

The Gospel of John presents Jesus as the divine Son of God, emphasizing His identity through miraculous signs and profound teachings. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John focuses on Jesus' relationship with the Father and the promise of eternal life for those who believe. As Jesus declares, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

Session 1: "In the Beginning—Jesus, the Word of God" - John 1:1–18

Focus- John introduces Jesus as the eternal Word—divine, life-giving, and full of grace and truth.

READ: [John 1:1–18](#) (Prologue: Jesus as the Word, Light, and Life)

OVERVIEW:

John 1:1-18 is a profound introduction to the Gospel of John that presents Jesus as the eternal Word of God who existed from the very beginning. These verses highlight the divinity of Jesus, His role in creation, and His incarnation as the light and life of humanity. John emphasizes the transforming power of Jesus, who brings grace and truth, and reveals God to the world. This passage sets the stage for understanding Jesus' identity and mission throughout the rest of the Gospel.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 1:1-3 – The Word in the Beginning: John opens his Gospel with the powerful declaration that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). This statement affirms the eternal existence and divinity of Jesus, who is referred to as the Word (Greek: "Logos"). John emphasizes that Jesus was with God from the very beginning and that all things were made through Him. This establishes Jesus' central role in creation and His divine nature. As theologian N.T. Wright explains, "The Word shares in the life and purposes of the one true God."

John 1:4-5 – The Light of Humanity: John continues by describing Jesus as the source of life and light for all humanity. "In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:4-5). This imagery of light and darkness highlights the transforming power of Jesus, who brings life and hope to a world overshadowed by sin and darkness. The light of Jesus is invincible, overcoming all forms of darkness.

John 1:6-8 – The Witness of John the Baptist: John introduces John the Baptist as a witness to the light, sent by God to testify about Jesus so that all might believe through him. John clarifies that John the Baptist was not the light but came to bear witness to the light. "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe" (John 1:6-7). This underscores the importance of testimony in leading others to faith in Jesus.

John 1:9-13 – The True Light and Belief: John describes Jesus as the true light that gives light to everyone, coming into the world. Despite being the Creator, Jesus was not recognized or received by His own people. However, to those who did receive Him and believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). This emphasizes the gift of new life and identity that comes through faith in Jesus.

John 1:14 – The Word Became Flesh: John makes the profound statement that "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This verse highlights the incarnation of Jesus, who took on human form and lived among us, revealing the glory of God. Pastor Timothy Keller notes, "The Word became flesh; God became vulnerable. He took on the weaknesses and limitations of a human body out of love for us."

John 1:15-18 – Grace and Truth through Jesus: John the Baptist testifies to the greatness of Jesus, proclaiming that He is greater because He existed before him. John explains that from the fullness of Jesus, we have all received grace upon grace. The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). John concludes by stating that no one has ever seen God, but Jesus, the one and only Son, has made Him known. This emphasizes the unique role of Jesus in revealing God's character and bringing grace and truth to humanity.

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Have you ever tried to explain something really important to someone, but struggled to find the right words? Think about when you first held your grandchild or saw a beautiful sunset - how did you put those feelings into words?"

+ Consider this quote from a grandmother: "When I first held my grandson, I kept saying 'He's perfect, he's just perfect!' But those simple words couldn't capture the overwhelming love and joy I felt. Sometimes the deepest truths need more than just words to be understood."

THINK ABOUT THIS: The Power of the Word

Have you ever sat in the quiet of the morning, just before the sun rises, and felt the stillness of a new day? In that quiet moment, before the world wakes up, there is a sense of expectation—something is about to begin.

John 1:1 tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Just as creation had a beginning, so our faith begins with Jesus, the Word of God. This passage reminds us that Jesus was not an afterthought or a last-minute plan. He was there from the very start, bringing light, life, and hope into the world.

Think back to a time when a kind word changed your day. Maybe someone encouraged you when you felt down. Maybe a Bible verse spoke to your heart just when you needed it. Words have power! They can build up or tear down, give hope or cause harm. If our simple human words can have such an impact, imagine how powerful the Word of God is!

Jesus, as the Word, speaks life into our weary souls. When we feel lost, He guides us. When we feel broken, He heals us. When we feel alone, He reminds us that He is always with us.

Quotes to Reflect On:

— "The Bible is not the Word of God because it speaks about Jesus, but because it speaks Jesus himself." — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

— "God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If He gives us the gift of Christmas, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it." — Pope Francis

— "The Christian life is not about finding our own way, but about following the One who has always been the Way." — Unknown

A Question to Ponder:

Can you remember a time when God's Word brought you comfort or clarity? How does knowing that Jesus has been with us since the very beginning encourage your faith today?

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 1:1-18 by recognizing and embracing the profound identity of Jesus as the eternal Word of God. Understanding that Jesus is not only the Creator but also the source of life and light can inspire us to deepen our relationship with Him through prayer, worship, and studying His Word. By acknowledging Jesus' divinity and His role in creation, we can better appreciate His love and sacrifice for us, leading us to live lives that reflect His grace and truth.

One practical way to APPLY THIS CONTENT: is by actively seeking to be a light in the world, as Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness. This involves demonstrating love, kindness, and compassion in our interactions with others, and being a positive influence in our communities. As Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." By living out the light of Christ, we can point others to Him and bring glory to God.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "In the Beginning—Jesus, the Word of God"- John 1:1–18

Recognition of Jesus as Divine→Understanding Jesus as the eternal Word who was with God and is God, acknowledging His divinity.→John 1:1

Appreciation of Jesus' Role in Creation→Realizing Jesus' active involvement in creation and sustaining all things through Him.→John 1:3

Acceptance of Jesus as Light→Embracing Jesus as the true Light that shines in the darkness, providing spiritual illumination.→John 1:4–5

Receiving and Believing in Jesus→Responding to Jesus by receiving Him personally and believing in His name for salvation and identity.→John 1:12

Becoming Children of God→Experiencing spiritual rebirth and adoption as children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.→John 1:12–13

Witnessing to the Truth→Living as a witness to Jesus Christ, testifying to His glory and grace as the only begotten Son.→John 1:14, 17

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 1:1-18 reveals His desire for humanity to know and experience His love through Jesus, the Word made flesh. These verses highlight the significance of Jesus' incarnation, His role in creation, and His mission to bring light and life to a dark and broken world. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on the identity of Jesus as the eternal Word of God, we are reminded of the transforming power of His presence in our lives. The incarnation of Jesus demonstrates God's willingness to enter into our humanity, to walk with us, and to bring us into a relationship with Him. This intimate connection with the Creator encourages us to live with a sense of purpose and intentionality, knowing that our lives are part of God's greater plan.

By applying these truths in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the identity of Jesus as the Word of God not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to be His light in the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

"In John 1:1, why do you think John chose to begin his gospel with 'In the beginning was the Word' instead of starting with Jesus's birth like other gospels?"

- This helps participants connect Genesis 1:1 with John 1:1, showing Jesus's eternal nature and His role in creation. It emphasizes that Jesus wasn't just born in Bethlehem - He has always existed.

"What does it mean to you that Jesus is called 'the Word' of God? How does this help us understand who He is?"

- This encourages reflection on how Jesus perfectly expresses who God is - just as our words express our thoughts, Jesus "expresses" the Father to us. He makes the invisible God visible.

"Look at verses 4-5: 'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' What everyday examples of light overcoming darkness can we think of that help us understand this truth?"

- This question brings abstract concepts down to practical understanding. Participants might mention how even a small flashlight cuts through complete darkness, or how a single candle can light a room.

"In verse 14, John says 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.' Why do you think God chose to communicate with us by becoming human instead of just speaking from heaven?"

- This helps seniors reflect on the intimacy and humility of the incarnation - God didn't just send a message, He sent Himself in person to live among us.

"Looking at verses 16-17, what's the difference between the law given through Moses and the grace and truth that came through Jesus Christ?"

- This question helps explore the progression of God's revelation, from the written law to the living Word, and how Jesus fulfills rather than abolishes the law.

What to Look For

Pay attention to the repeated themes of "light" and "life." What do they reveal about Jesus' mission and nature?

Notice the contrast between those who received Jesus and those who did not. What does John say about the right to become children of God?

Observe how John describes Jesus' glory. What do we learn about grace and truth through Him?

Personal Reflection Questions

When you think of beginnings—whether of your life, your faith, or a new chapter—how do you see God's hand at work?

If someone asked you, "Who is Jesus to you?"—how would your answer compare with the majestic description in these verses?

Session 2: "Come and See—Jesus Calls Disciples"- John 1:19–51

Focus- Jesus begins gathering followers—not with force, but with invitation. His call is personal, transformational, and still echoes today: "Come and see."

READ: [John 1:19–51](#) (John the Baptist's testimony, first disciples follow Jesus)

OVERVIEW:

In John 1:19-51, the Apostle John records the beginnings of Jesus' public ministry by highlighting the testimony of John the Baptist and the calling of Jesus' first disciples. John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God, and several individuals begin to follow Jesus based on his testimony. Through personal encounters and invitations, Jesus calls His first disciples, including Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael. These verses emphasize the transforming power of recognizing and following Jesus, and the importance of personal testimony in leading others to Christ.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 1:19-28 – John the Baptist's Testimony: The Jewish leaders send priests and Levites to ask John the Baptist who he is. John clearly states that he is not the Messiah, Elijah, or the Prophet. Instead, he identifies himself as "the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord'" (John 1:23), quoting Isaiah 40:3. John explains that he baptizes with water, but among them stands one they do not know, who is greater than him and whose sandal he is not worthy to untie. This introduces Jesus as someone far greater than John, who prepares the way for the Messiah.

John 1:29-34 – Behold, the Lamb of God: The next day, John the Baptist sees Jesus coming toward him and declares, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). He testifies that Jesus is the one he spoke about, and that he saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on Him. John affirms that he did not know Jesus was the Messiah until this revelation. "I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One" (John 1:34). This moment underscores the divine revelation of Jesus' identity and mission as the sacrificial Lamb who takes away sin.

John 1:35-42 – The First Disciples: The following day, John the Baptist is with two of his disciples when he sees Jesus passing by and again exclaims, "Look, the Lamb of God!" (John 1:36). The two disciples, Andrew and another, follow Jesus. Jesus asks them what they want, and they address Him as Rabbi (Teacher). Jesus invites them to come and see where He is staying, and they spend the day with Him. Andrew then finds his brother Simon and tells him, "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41). He brings Simon to Jesus, who names him Cephas (Peter). This encounter highlights the power of personal testimony and invitation in leading others to Jesus.

John 1:43-51 – Philip and Nathanael: The next day, Jesus decides to leave for Galilee and finds Philip, saying, "Follow me" (John 1:43). Philip, like Andrew and Peter, is from the town of Bethsaida. Philip finds Nathanael and tells him they have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, Jesus of Nazareth. Nathanael is initially skeptical, saying, "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Philip responds, "Come and see" (John 1:46). When Jesus sees Nathanael, He describes him as an Israelite without deceit. Nathanael is amazed that Jesus saw him under the fig tree before Philip called him and declares, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel" (John 1:49). Jesus tells Nathanael that he will see greater things, including heaven open and angels

ascending and descending on the Son of Man. This encounter illustrates the transforming power of Jesus' knowledge and presence, leading to a declaration of faith.

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Have you ever received an invitation that changed your life?"

+ "Think about Martha down the hall who received an invitation to volunteer at the community center after her husband passed away. That simple 'come and see' invitation led her to find new purpose and friendships. Sometimes, one invitation can open the door to something life-changing – just like when Jesus invited his first disciples to 'come and see.'"

THINK ABOUT THIS: "Come and See—Jesus Calls Disciples" (John 1:19–51)

Imagine a time when you were invited to something that changed your life—a church service, a family gathering, or a conversation that helped you see things differently. Maybe it was a moment when you realized you were loved, welcomed, or called to something greater.

In John 1:19–51, Jesus extends a simple but powerful invitation: "Come and see." He doesn't force, argue, or pressure—He invites. Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, and Nathanael all come to know Jesus because someone introduced them, and Jesus met them where they were.

Think about your own journey of faith. Who first invited you to "come and see" Jesus? Maybe it was a parent, a friend, or a Sunday school teacher. Just like the first disciples, we are invited to experience Jesus personally and then share Him with others.

Quotes to Reflect On

"Evangelism is just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." —D.T. Niles

"Jesus doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called." —Unknown

"You can't lead someone where you haven't been. Follow Jesus, then invite others to do the same."

A Closing Thought

Jesus' invitation still stands today. No matter where you are in life, He calls you to come, see, and follow. And just like the first disciples, you don't have to have it all figured out—you just have to say yes.

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 1:19–51 by recognizing the importance of personal testimony and invitation in leading others to Christ. Just as John the Baptist and the early disciples shared their experiences and invited others to "come and see," we too can share our faith with those around us. This can be done through simple acts of kindness, sharing our personal stories of how Jesus has impacted our lives, and inviting friends and family to church or Bible study. As Jesus said in John 1:39, "Come, and you will see." This highlights the power of personal invitation in introducing others to the life-transforming love of Jesus.

Embracing the call to follow Jesus and recognizing Him as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. This involves surrendering our lives to Him, seeking to live in obedience to His teachings, and allowing His light to shine through us. As theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." This means that following Jesus may require us to make sacrifices, but it also brings the promise of abundant life and eternal hope.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Come and See—Jesus Calls Disciples"- John 1:19–51

Seeking Truth with Openness→Demonstrating a willingness to inquire and discern the identity of Jesus with an open heart.→John 1:19–23

Recognizing Jesus as the Messiah→Identifying Jesus as the promised Christ and believing in His divine mission.→John 1:29, 41

Responding to Jesus' Call→Willingly following Jesus when He calls, leaving behind old ways and priorities.→John 1:43–44

Inviting Others to Encounter Jesus→Sharing the discovery of Jesus with others, encouraging them to "come and see."→John 1:45–46

Growing in Personal Relationship with Jesus→Deepening intimacy with Jesus through personal encounters and conversations.→John 1:47–48

Confessing Jesus as the Son of God→Boldly acknowledging Jesus' identity as the Son of God, indicating growing faith.→John 1:49

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 1:19-51 reveals His desire for humanity to know and follow Jesus, the Lamb of God. These verses emphasize the significance of personal testimony and invitation, as well as the transforming power of recognizing and following Jesus. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find purpose and direction in our relationship with Christ.

As we reflect on the calling of the first disciples, we are reminded that Jesus continues to invite each of us to follow Him. This invitation is not just a one-time decision but a daily commitment to walk in His ways and to grow in our relationship with Him. The encounters described in this passage highlight the power of personal testimony and the impact that one person's faith can have on others. By sharing our faith and inviting others to experience Jesus, we participate in God's redemptive work and help spread the light of Christ in a dark world.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the invitation to follow Jesus and sharing that invitation with others not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to be His light in the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. "In verses 35-39, why do you think Jesus responded to the disciples' question with 'Come and see' instead of just telling them where he was staying?"

– This response from Jesus shows He wasn't just interested in giving information – He wanted to offer an experience, a relationship. It's similar to how we might invite someone to dinner rather than just telling them about the meal. Jesus was inviting them into His life, not just His location.

2. "Andrew immediately went to find his brother Simon Peter (verses 40-42). Why do you think sharing good news with family is often our first instinct?"

– This highlights the natural desire to share life-changing discoveries with those closest to us. Andrew's actions demonstrate how genuine encounters with Jesus create an immediate desire to share with others.

3. "Look at verse 46, when Nathanael asks, 'Can anything good come from Nazareth?' How does Philip's response of 'Come and see' mirror Jesus's earlier invitation?"

– Philip uses the same approach Jesus did – not arguing or defending, but simply inviting Nathanael to experience for himself. This shows how the disciples were already learning from Jesus's method of evangelism.

4. "Throughout this passage, we see a chain reaction of people bringing others to Jesus. How might this pattern apply to our own lives today?"

– This question helps seniors reflect on their own role in sharing faith with others, emphasizing that evangelism often happens through simple invitations and personal relationships rather than complex arguments.

5. Would you like me to provide more questions or modify any of these to better suit your group's needs?

What to Look For

Watch how John the Baptist points others to Jesus. How does his role prepare hearts for the Messiah?

Notice the different ways people respond when they first meet Jesus. What questions do they ask? What do they call Him?

Look for the ripple effect of personal testimony. Who brings whom to Jesus—and what does that tell us about sharing faith?

Personal Reflection Questions

Who first invited you to “come and see” Jesus? What impact did that have on your life? If Jesus looked at you today and said, “Follow me,” how would that invitation challenge or encourage you right now?

Session 3: **"Signs and Wonders—The First Miracles of Jesus"**- John 2–3

Focus- Jesus' first signs reveal His divine authority and deeper purpose. His miracles point beyond the moment—to transformation, new life, and belief.

READ: [John 2–3](#) (Water to wine, temple cleansing, Nicodemus & being born again)

OVERVIEW:

In John 2-3, the Apostle John recounts the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and the first signs and miracles He performed. Chapter 2 describes the miracle at the wedding in Cana, where Jesus turns water into wine, revealing His divine power. This chapter also includes the cleansing of the temple, where Jesus drives out the merchants and money changers, emphasizing the sanctity of God's house. In Chapter 3, we see the encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus, a Pharisee who seeks to understand Jesus' teachings. Here, Jesus explains the necessity of being born again and God's profound love for the world, culminating in the well-known verse, John 3:16.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 2:1-11 – The Wedding at Cana: The first miracle Jesus performs is at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. When the wine runs out, Jesus' mother informs Him, and He responds, "My hour has not yet come" (John 2:4). Nevertheless, Jesus instructs the servants to fill six stone water jars with water, which He then turns into wine. This miracle reveals Jesus' divine authority and compassion, providing abundantly for the wedding guests. The miraculous wine, described as being of superior quality, symbolizes the new and abundant life Jesus offers. As theologian N.T. Wright comments, "In the transformation of water into wine, Jesus shows that He is doing something radically new, bringing in the new creation that God had always intended."

John 2:12-25 – Cleansing the Temple: After the miracle at Cana, Jesus travels to Jerusalem for the Passover. He finds people selling animals and exchanging money in the temple courts, turning it into a marketplace. Jesus makes a whip out of cords and drives out the merchants and money changers, saying, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" (John 2:16). This act demonstrates Jesus' zeal for the purity and sanctity of worship. It also foreshadows His ultimate sacrifice, as He refers to His body as the temple that will be destroyed and raised in three days. This shows Jesus' authority over the temple and His role in bringing true worship. Pastor John Piper notes, "Jesus' action in the temple reveals His passion for reverent worship and His authority to purify God's house."

John 3:1-15 – Jesus and Nicodemus: Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the Jewish ruling council, visits Jesus at night to learn more about His teachings. Jesus tells Nicodemus that no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. Nicodemus is confused, asking how someone can be born when they are old. Jesus explains that being born again means being born of water and the Spirit. He emphasizes the need for spiritual rebirth and the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit. "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5). This conversation highlights the transforming power of spiritual rebirth and the necessity of faith in Jesus.

John 3:16-21 – God's Love for the World: In this passage, Jesus explains the profound love of God for humanity, culminating in the famous verse, John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Jesus emphasizes that He came into the world not to condemn it but to save it. He calls people to believe in Him, stating that those who believe will have eternal life, while those who reject Him stand condemned. This passage underscores the central message of the gospel—the offer of salvation through faith in Jesus and the demonstration of God's immense love for humanity.

John 3:22-36 – John the Baptist's Testimony About Jesus: After the encounter with Nicodemus, John describes how Jesus and His disciples spend time baptizing people in the Judean

countryside. During this time, John the Baptist continues his ministry of baptizing and testifying about Jesus. When John's disciples express concern about Jesus gaining more followers, John responds with humility, acknowledging that his role is to prepare the way for Jesus. "He must become greater; I must become less" (John 3:30). John the Baptist testifies that Jesus is from above and speaks the words of God, emphasizing the importance of believing in Him for eternal life. This passage highlights the selfless dedication of John the Baptist and the supremacy of Jesus.

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Have you ever been to a celebration that didn't go as planned? What happened, and how was the situation saved?"

+ "Picture this: At a 50th wedding anniversary celebration, the caterer's van broke down with all the food inside. Just when everyone started to worry, the neighbors from three houses down showed up with trays of homemade dishes they'd prepared for their own family reunion. What seemed like a disaster turned into an even more memorable celebration of community and God's provision."

THINK ABOUT THIS

Have you ever witnessed something so amazing that it left you in awe? Maybe it was a beautiful sunset that painted the sky with colors beyond imagination, or perhaps it was the birth of a child—so small, yet so full of life. These moments remind us that there are things beyond our understanding, things that point to a greater power at work.

In John 2, Jesus performs His first miracle at a wedding in Cana, turning water into wine. This wasn't just about saving the wedding feast—it was a sign. It revealed His power and pointed to something greater: that He is the Son of God. Later, in John 3, Jesus speaks to Nicodemus about another miracle—the miracle of being "born again." Just as He transformed water into wine, He transforms hearts and lives through faith in Him.

Think about this: Have you ever experienced a time when God did something unexpected in your life? Maybe He provided for you when you didn't know how things would work out. Maybe He gave you peace in a difficult moment. These are signs of His love and presence in our lives.

A Quote to Reflect On:

"Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature." — Saint Augustine

Jesus' miracles weren't just for the people who saw them in person. They remind us today that God is still at work, changing hearts, renewing lives, and giving us hope. Where do you see signs of His power in your own life?

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 2-3 by recognizing the significance of Jesus' miracles and teachings in their lives. The miracle at the wedding in Cana demonstrates Jesus' compassion and His ability to provide abundantly in times of need. This encourages us to trust in His provision and to bring our concerns to Him in prayer. As Philippians 4:19 states, "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." By relying on Jesus' provision, we can experience His abundant grace in our daily lives.

Additionally, the cleansing of the temple highlights the importance of reverence and purity in our worship. We are reminded to examine our own lives and ensure that we are honoring God with our actions and attitudes. Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus emphasizes the necessity of being born again through the Holy Spirit, encouraging us to seek a deeper spiritual rebirth and renewal. As Pastor Charles Spurgeon once said, "The new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit, and it is a great mystery; but it is a glorious reality." By seeking the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, we can grow in our faith and relationship with God.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Signs and Wonders—The First Miracles of Jesus"- John 2-3

Faith in Jesus' Power→Trusting in Jesus' divine authority demonstrated through miracles, such as turning water into wine.→John 2:1-11

Belief in Jesus as the Son of God→Accepting Jesus' identity and mission, as affirmed by His miraculous signs and teachings.→John 2:18-22

Seeking Spiritual Rebirth→Embracing the need for being “born again” to enter the kingdom of God, as taught by Jesus.→John 3:3

Openness to Jesus’ Teaching→Listening to and pondering Jesus’ words about eternal life and God’s love.→John 3:16–21

Growing Understanding of God’s Love→Realizing the depth of God’s love in sending His Son for salvation and judgment.→John 3:16–17

Responding to Jesus with Faith→Choosing to believe in Jesus and His message, leading to spiritual transformation.→John 3:36

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God’s plan associated with John 2-3 reveals His desire for humanity to experience His transforming power and abundant grace through Jesus Christ. These chapters highlight the significance of Jesus’ miracles, teachings, and encounters with individuals, demonstrating His authority and compassion. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on the first miracles of Jesus, we are reminded of His divine authority and His deep concern for our needs. The miracle at Cana encourages us to trust in Jesus’ provision and to bring our concerns to Him in prayer. The cleansing of the temple challenges us to maintain the purity and reverence of our worship, ensuring that our actions and attitudes honor God. Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus underscores the importance of spiritual rebirth and renewal, inviting us to seek a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the signs and wonders of Jesus’ ministry not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His love and grace with the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. "In the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11), why do you think Jesus chose this particular moment and setting for His first miracle?"
 - This miracle reveals Jesus’ compassion for ordinary human concerns. He didn’t choose a grand public spectacle but rather helped a family avoid embarrassment at their celebration. It also shows how Jesus sanctifies our everyday joys and demonstrates His power over creation itself.
2. "Notice how Mary responds when the wine runs out. What does her interaction with Jesus and the servants tell us about her faith?"
 - Mary’s simple statement "They have no wine" shows her confidence in Jesus’ ability to help. Her instruction to the servants - "Do whatever He tells you" - demonstrates complete trust in His wisdom, even when His initial response seemed reluctant.
3. "In John 2:13-22, Jesus cleanses the temple. How does this action differ from the wedding miracle, and what does it tell us about different aspects of Jesus’ ministry?"
 - While the wedding miracle was quiet and personal, the temple cleansing was public and confrontational. Together, they show Jesus as both compassionate friend and righteous judge, caring about both our celebrations and our worship.
4. "Looking at Nicodemus’s nighttime visit (John 3:1-21), what similarities do you see between his spiritual journey and your own?"
 - Like many of us, Nicodemus came with questions and uncertainty. Jesus met him where he was but challenged him to think beyond his current understanding. The conversation shows how Jesus can take our intellectual questions and turn them into opportunities for spiritual transformation.

What to Look For

Notice the significance of Jesus’ first miracle at the wedding. Why water into wine? What does it show about His character and mission?

Watch how people respond to Jesus' signs, including Nicodemus. What does belief look like in these early encounters?

Pay attention to the conversation about being "born again." What does Jesus teach about spiritual rebirth and the work of the Spirit?

Personal Reflection Questions

When have you seen God work in ways that surprised or stretched your understanding of Him?

What part of your life might Jesus want to change "water into wine"—to transform the ordinary into something sacred and new?

Session 4: "Living Water and True Worship"- John 4

Focus- Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well and offers her living water—an invitation to eternal life and authentic worship that crosses every barrier.

READ: [John 4](#) (Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, healing the official's son)

OVERVIEW:

John 4 presents the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, highlighting His offer of "living water" and the transforming power of true worship. Jesus intentionally travels through Samaria and engages in a profound conversation with the woman, breaking cultural and social barriers. Through this dialogue, Jesus reveals His identity as the Messiah and teaches about the importance of worshiping God in spirit and truth. The chapter concludes with the healing of an official's son, demonstrating Jesus' power and compassion.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 4:1-6 – Jesus Travels to Samaria: Jesus learns that the Pharisees have heard about His growing ministry, and He decides to leave Judea and travel back to Galilee. On His way, He passes through Samaria and stops at Jacob's well in the town of Sychar. Tired from His journey, Jesus sits by the well, setting the stage for His encounter with the Samaritan woman. This journey highlights Jesus' intention to reach out to all people, regardless of social or ethnic boundaries.

John 4:7-14 – The Offer of Living Water: A Samaritan woman comes to draw water, and Jesus asks her for a drink. Surprised by His request, she points out the cultural barriers between Jews and Samaritans. Jesus responds by offering her "living water," which would quench her thirst forever. He explains, "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14). This symbolizes the spiritual satisfaction and eternal life that Jesus offers.

John 4:15-26 – The Revelation of True Worship: The woman expresses her desire for this living water, and Jesus asks her to call her husband. When she admits she has no husband, Jesus reveals His knowledge of her past, demonstrating His prophetic insight. The woman perceives Jesus as a prophet and raises the topic of worship, noting the differences between Jewish and Samaritan worship practices. Jesus responds by teaching that true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, saying, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). This emphasizes the importance of genuine, heartfelt worship beyond physical locations and rituals.

John 4:27-42 – The Samaritan Woman's Testimony: The disciples return and are surprised to find Jesus speaking with the woman. She leaves her water jar and goes back to the town, telling the people to come and see a man who told her everything she ever did. Many Samaritans believe in Jesus because of her testimony, and they come to see Him for themselves. Jesus stays with them for two days, and many more believe because of His words. They declare, "We know that this man really is the Savior of the world" (John 4:42). This story highlights the impact of personal testimony and the inclusive nature of Jesus' mission.

John 4:43-54 – The Healing of the Official's Son: After leaving Samaria, Jesus returns to Galilee, where He is welcomed by the people. An official from Capernaum approaches Jesus, begging Him to heal his dying son. Jesus challenges the people's reliance on signs and wonders, but the official

persists in his plea. Jesus tells him, "Go, your son will live" (John 4:50). The official believes Jesus' words and finds his son healed upon his return home. This miracle underscores the power of faith and Jesus' authority to heal.

THINK ABOUT THIS:

Have you ever been really thirsty? Maybe you were working outside on a hot day, and all you could think about was getting a cold glass of water. Nothing else would satisfy that thirst—only water could truly refresh you.

In John 4, Jesus meets a woman at a well. She came to get water, but Jesus offered her something much greater—living water. He wasn't talking about the kind of water we drink; He was talking about Himself. Only Jesus can satisfy the thirst in our hearts—the deep need we all have for love, purpose, and forgiveness.

Think about this: Are there things in life that you look to for satisfaction—things that don't really last? Jesus invites us to come to Him, to worship in spirit and truth, and to find true fulfillment in a relationship with Him.

A Quote to Reflect On:

"You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You." — Saint Augustine

Just like the woman at the well, we all have a choice. Will we keep searching for meaning in things that don't last, or will we accept the living water that Jesus offers? He is always ready to refresh our hearts and fill us with His love.

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "When was a time you were really thirsty - not just for a drink, but desperately thirsty? How did getting water finally feel?"

+ "A hiker named Sarah got lost in the Arizona desert for two days in the summer heat. When rescue workers found her, she said the first sip of water felt like 'pure life flowing into her body.' Her physical thirst helps us understand what spiritual thirst feels like."

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 4 by recognizing the significance of Jesus' offer of "living water" and the importance of worshiping God in spirit and truth. The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman teaches us that Jesus offers a life-giving relationship that satisfies our deepest spiritual needs. As believers, we are called to seek this living water by developing a personal relationship with Jesus through prayer, studying the Bible, and allowing the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. Jesus said, "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst" (John 4:14). This encourages us to rely on Jesus for spiritual fulfillment and to share this gift with others.

Additionally, the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman highlights the importance of true worship. Jesus emphasizes that true worship is not confined to specific locations or rituals but is a matter of the heart, characterized by worshiping in spirit and truth. This challenges us to examine our own worship practices and to ensure that our worship is genuine and heartfelt. As theologian A.W. Tozer once said, "Worship is no longer worship when it reflects the culture around us more than the Christ within us." By prioritizing authentic worship, we can experience a deeper connection with God and grow in our faith.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Living Water and True Worship" - John 4

Seeking Spiritual Fulfillment→Recognizing the deeper thirst for eternal satisfaction beyond physical needs, symbolized by living water.→John 4:7–14

Breaking Social Barriers→Willingness to engage across cultural and social divides, as Jesus did with the Samaritan woman.→John 4:9, 27

Honest Self-Reflection→Confessing personal shortcomings and openness to transformation through encounter with Jesus.→John 4:16–18

Understanding True Worship→Learning that true worship is not about location but about worshiping God in spirit and truth.→John 4:23–24

Spiritual Awakening→Experiencing new insight and faith, leading to a personal testimony and evangelism.→John 4:28–30, 39–42

Recognizing Jesus as Messiah→Acknowledging Jesus as the promised Savior based on personal revelation and experience.→John 4:26

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 4 reveals His desire for humanity to experience the transforming power of Jesus' living water and to engage in true worship. These verses emphasize the inclusive nature of Jesus' ministry, breaking down cultural and social barriers to offer eternal life to all who believe. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, we are reminded of the boundless grace and love that Jesus extends to everyone, regardless of their background or past. This encounter encourages us to reach out to others with the same grace and to share the life-giving message of Jesus. The concept of living water challenges us to seek spiritual nourishment from Jesus and to rely on Him for our deepest needs. In turn, we are called to be conduits of this living water, sharing the hope and love of Christ with those around us.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to authentic worship and sharing the living water of Jesus not only strengthens our relationship with God but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the living water and true worship that Jesus offers not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to be His light in the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. "In verses 7-9, why do you think Jesus broke three cultural rules by talking to this woman? (She was a Samaritan, a woman, and had a questionable reputation)"
 - Jesus shows us that God's love crosses all human barriers. He deliberately went through Samaria when most Jews would go around it. This teaches us that no one is beyond God's reach, and we shouldn't let social barriers stop us from sharing God's love.
2. "Jesus offers 'living water' (verses 13-14). What's the difference between the water in the well and the 'living water' Jesus offers?"
 - The well water meets a temporary physical need - you'll get thirsty again. But Jesus offers something that satisfies our deepest spiritual needs forever. This living water represents eternal life and a relationship with God.
3. "Look at verses 20-24. The woman brings up worship locations - the mountain versus Jerusalem. How does Jesus change the conversation from 'where' to 'how' we should worship?"
 - Jesus shifts the focus from physical places to spiritual truth. True worship isn't about a building or location - it's about worshiping "in spirit and truth." This means sincere worship from our hearts that's based on God's truth.
4. "In verses 28-30, what does the woman do after meeting Jesus? What can we learn from her example?"
 - She leaves her water jar (her original purpose) and becomes one of the first evangelists in the Bible. She simply tells others what Jesus did for her. This shows that anyone can share their faith by telling their story of meeting Jesus.

What to Look For

Notice the cultural and social barriers Jesus breaks. Why is this conversation so unexpected? Watch how the woman's understanding of Jesus deepens. How does her perception change through the dialogue?

Pay attention to what Jesus teaches about worship. What does it mean to worship "in spirit and in truth"?

Personal Reflection Questions

What "wells" have you drawn from in life that never truly satisfied?

What would it look like for you to worship God with both heart and honesty this week?

Session 5: "Healing on the Sabbath—Jesus Challenges Traditions"- John 5

Focus- Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath, revealing both His compassion and His authority—sparking conflict with religious leaders over tradition and identity.

READ: [John 5](#) (Healing at the pool, Jesus claims equality with God)

OVERVIEW:

In John 5, the Apostle John recounts the story of Jesus healing a man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath, which leads to conflict with the Jewish religious leaders. This chapter highlights Jesus' authority over traditional laws and His divine mission. Through this healing miracle and subsequent discourse, Jesus reveals His identity as the Son of God, who has the power to give life and execute judgment. The chapter emphasizes the importance of faith in Jesus and challenges rigid interpretations of religious traditions.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 5:1-9 – Healing at the Pool of Bethesda: Jesus visits Jerusalem for a Jewish festival and encounters a man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years, lying by the Pool of Bethesda. The man hopes to be healed by entering the pool when the water is stirred, but he has no one to help him. Jesus sees the man's condition and asks, "Do you want to get well?" The man explains his predicament, and Jesus responds with a command, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk" (John 5:8). Immediately, the man is healed, takes up his mat, and walks. This miracle demonstrates Jesus' compassion and His authority to heal, even in seemingly hopeless situations. As Pastor Charles Spurgeon once remarked, "There is no case too desperate for the power of Jesus."

John 5:10-18 – Conflict with Religious Leaders: The healing occurs on the Sabbath, and the Jewish leaders confront the man for carrying his mat, which they consider a violation of Sabbath law. When the man explains that Jesus healed him and instructed him to carry his mat, the leaders become more upset. They challenge Jesus, and He responds by stating, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working" (John 5:17). This claim of divine authority enrages the leaders further, as Jesus not only breaks the Sabbath but also calls God His Father, making Himself equal with God. This passage highlights the tension between Jesus and the religious leaders, emphasizing His divine identity and mission.

John 5:19-30 – Jesus Explains His Authority: In response to the leaders' accusations, Jesus explains His relationship with the Father and His divine authority. He states that He can do nothing by Himself but only what He sees the Father doing. Jesus emphasizes that just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to whom He is pleased to give it. He also explains that the Father has entrusted all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it" (John 5:21). This discourse reveals Jesus' unique relationship with the Father and His authority to give life and execute judgment.

John 5:31-47 – Testimonies About Jesus: Jesus presents multiple testimonies to validate His claims, including the witness of John the Baptist, His own works, the Father's testimony, and the Scriptures. He points out that the Jewish leaders have studied the Scriptures diligently, believing that in them they have eternal life, yet they refuse to come to Him for life. Jesus rebukes them for seeking glory from one another rather than from God and for failing to believe in the one whom Moses wrote about. "These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39-40). This section underscores the importance of recognizing and accepting the testimonies about Jesus and believing in Him for eternal life.

THINK ABOUT THIS: Breaking Barriers to Show Love

Imagine you are walking into a church service on a Sunday morning. Everyone is dressed in their best clothes, greeting one another, and preparing to worship. But just outside the door, there is a man sitting in a wheelchair. He is struggling to open the door, but no one stops to help because they are in a hurry to get inside.

Would you stop to help him, even if it meant being late for the service?

In John 5, Jesus saw a man who had been sick for 38 years. He was lying by the Pool of Bethesda, hoping for healing. Jesus could have waited until the next day to heal him, but instead, He healed him on the Sabbath, a day when Jewish leaders said no one should work—including healing. Jesus was showing that compassion is more important than tradition.

Sometimes, we get so caught up in doing things the “right” way that we forget to show love and kindness to people who need it most. Are there traditions in your life that might be keeping you from helping others?

Jesus calls us to love first—even when it challenges the way we’ve always done things.

Quotes to Consider:

- "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." — Jesus (Mark 2:27)
- "The love of Christ knows no boundaries—it reaches beyond traditions and expectations to meet people where they are." — Unknown
- "Compassion will never be inconvenient for those who truly follow Jesus." — Charles Spurgeon

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Have you ever felt frustrated when rules seemed to get in the way of helping someone? For example, imagine a school having a strict 'no phone' policy, but a student needs to call their grandmother who fell and needs help. Sometimes rules that are meant to protect us can create difficult situations when we need to show compassion."

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 5 by recognizing the importance of compassion and mercy over rigid adherence to tradition. Jesus' healing of the man at the Pool of Bethesda demonstrates His willingness to prioritize human need over legalistic interpretations of the Sabbath. This challenges us to consider how we can show compassion and kindness in our own lives, even when it means stepping outside of conventional norms. As Jesus said in Matthew 12:7, "If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent."

Moreover, Jesus' declaration of His divine authority invites us to trust in His power and to seek His will in all aspects of our lives. This means acknowledging Jesus as the source of life and allowing Him to guide our decisions and actions. We can cultivate a deeper relationship with Jesus through prayer, study of the Scriptures, and obedience to His teachings. As theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, "Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively doing God's will."

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Healing on the Sabbath—Jesus Challenges Traditions"- John 5

Compassion for the Needy→Showing mercy and concern by healing those in need, regardless of societal rules.→John 5:1–9

Courage to Challenge Tradition→Willingness to confront and question established religious norms that hinder doing good.→John 5:10–18

Confidence in Jesus' Authority→Trusting in Jesus' divine authority to heal and teach, even when it brings opposition.→John 5:19–23

Understanding God's Work→Recognizing that Jesus' work aligns with God's ongoing work and purpose.→John 5:17, 36

Faith in Jesus as Judge and Life-Giver→Belief in Jesus' role as the one who gives life and will judge humanity.→John 5:24–30

Desire to Honor the Father→Living in a way that glorifies God through obedience to Jesus' teachings.→John 5:41–47

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 5 reveals His desire for humanity to experience healing, mercy, and transformation through Jesus Christ. These verses emphasize the authority of Jesus as the Son of God, who has the power to give life and to judge. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on Jesus' healing on the Sabbath, we are reminded of His compassion and willingness to challenge traditions that hinder genuine worship and human flourishing. This encourages us to examine our own lives and to prioritize showing love and mercy to others. Jesus' discourse with the religious leaders highlights the importance of recognizing His divine authority and trusting in His power to bring about transformation in our lives.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the authority and compassion of Jesus not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to be His hands and feet in the world, demonstrating His love and grace to those in need.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

"Why do you think the Jewish leaders were more concerned about the man carrying his mat on the Sabbath than celebrating his healing? What does this tell us about how traditions can sometimes blind us to God's work?" – This question helps explore how religious customs, while important, can sometimes cause us to miss God's bigger purpose. The leaders focused on the rule-breaking rather than the miracle of healing, much like we sometimes get caught up in "how things should be done" rather than seeing God's mercy at work.

"Jesus chose to heal this man who had been sick for 38 years specifically on the Sabbath. What message was He trying to send about God's love versus religious rules?" – This helps the group understand that Jesus wasn't being disrespectful of the Sabbath, but rather showing its true purpose - to honor God and show love to others. The healing demonstrates that doing good and showing mercy is always appropriate.

"The healed man didn't know who Jesus was at first (verse 13), but Jesus found him later in the temple. What does this tell us about Jesus's personal care for individuals?" – This question highlights how Jesus doesn't just heal and leave - He follows up, showing personal interest in those He helps. It emphasizes the relational aspect of faith.

"After being healed, Jesus tells the man to 'stop sinning or something worse may happen to you' (verse 14). How do you understand the connection between physical healing and spiritual wellness?" – This prompts discussion about the deeper purpose of Jesus's healings - not just to fix physical problems, but to lead people to spiritual transformation.

What to Look For

Notice the man's condition and Jesus' question: "Do you want to get well?" What might this reveal about healing and faith?

Watch the response of the religious leaders. Why does Jesus' act cause such controversy?

Pay attention to how Jesus speaks about His relationship with the Father. What bold claims does He make?

Personal Reflection Questions

Is there an area in your life where Jesus is asking, "Do you want to get well?"—physically, emotionally, or spiritually?

Have your expectations of religion or tradition ever gotten in the way of truly experiencing God's work?

Session 6: "Bread of Life—Trusting in Jesus Alone"- John 6

Focus- Jesus feeds the multitudes, walks on water, and declares Himself the Bread of Life—calling people to trust not in miracles, but in Him alone for eternal life.

READ: [John 6](#) (Feeding the 5,000, Jesus walks on water, teaching about spiritual food)

OVERVIEW:

In John 6, the Apostle John describes several key events and teachings of Jesus that reveal His identity as the Bread of Life and emphasize the importance of trusting in Him alone. The chapter begins with the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, demonstrating Jesus' ability to provide abundantly for physical needs. Following this miracle, Jesus walks on water, showcasing His power over nature. The chapter then focuses on Jesus' discourse about being the Bread of Life, where He teaches about the necessity of believing in Him for eternal life. This chapter highlights Jesus' divine authority, His provision for both physical and spiritual needs, and the call to trust in Him completely.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 6:1-15 – Feeding the Five Thousand: Jesus crosses to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee, followed by a large crowd because they saw the signs He performed by healing the sick. When Jesus sees the crowd, He asks Philip where they can buy bread to feed them, testing Philip's faith. Andrew finds a boy with five barley loaves and two fish, but questions how this small amount can feed so many. Jesus gives thanks and distributes the food, miraculously providing enough to feed about five thousand men, with twelve baskets of leftovers. This miracle demonstrates Jesus' ability to provide abundantly and His compassion for the people's needs. Pastor Max Lucado highlights this event, saying, "When the disciples came up short, Christ came through with abundance."

John 6:16-21 – Jesus Walks on Water: That evening, the disciples set off across the lake to Capernaum without Jesus. As they row, a strong wind stirs up the waters, and they see Jesus walking on the water, approaching the boat. Initially frightened, they are reassured when Jesus says, "It is I; don't be afraid" (John 6:20). Jesus gets into the boat, and immediately they reach the shore. This miraculous act reveals Jesus' mastery over nature and His presence in times of fear and uncertainty. It encourages believers to trust in Jesus even in challenging situations.

John 6:22-35 – Jesus, the Bread of Life: The next day, the crowd seeks Jesus, who tells them that they are looking for Him because they ate the loaves and were filled. He encourages them to seek the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give. When they ask how to do God's work, Jesus responds, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (John 6:29). He then declares, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35). This discourse emphasizes the importance of faith in Jesus for spiritual sustenance and eternal life.

John 6:36-51 – The Promise of Eternal Life: Jesus explains that He has come down from heaven to do the will of the Father, which is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life. He assures the crowd that He will never drive away those who come to Him. The Jews grumble about Jesus' claim to have come down from heaven, questioning His identity. Jesus reaffirms, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever" (John 6:51). This section underscores the promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus and the necessity of accepting Him as the Bread of Life.

John 6:52-71 – The Reaction to Jesus' Teaching: Jesus' teaching about eating His flesh and drinking His blood causes confusion and offense among the Jews and some disciples. He explains that His flesh and blood symbolize the sacrifice He will make for the salvation of the world, emphasizing the importance of spiritual nourishment through Him. Many disciples find this teaching difficult and abandon Him. Jesus asks the Twelve if they also want to leave, and Peter responds, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). This passage highlights the challenge of accepting Jesus' teachings and the necessity of faith and commitment to follow Him.

THINK ABOUT THIS: The Daily Bread of Trust

Have you ever had a time when you didn't know how you would make it through? Maybe it was a financial struggle, a health crisis, or even a time of loneliness. In John 6, Jesus tells us, "I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." (John 6:35, ESV)

Think back to the Israelites in the wilderness. God provided manna, bread from heaven, every single day (Exodus 16). They couldn't store it up for the future—they had to trust that God would send it again tomorrow. In the same way, Jesus invites us to trust in Him every day, not just for physical needs, but for spiritual life.

Maybe you remember freshly baked bread from your childhood. The smell filling the kitchen, the warmth, the way it satisfied hunger. Jesus is like that—always fresh, always enough, always satisfying. He isn't just a one-time meal; He is our daily bread. When we trust Him, He fills the hunger in our hearts.

Reflect:

What are some ways Jesus has provided for you in the past?

How does trusting in Him each day bring peace instead of worry?

Are there areas in your life where you're relying on yourself instead of trusting in Jesus alone?

Encouraging Quotes:

— "He Himself is the food that satisfies our soul's hunger." — Charles Spurgeon

— "To trust God in the light is nothing, but trust Him in the dark—that is faith." — C.H. Spurgeon

— "Faith is the gaze of a soul upon a saving God." — A.W. Tozer

Let's remember: Just like bread nourishes the body, Jesus alone nourishes the soul. Trust Him today, and you will never go hungry.

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "When you're really hungry, what's your go-to comfort food and why?"

+ "Sarah, an 82-year-old grandmother, always keeps homemade bread in her freezer. 'During the Great Depression,' she says, 'fresh bread meant everything to us. Even today, the smell of baking bread reminds me of how God provides for our needs, both physical and spiritual.'"

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 6 by trusting in Jesus to provide for their physical and spiritual needs. The miracle of feeding the five thousand reminds us that Jesus is capable of meeting our needs in abundance, even when resources seem scarce. This encourages us to bring our concerns to Him in prayer and trust in His provision. As Philippians 4:19 states, "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." By relying on Jesus for our daily needs, we can experience His grace and generosity.

Additionally, Jesus' declaration of being the Bread of Life emphasizes the importance of seeking spiritual nourishment through a relationship with Him. Just as physical bread sustains our bodies, Jesus sustains our souls. We can prioritize our spiritual growth by spending time in prayer, studying the Bible, and participating in fellowship with other believers. As theologian C.S. Lewis once said, "God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other." By seeking Jesus as our spiritual sustenance, we can grow in our faith and find true fulfillment.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Bread of Life—Trusting in Jesus Alone"- John 6

Dependence on Jesus for Spiritual Life→Recognizing Jesus as the essential "bread of life" who sustains spiritual existence.→John 6:35

Faith in Jesus' Words→Believing and trusting Jesus' teaching, even when difficult to understand or accept.→John 6:60–69

Desire for Eternal Life→Seeking the life that only Jesus can give, beyond physical sustenance.→John 6:27

Commitment to Follow Jesus→Choosing to remain a disciple despite challenges and opposition.→John 6:66–69

Spiritual Nourishment through Jesus→Valuing Jesus' teaching as the true spiritual food that satisfies the soul.→John 6:51

Acknowledging Jesus as the Holy One of God→Confessing Jesus' divine identity as the source of life and salvation.→John 6:69

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 6 reveals His desire for humanity to trust in Jesus alone for both physical and spiritual sustenance. These verses highlight the significance of Jesus' miracles and teachings, demonstrating His divine authority and compassion. By

understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on the feeding of the five thousand, we are reminded of Jesus' ability to provide abundantly for our needs and His deep compassion for those who are struggling. This encourages us to trust in His provision and to extend His love and care to others. Jesus' teaching about being the Bread of Life challenges us to seek spiritual nourishment through a personal relationship with Him, recognizing that true fulfillment comes from knowing and following Him.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing Jesus as the Bread of Life not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His love and grace with the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

"In verses 1-15, Jesus feeds 5,000 people with just five loaves and two fish. Why do you think the crowd followed Jesus the next day?" – This helps participants recognize the difference between following Jesus for physical benefits versus spiritual reasons. The crowd was more interested in free food than in Jesus himself.

"In verse 35, Jesus says 'I am the bread of life.' What do you think He meant by comparing Himself to bread?" – This helps seniors connect the necessity of daily bread for physical life to their need for Jesus for spiritual life. It's particularly meaningful for those who remember times when bread was a crucial daily staple.

"Look at verses 60-66. Why did many disciples find Jesus' teaching 'hard' and leave Him? What made Peter and others stay?" – This question addresses the challenge of faith when teachings are difficult to understand or accept. It relates to modern-day challenges seniors might face in their own faith journey.

"In verses 28-29, the people ask what they must do to perform God's works. How does Jesus' answer challenge our thinking about 'earning' God's favor?" – This helps address the common misconception about works-based salvation, especially relevant for those who might have grown up with different religious teachings.

What to Look For

Notice the crowd's reaction to the feeding miracle. What were they really seeking from Jesus? Pay attention to Jesus' bold claim: "I am the Bread of Life." What does this mean spiritually? Watch how the crowd and even disciples respond. What makes this teaching hard to accept?

Personal Reflection Questions

Are you ever tempted to seek God for what He can do, rather than for who He is?

What does "daily bread" from Jesus look like in your life today?

Session 7: "Light of the World—Who is Jesus?"- John 7-8

Focus- Jesus reveals Himself as the Light of the World, confronting darkness and division. His identity becomes the central question—one that demands a personal response.

READ: [John 7-8](#) (Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles, the woman caught in adultery)

OVERVIEW:

In John 7-8, the Apostle John presents a series of events and teachings that highlight Jesus' identity as the Light of the World and explore the varied responses to His ministry. Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles and teaches openly, causing division among the people and the religious leaders. He reveals profound truths about His divine origin and mission, offering the promise of living water and declaring Himself as the Light of the World. These chapters emphasize the

importance of recognizing and accepting Jesus' identity and teachings, and they challenge readers to consider their own response to Him.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 7:1-13 – Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles: Jesus travels to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, despite the danger posed by those seeking to kill Him. His brothers urge Him to show Himself publicly, but Jesus chooses to go in secret. During the feast, there is much debate among the people about Jesus, with some calling Him a good man and others accusing Him of leading people astray. This passage highlights the growing tension and division regarding Jesus' identity and mission.

John 7:14-24 – Jesus Teaches at the Feast: In the middle of the feast, Jesus begins to teach openly in the temple courts. The people are amazed at His knowledge, given that He has not been formally trained. Jesus explains that His teaching comes from God and urges them to judge rightly, not by mere appearances. He challenges them to recognize the divine authority behind His words. "Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly" (John 7:24). This emphasizes the need for discernment and openness to the truth.

John 7:25-36 – Division Over Who Jesus Is: The crowd is divided over Jesus' identity, with some believing He is the Messiah and others questioning how the Messiah could come from Galilee. The religious leaders try to arrest Him but fail because His time has not yet come. This passage illustrates the confusion and conflict among the people and the leaders regarding Jesus' true nature.

John 7:37-39 – The Promise of Living Water: On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stands and proclaims, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them" (John 7:37-38). This promise of living water symbolizes the Holy Spirit, who would be given to believers after Jesus' glorification. This profound declaration offers hope and spiritual renewal to all who believe in Jesus.

John 8:1-11 – The Woman Caught in Adultery: Jesus returns to the temple courts, where the Pharisees bring a woman caught in adultery, hoping to trap Him. They ask if she should be stoned according to the Law of Moses. Jesus responds by saying, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7). One by one, the accusers leave, and Jesus tells the woman that He does not condemn her and instructs her to leave her life of sin. This encounter demonstrates Jesus' mercy and the call to repentance.

John 8:12-30 – Jesus, the Light of the World: Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). He speaks of His divine origin and mission, emphasizing that He does nothing on His own but speaks what the Father has taught Him. Despite opposition, many believe in Him. This section underscores Jesus' role as the source of spiritual illumination and guidance.

John 8:31-47 – The Truth Will Set You Free: Jesus addresses the Jews who have believed in Him, telling them that if they hold to His teaching, they are truly His disciples and will know the truth, which will set them free. He explains that everyone who sins is a slave to sin, but the Son can set them free. This passage highlights the liberating power of Jesus' truth and the importance of remaining in His word.

John 8:48-59 – Jesus' Claim to Divinity: The conflict intensifies as the Jews accuse Jesus of being demon-possessed. Jesus responds by asserting His honor and obedience to the Father. He declares, "Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58), using the divine name "I AM" to reveal His pre-existence and divinity. The Jews attempt to stone Him, but He slips away. This powerful statement affirms Jesus' identity as God and challenges the listeners to acknowledge His divine nature.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Imagine you are walking down a dark path at night with no flashlight. You can barely see where to step, and each shadow seems full of danger. Now, think about how different it feels when someone turns on a bright light. Suddenly, you can see the way forward. The obstacles that once seemed scary are now clear. You feel safer, more confident, and at peace.

In John 8:12, Jesus says,

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Just like a flashlight on a dark path, Jesus shines His light into our lives, showing us truth, guiding our steps, and giving us hope. His light drives away fear and confusion. Think about a time when you were struggling, feeling lost, or unsure about something. Maybe it was a time of sickness, worry, or a big decision. How did God's light—through His Word, prayer, or other believers—help guide you?

Quote to Reflect On:

"There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it." — Edith Wharton

As followers of Jesus, we not only receive His light, but we also reflect His love and truth to others. How can you be a light in someone's life this week?

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Have you ever tried to find your way around in complete darkness? What changed when you finally found a light source?"

+ "During the major power outage of 2003 that affected the northeastern United States, millions of people suddenly found themselves in darkness. One resident shared: 'I never realized how much we depend on light until it was gone. Even simple tasks like finding my keys or reading became impossible. When I finally found my flashlight, it changed everything – not just for me, but for my neighbors too. That one light made all the difference.'"

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 7-8 by recognizing Jesus as the Light of the World and living in a way that reflects His light. This involves seeking a personal relationship with Jesus, allowing His teachings to guide our daily decisions, and sharing His love and truth with others. As Jesus said in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." By following Jesus, we can navigate the challenges of life with hope and purpose, and illuminate the path for those around us.

Additionally, the encounter with the woman caught in adultery teaches us the importance of showing mercy and forgiveness, rather than judgment. We are reminded that everyone has sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23). By extending grace to others, we reflect the character of Jesus and help create a community of compassion and support. As Pastor Timothy Keller once said, "The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time, we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope."

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Light of the World—Who is Jesus?"- John 7-8

Recognizing Jesus as the Light→Understanding Jesus as the spiritual light that exposes truth and overcomes darkness.→John 8:12

Seeking Truth Courageously→Pursuing Jesus' teachings despite opposition and controversy, showing boldness in faith.→John 7:14-18

Confession of Jesus' Identity→Openly acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God despite societal pressures.→John 8:24, 28

Desire for Freedom from Sin→Yearning for liberation from sin's bondage through Jesus' truth and grace.→John 8:31-36

Living by Jesus' Word→Committing to abide in Jesus' teachings as the path to true freedom and life.→John 8:31

Rejecting Spiritual Blindness→Choosing to see spiritually and reject ignorance or deception, following Jesus' light instead.→John 7:40-44; 8:43-47

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 7-8 reveals His desire for humanity to recognize and accept Jesus as the Light of the World. These chapters highlight Jesus' divine identity and mission, emphasizing the importance of believing in Him for spiritual illumination and

eternal life. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope, guidance, and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on Jesus' declarations and miracles, we are reminded of the transforming power of His presence in our lives. Jesus' teaching about being the Light of the World challenges us to live in a way that reflects His light, bringing hope and clarity to a world often shrouded in darkness. The encounter with the woman caught in adultery underscores the importance of mercy and forgiveness, encouraging us to extend the same grace to others that we have received from Jesus.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing Jesus as the Light of the World not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His love and grace with the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

"In John 8:12, Jesus says 'I am the light of the world.' What do you think He meant by calling Himself 'light'?" – This helps people connect the physical properties of light (guides, reveals, warms, helps growth) to Jesus's role in our lives. It builds on their earlier experience with the lead-in question.

"The religious leaders questioned Jesus's authority (John 8:13). Why do you think they had trouble accepting His claims?" – This question helps explore the human tendency to doubt and resist change, even when truth is right in front of us. It can lead to discussion about our own moments of doubt.

"Jesus tells the people that the truth will set them free (John 8:32). What kind of freedom do you think He was talking about?" – This opens up discussion about different types of freedom - physical vs. spiritual freedom, freedom from sin, freedom from fear. It connects to seniors' life experiences with various forms of bondage and liberation.

"How does Jesus being the 'light of the world' make a difference in your daily life?" – This brings the lesson home to practical application, helping participants connect ancient truth to modern living. It encourages sharing of personal experiences.

What to Look For

Notice the growing division over Jesus' identity. How do different groups react to His words and actions?

Pay attention to the imagery of light and darkness. What does Jesus mean when He says, "I am the light of the world"?

Watch how Jesus deals with sin and truth—especially in the story of the woman caught in adultery. What do we learn about grace and judgment?

Personal Reflection Questions

When have you experienced God's light breaking through your own darkness?

What does it mean to walk in the light of Christ in today's world?

Session 8: "The Good Shepherd—Hearing Jesus' Voice"- John 9–10

Focus- Jesus reveals Himself as the Good Shepherd—one who knows His sheep, calls them by name, and lays down His life for them. His voice brings both comfort and controversy.

READ: [John 9–10](#) (Healing the blind man, Jesus as the Good Shepherd)

OVERVIEW:

In John 9-10, the Apostle John presents two significant events and teachings of Jesus that reveal His identity as the Good Shepherd and emphasize the importance of hearing and following His

voice. Chapter 9 describes the miraculous healing of a man born blind, which leads to a confrontation with the Pharisees and a deeper revelation of Jesus' divine mission. In Chapter 10, Jesus uses the metaphor of the Good Shepherd to explain His relationship with His followers, highlighting His care, protection, and the necessity of recognizing His voice. These chapters underscore the themes of spiritual sight, guidance, and the intimate relationship between Jesus and His followers.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 9:1-12 – Healing of the Man Born Blind: As Jesus and His disciples encounter a man born blind, the disciples ask whether his blindness is due to his own sin or his parents' sin. Jesus replies that neither is the case, but rather, the man's blindness is an opportunity for God's works to be displayed in him. Jesus then heals the man by making mud with His saliva, placing it on the man's eyes, and instructing him to wash in the Pool of Siloam. The man obeys and returns with his sight restored. This miracle demonstrates Jesus' power to heal and His compassion for those in need. As Pastor John Piper explains, "God's sovereignty and glory are most magnified in His mercy."

John 9:13-34 – Investigation by the Pharisees: The Pharisees question the healed man and his parents, trying to discredit the miracle because it occurred on the Sabbath. The man boldly testifies that Jesus healed him, insisting, "One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" (John 9:25). Despite the Pharisees' skepticism and hostility, the man maintains his testimony and is ultimately excommunicated from the synagogue. This section highlights the tension between Jesus' works and the religious leaders' rigid interpretations of the law.

John 9:35-41 – Spiritual Blindness: Jesus seeks out the healed man and reveals Himself as the Son of Man. The man believes and worships Jesus. Jesus then addresses the Pharisees, stating that their refusal to acknowledge Him results in spiritual blindness. "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind" (John 9:39). This passage underscores the theme of spiritual sight and the importance of recognizing Jesus as the light of the world.

John 10:1-6 – The Good Shepherd and His Sheep: Jesus begins teaching about the Good Shepherd, using the analogy of a shepherd and his sheep. He explains that the shepherd enters through the gate, and the sheep recognize his voice and follow him, but they will not follow a stranger. "When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice" (John 10:4). This metaphor emphasizes the intimate relationship between Jesus and His followers, who recognize and respond to His voice.

John 10:7-18 – Jesus, the Good Shepherd: Jesus declares, "I am the gate for the sheep" (John 10:7) and "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). He contrasts Himself with hired hands who abandon the sheep at the first sign of danger. Jesus explains that He knows His sheep and His sheep know Him, just as He knows the Father and the Father knows Him. He also speaks of other sheep that are not of this sheep pen, indicating the inclusion of Gentiles. This passage highlights Jesus' sacrificial love, care, and the unity of His followers.

John 10:19-30 – Division and Belief: Jesus' teachings create division among the Jews, with some accusing Him of being demon-possessed while others recognize His miraculous works. During the Feast of Dedication, Jesus reaffirms His identity, stating, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish" (John 10:27-28). This section emphasizes the importance of believing in Jesus and the assurance of eternal life for His followers.

John 10:31-42 – Jesus and the Father are One: The Jews attempt to stone Jesus for blasphemy, accusing Him of claiming to be God. Jesus responds by referencing Scripture and explaining that His works testify to His divine identity. He declares, "The Father is in me, and I in the Father" (John 10:38). Despite the hostility, many people come to believe in Jesus. This passage reinforces the unity between Jesus and the Father and the importance of faith in Him.

THINK ABOUT THIS: Hearing the Shepherd's Voice

Have you ever been in a crowded place and suddenly heard a familiar voice call your name? Maybe it was a grandchild, a friend, or someone you hadn't seen in years. No matter how many voices were around, you recognized that one voice. Why? Because you knew the person who called you.

Jesus tells us in John 10:27,

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

A shepherd’s sheep know his voice. They don’t follow just anyone—they follow the one who cares for them, feeds them, and protects them. Jesus says that He is our Good Shepherd, and He wants us to listen for His voice.

But how do we hear Jesus’ voice today? We hear Him when we read the Bible, when the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts, and when godly people give us wisdom. The more time we spend with Jesus—praying, reading His Word, and following Him—the easier it is to hear His voice above the noise of the world.

Think about a time when you clearly knew God was guiding you. Maybe He gave you peace in a hard moment or wisdom for an important decision. How did you recognize His voice?

Jesus is always speaking. The question is—are we listening?

Quotes to Reflect On:

“God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer.” – Mother Teresa

“Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading.” – Oswald Chambers

“The closer you are to the Shepherd, the safer you are from the wolves.” – Unknown

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "When you hear someone's voice on the phone without seeing their caller ID, how do you know who it is? What makes their voice distinctive to you?"

+ "My granddaughter called me last week, and before she even said 'Hi Grandma,' I knew it was her from her cheerful tone and the way she says certain words. Over the years, I've learned to recognize not just her voice, but also when something's bothering her just by how she speaks."

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 9-10 by recognizing Jesus as the Good Shepherd and striving to hear and follow His voice. Jesus' healing of the man born blind reminds us of His power to bring physical and spiritual restoration. We can apply this by seeking Jesus in times of need, trusting in His ability to heal and guide us through life's challenges. As David wrote in Psalm 23:1, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." This verse encourages us to rely on Jesus for provision and guidance.

Additionally, Jesus' teachings about the Good Shepherd highlight the importance of discerning His voice amidst the many influences in our lives. We can practice this by regularly reading the Bible, spending time in prayer, and being part of a faith community where we can grow and support one another. As Pastor Charles Stanley said, "Listening to God requires a deliberate choice to shut out the chaos around us and focus on His voice." By making a conscious effort to listen to Jesus, we can follow His guidance and experience the abundant life He promises.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "Light of the World—Who is Jesus?"- John 7-8

Spiritual Insight and Healing→Receiving spiritual and physical healing through faith in Jesus, the Light of the world.→John 9:1-7, 35-38

Recognizing Jesus as the Shepherd→Understanding Jesus’ role as the Good Shepherd who cares deeply for His sheep.→John 10:11-14

Hearing and Following Jesus’ Voice→Developing sensitivity to Jesus’ guidance and following Him faithfully.→John 10:27

Confidence in Jesus’ Protection→Trusting in Jesus’ power to protect His followers from spiritual harm and danger.→John 10:28-29

Rejecting False Leaders→Learning to discern and reject those who mislead or harm the flock.→John 10:1-5, 12-13

Abiding in Relationship with Jesus→Maintaining a close, personal relationship with Jesus as the source of life and security.→John 10:27-30

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 9-10 reveals His desire for humanity to experience the guidance, protection, and abundant life offered by Jesus, the Good Shepherd. These chapters emphasize Jesus' divine identity, His compassionate care for His followers, and the importance of recognizing and responding to His voice. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope, direction, and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on Jesus' healing of the man born blind, we are reminded of His power to bring both physical and spiritual healing. This encourages us to seek Jesus in our own times of need and to trust in His ability to restore and guide us. Jesus' metaphor of the Good Shepherd challenges us to prioritize hearing His voice and following His lead in our daily lives. This requires a commitment to spiritual practices that help us discern His guidance and a willingness to follow where He leads.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing Jesus as the Good Shepherd not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His love and grace with the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. "In John 10:3-4, Jesus says the sheep know the shepherd's voice. What are some ways we can learn to recognize Jesus' voice in our daily lives?"

– This helps participants reflect on practical ways they experience God's guidance through Scripture, prayer, wise counsel, and the Holy Spirit's prompting. It connects the biblical metaphor to their personal walk with Christ.

2. "Jesus contrasts the good shepherd with thieves and hired hands (John 10:11-13). What's the difference between how they treat the sheep?"

– This question highlights Jesus' sacrificial love versus worldly influences that might lead us astray. It helps seniors identify false teachings while emphasizing Christ's protective care.

3. "Looking at John 9:35-38, how did the healed blind man come to recognize Jesus as the Son of Man? What can this teach us about spiritual sight?"

– This connects the healing story with spiritual understanding, showing how personal encounters with Jesus lead to deeper faith. It encourages discussion about their own journey of discovering who Jesus is.

4. "When Jesus says 'I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen' (John 10:16), what do you think He means? How does this shape our view of God's family?"

– This promotes discussion about God's inclusive love and the universal nature of Christ's sacrifice, while encouraging seniors to think about their role in welcoming others into God's family.

5. "What comfort do you find in Jesus' promise that no one can snatch us from His hand (John 10:28-29)?"

– This question addresses common concerns about salvation and security, particularly meaningful for seniors who may be reflecting on their faith journey and eternal life.

What to Look For

Notice the healing of the blind man and its aftermath. How does physical healing lead to spiritual insight—and conflict?

Pay attention to Jesus' description of Himself as the Shepherd. What does it mean to enter through Him as the "gate"?

Watch for contrasts between the Good Shepherd and false leaders. What defines true spiritual leadership?

Personal Reflection Questions

Whose voice do you listen to most—especially in times of uncertainty or fear?

How do you recognize the voice of Jesus in your daily life?

Session 9: "The Resurrection and the Life—Victory Over Death"- John 11

Focus- In raising Lazarus, Jesus reveals His power over death and declares, "I am the resurrection and the life." This miracle points to the hope found only in Him.

READ: [John 11](#) (Raising Lazarus, Jesus' power over death)

OVERVIEW:

In John 11, the Apostle John recounts the powerful story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, which serves as a profound demonstration of His authority over life and death. This chapter highlights the themes of faith, the power of Jesus' word, and the promise of resurrection for believers. Jesus declares Himself to be the resurrection and the life, providing hope and assurance of eternal life for all who believe in Him. This miracle not only strengthens the faith of Jesus' followers but also intensifies the opposition from the religious leaders, ultimately setting the stage for His own death and resurrection.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 11:1-16 – The Death of Lazarus: The chapter begins with the news that Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, is seriously ill. The sisters send word to Jesus, hoping He will come and heal Lazarus. Surprisingly, Jesus delays His journey, stating, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it" (John 11:4). After two days, Jesus tells His disciples that Lazarus has fallen asleep, meaning he has died, and that He is going to awaken him. This delay highlights Jesus' divine purpose and the importance of God's timing.

John 11:17-27 – Jesus Comforts Martha: When Jesus arrives in Bethany, Lazarus has been in the tomb for four days. Martha goes out to meet Jesus and expresses her disappointment, saying, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Jesus reassures her by stating, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26). Martha affirms her faith in Jesus as the Messiah. This exchange highlights the promise of resurrection and eternal life through faith in Jesus.

John 11:28-37 – Jesus Weeps: Martha informs Mary that Jesus has arrived, and Mary goes to meet Him, accompanied by mourners. When Mary sees Jesus, she falls at His feet and echoes Martha's words. Jesus is deeply moved by their grief and the sorrow of the mourners. He weeps with them, showing His compassion and empathy. This moment underscores Jesus' humanity and His deep love for those who are suffering. Pastor Max Lucado writes, "Jesus weeps not because he is helpless but because he is moved by our pain."

John 11:38-44 – Jesus Raises Lazarus: Jesus approaches the tomb and instructs the people to remove the stone. Despite Martha's concern about the odor, Jesus reminds her to have faith. After thanking God, Jesus calls out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43). Lazarus emerges from the tomb, still wrapped in burial clothes, and Jesus commands the people to unbind him. This miraculous event demonstrates Jesus' authority over death and serves as a powerful sign of His divine power.

John 11:45-57 – The Plot to Kill Jesus: The miracle of raising Lazarus leads many to believe in Jesus, but it also prompts the religious leaders to take action against Him. They convene a council and decide that Jesus must be stopped to prevent further disruption. Caiaphas, the high priest, unknowingly prophesies that Jesus would die for the nation and to gather God's scattered children. This section reveals the growing opposition to Jesus and sets the stage for the events leading to His crucifixion. Theologian N.T. Wright notes, "The resurrection of Lazarus is the turning point that brings the final crisis into view."

THINK ABOUT THIS: Victory Over Death

Have you ever been to a funeral where people were sad, but also full of hope? Maybe they shared stories of their loved one, smiling through tears. For a Christian, death is not the end—it is a doorway to something greater.

In John 11, Jesus stood at the tomb of His dear friend Lazarus. The people around Him were grieving, and even Jesus Himself wept. But then, something amazing happened—Jesus called Lazarus back to life! This was a powerful reminder that Jesus has authority over death. He told Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die" (John 11:25, NIV).

Think about a time when you were afraid—maybe of losing someone, of growing older, or of death itself. Jesus' words remind us that we don't have to live in fear. He has power over death, and because of Him, we can have eternal life. That changes everything!

Reflection:

How does knowing Jesus has power over death give you peace?

How can we live differently today knowing that eternal life is promised?

Quotes to Consider:

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." — 1 John 5:12

"Death may be the King of terrors, but Jesus is the King of kings!" — D.L. Moody

"For the Christian, death is not the end of the road, but a bend in the road." — Billy Graham

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Have you ever waited for God to answer a prayer, and it seemed like He was taking too long? When Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus about Lazarus being sick, Jesus waited two more days before going to them."

+ "Think about a time when you were expecting an important phone call from a doctor about test results, or waiting to hear if a loved one made it safely to their destination. Those minutes and hours of waiting can feel endless. Now imagine Martha and Mary's wait - knowing their brother was dying, having sent word to Jesus, and watching day after day with no sign of His arrival."

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 11 by embracing the hope and assurance of resurrection and eternal life through faith in Jesus. The story of Lazarus reminds us that Jesus has power over life and death and that He offers us new life, both now and in the future. We can live with confidence and peace, knowing that death is not the end but a gateway to eternal life with Christ. As Jesus said in John 11:25-26, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." This promise encourages us to trust in Jesus and find comfort in His words.

Additionally, the compassionate response of Jesus to the grief of Mary and Martha reminds us to show empathy and support to those who are hurting. We can follow Jesus' example by offering our presence, comfort, and prayers to those who are experiencing loss or difficult times. As Pastor Rick Warren emphasizes, "The deepest level of worship is praising God in spite of pain, thanking God during trials, trusting Him when tempted, surrendering while suffering, and loving Him when He seems distant."

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "The Resurrection and the Life—Victory Over Death"- John 11

Faith in Jesus' Power over Death→Trusting Jesus as the one who has authority to give life and conquer death.→John 11:25–26

Hope in Eternal Life→Holding confident hope in the promise of resurrection and life beyond physical death.→John 11:25

Compassion and Empathy→Reflecting Jesus' compassion, mourning with those who mourn.→John 11:33–36

Confidence in Jesus' Timing→Trusting in Jesus' perfect timing even when answers seem delayed.→John 11:6

Boldness in Witnessing→Proclaiming Jesus as the resurrection and the life, even in the face of opposition.→John 11:45–46

Strengthened Faith through Miracles→Allowing Jesus' miraculous works to deepen faith and inspire trust.→John 11:38–44

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT;

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 11 reveals His desire for humanity to experience victory over death through Jesus Christ. This chapter highlights Jesus' identity as the resurrection and the life, emphasizing the power of His word and the promise of eternal life for those who believe in Him. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope and assurance in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on the resurrection of Lazarus, we are reminded of the transforming power of Jesus' presence in our lives. His ability to bring life out of death assures us that no situation is beyond His reach and that He can bring healing and restoration to our brokenness. This encourages us to approach life with faith and hope, trusting in Jesus' power to work in and through us.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing Jesus as the resurrection and the life not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His message of hope and victory with the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. "When Jesus finally arrived, Martha said 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died' (John 11:21). What emotions do you hear in Martha's words?"
 - Martha's statement reveals both faith and frustration. She believed in Jesus's power to heal, yet struggled with His timing. This mirrors our own complex relationship with God during difficult times - we trust Him, yet sometimes question His methods or timing.
2. "Jesus told Martha 'I am the resurrection and the life' (John 11:25). What does this mean for us today, especially as we face our own mortality?"
 - This declaration goes beyond just physical death. Jesus is asserting His power over both physical and spiritual death, offering eternal life to all who believe in Him. This brings particular comfort to seniors who may be contemplating end-of-life matters.
3. "In verse 35, we read the shortest verse in the Bible: 'Jesus wept.' Why do you think Jesus cried when He knew He was about to raise Lazarus?"
 - This shows Jesus's deep compassion and humanity. Even knowing the miracle He was about to perform, He was moved by the grief of those He loved. This reminds us that God isn't distant from our sorrows - He enters into them with us.
4. "Notice that before raising Lazarus, Jesus prayed publicly, saying it was 'for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe' (John 11:42). What can we learn about faith from this?"
 - Miracles aren't just about the immediate outcome - they're about building faith in witnesses and future believers. This story has continued to build faith for 2,000 years.

What to Look For

Watch the emotional responses of Mary, Martha, and Jesus. What do these moments reveal about faith, grief, and love?

Pay attention to Jesus' declaration to Martha. What does it mean to live even though we die?

Notice the reactions after the miracle. How do belief and opposition grow in response to Jesus' power?

Personal Reflection Questions

How does knowing Jesus as "the resurrection and the life" affect how you view death—or life right now?

What area of your life feels hopeless or "dead"? How might Jesus bring new life there?

Session 10: "The Final Week—Jesus' Love and Servanthood"- John 12–13

Focus- As Jesus enters His final week, He shows His love through humble servanthood, preparing His disciples for what lies ahead.

READ: [John 12–13](#) (Triumphal Entry, Jesus washes disciples' feet, new commandment)

OVERVIEW:

In John 12-13, the Apostle John provides a detailed account of the events leading up to the final week of Jesus' life, emphasizing His love and servanthood. Chapter 12 describes Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, His prediction of His death, and His teaching about the cost of discipleship. In Chapter 13, John recounts the intimate moment of Jesus washing His disciples' feet and His command to love one another as He has loved them. These chapters highlight Jesus' selfless love, humility, and the example He sets for His followers.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 12:12-19 – The Triumphal Entry: Jesus enters Jerusalem riding on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy from Zechariah 9:9. The crowd greets Him with palm branches, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (John 12:13). This event signifies Jesus' acknowledgment as the Messiah by the people, though they have different expectations of what that means. The scene highlights the contrast between the crowd's joyful reception and the somber path Jesus knows He must take.

John 12:20-26 – Jesus Predicts His Death: Some Greeks seek to meet Jesus, prompting Him to speak about His impending death. He uses the metaphor of a grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying to produce many seeds, illustrating the necessity of His sacrifice. "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24). Jesus calls His followers to serve and follow Him, even to the point of losing their lives for His sake. This passage emphasizes the cost of discipleship and the fruitful outcome of Jesus' sacrificial death.

John 13:1-17 – Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet: During the Last Supper, Jesus takes on the role of a servant by washing His disciples' feet, an act of humility and love. Peter initially resists, but Jesus explains the significance of the act, stating, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me" (John 13:8). After washing their feet, Jesus instructs them to follow His example of servanthood. "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet" (John 13:14). This moment underscores the importance of humility and service in the life of a believer.

John 13:21-30 – Jesus Predicts His Betrayal: During the meal, Jesus becomes troubled and reveals that one of His disciples will betray Him. The disciples are shocked and begin to question who it might be. Jesus indicates that it is Judas Iscariot by giving him a piece of bread. After receiving the bread, Judas leaves to carry out his betrayal. This passage highlights the sorrow and betrayal Jesus faces, even among His closest followers.

John 13:31-35 – A New Command: After Judas leaves, Jesus speaks to His remaining disciples about His glorification and the new commandment He gives them: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35). This command emphasizes the central role of love in the Christian community and the importance of reflecting Jesus' love in their relationships with others.

THINK ABOUT THIS: A Servant's Heart

Have you ever had someone do something kind for you that you didn't expect? Maybe a friend brought you a meal when you were sick, a neighbor helped with a difficult chore, or a loved one simply took the time to listen when you needed encouragement. Small acts of love can leave a big impact.

On the night before He was crucified, Jesus did something unexpected. He got up from the table, wrapped a towel around His waist, and washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:4-5). This was a job usually done by the lowest servant in a household, yet Jesus—the Son of God—humbled Himself to serve.

Through this act, Jesus was teaching an important lesson: Real love is not just words; it's action. He told His disciples, "I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done for you" (John 13:15). He wasn't just talking about washing feet—He was showing them a way of life.

Think about a time when you had the chance to serve someone else. Maybe you cared for a grandchild, helped a friend in need, or encouraged someone with a kind word. Serving others is one of the greatest ways we can show Christ's love.

Today, let's ask ourselves: How can I follow Jesus' example? Who can I serve with love and humility?

Quotes to Reflect On

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." — Mark 10:45

"You can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving." — Amy Carmichael

"The measure of a man is not how many servants he has, but how many people he serves." — D.L. Moody

"We are never more like Jesus than when we are serving others." — Unknown

THINK ABOUT THIS:

As we reflect on Jesus' final week and His example of love and servanthood, let's consider this powerful thought: "To be great in God's kingdom, we must become servants to all." This idea comes directly from Jesus' teachings and actions during His last days on earth. In John 12, we see Jesus entering Jerusalem humbly on a donkey, while people shout "Hosanna!" which means "Save us!"

This shows us that true greatness comes from humility and a willingness to serve others. Here's a quote that captures this idea beautifully: "Whoever desires to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be most important and first in rank among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to have service rendered to Him, but to serve." ⁸ Think about a time when someone unexpectedly served you. How did it make you feel? Now, consider how you can show that same love and servanthood to others in your daily life. Remember, Jesus washed His disciples' feet as an example of how we should treat one another with humility and love. As we age, we might feel like we have less to offer, but our ability to serve others never diminishes. Even a kind word or a simple prayer can be a powerful act of service. Let's challenge ourselves to find new ways to serve those around us, just as Jesus did in His final week.

LEAD-IN QUESTION: "Can you think of a time when someone showed you unexpected kindness or served you in a way that touched your heart?" + "Imagine you're struggling with heavy grocery bags, and a stranger stops to help you carry them to your car. How would that make you feel?"

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 12-13 by embracing Jesus' example of love and servanthood. The story of Jesus washing His disciples' feet teaches us the importance of humility and service to others, regardless of our position or status. We can practice this by looking for opportunities to serve those around us, whether through acts of kindness, volunteering, or simply being present for someone in need. As Jesus said in John 13:14-15, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." This call to serve encourages us to follow Jesus' example in our daily lives.

Moreover, Jesus' command to love one another as He has loved us emphasizes the centrality of love in the Christian faith. We can apply this by cultivating a heart of compassion, forgiveness, and unconditional love towards others. As theologian and author Henri Nouwen wrote, "Community is where humility and glory touch." By loving and serving others selflessly, we reflect the character of Jesus and create a community that embodies His teachings.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "The Farewell Discourse—Preparing for the Spirit" - John 14-17

Humility in Service→Following Jesus' example of serving others selflessly, as He washed His disciples' feet.→John 13:3-17

Sacrificial Love→Embracing Jesus' love demonstrated through His willingness to lay down His life for others.→John 12:23–26; 13:1

Obedience to God's Will→Committing to doing God's purpose even when it involves suffering or sacrifice.→John 12:27–28; 13:31–32

Faith in Jesus' Mission→Trusting Jesus' plan for salvation despite uncertainty and hardship.→John 12:37–41; 13:18–30

Following Jesus' Commandments→Obeying Jesus' new command to love one another as He has loved us.→John 13:34–35

Preparation for Witnessing→Being equipped and encouraged to bear witness to Jesus in the world after His departure.→John 13:36–38

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 12-13 reveals His desire for humanity to understand and emulate Jesus' love and servanthood. These chapters highlight the sacrificial nature of Jesus' mission and the example He sets for His followers. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find purpose and direction in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on Jesus' actions during the final week of His life, we are reminded of the depth of His love and His willingness to serve others, even in the face of suffering and betrayal. This challenges us to examine our own lives and to prioritize love and service in our interactions with others. Jesus' example of washing His disciples' feet and His command to love one another underscore the importance of humility and selflessness in the Christian faith.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing Jesus' love and servanthood not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His love and grace with the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey tell us about His character?
 - Jesus chose a humble donkey instead of a grand horse, showing His humility and fulfilling prophecy. This act reveals Jesus as a servant-king who came to save, not to be served.
2. How did the crowd react to Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem? Why do you think they responded this way?
 - The crowd welcomed Jesus with palm branches and shouts of "Hosanna," which means "Save now". They saw Jesus as their long-awaited king, but many misunderstood His true mission.
3. In John 13, Jesus washes His disciples' feet. Why was this act so significant?
 - Foot-washing was usually done by the lowest servant. By doing this, Jesus showed the depth of His love and set an example of humble service for His followers.
4. How can we apply Jesus' example of servanthood in our daily lives?
 - We can look for ways to serve others, even in tasks that seem beneath us. This might include helping a neighbor with chores or volunteering at a local charity.
5. What does Jesus mean when He says, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet" (John 13:14)?
 - Jesus isn't just talking about literal foot-washing. He's calling us to serve each other humbly, putting others' needs before our own

What to Look For

Notice Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet. What does this reveal about His leadership and love?

Pay attention to the growing tension as Jesus predicts His death. How do the disciples respond? Watch for themes of love and sacrifice. How does Jesus model the way His followers should live?

Personal Reflection Questions

When have you experienced or witnessed love expressed through humble service?

What's one way you can follow Jesus' example of servanthood in your daily life?

Session 11: "The Farewell Discourse—Preparing for the Spirit" - John 14–17

Focus- Before His crucifixion, Jesus comforts His disciples with promises of the Holy Spirit and teaches about abiding in Him through love and faith.

READ: [John 14–17](#) (Jesus' teaching on the Holy Spirit, the vine, His prayer for believers)

OVERVIEW:

In John 14-17, the Apostle John records Jesus' farewell discourse to His disciples, offering them comfort, guidance, and promises as He prepares them for His departure and the coming of the Holy Spirit. These chapters include some of Jesus' most profound teachings about His relationship with the Father, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of love and unity among His followers. Jesus assures His disciples of His continued presence through the Spirit and prays for their protection, unity, and sanctification.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 14:1-14 – Jesus Comforts His Disciples: Jesus begins by comforting His disciples, encouraging them to trust in Him and promising that He is going to prepare a place for them in His Father's house. He declares, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). This statement emphasizes Jesus' unique role as the mediator between God and humanity. He also assures them that they will do even greater works than He has done because He is going to the Father.

John 14:15-31 – The Promise of the Holy Spirit: Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit, whom He calls the Advocate or Helper, to be with His disciples forever. "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit will guide, teach, and empower the disciples, ensuring that they are not left alone. Jesus also emphasizes the importance of loving Him and keeping His commandments.

John 15:1-17 – The Vine and the Branches: Using the metaphor of the vine and the branches, Jesus teaches about the importance of remaining in Him to bear fruit. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). He encourages His disciples to remain in His love and to love one another as He has loved them. This passage underscores the necessity of a close, abiding relationship with Jesus for spiritual growth and effectiveness.

John 15:18-16:4 – The World's Hatred: Jesus warns His disciples that they will face opposition and persecution from the world because of their association with Him. "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first" (John 15:18). He explains that the world's hatred is a result of its rejection of Him and His teachings. This section prepares the disciples for the challenges they will face and reassures them that they are not alone in their struggles.

John 16:5-15 – The Work of the Holy Spirit: Jesus elaborates on the role of the Holy Spirit, explaining that it is for their benefit that He is going away. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13). This passage emphasizes the Spirit's role in guiding the disciples into truth, revealing the things of Christ, and glorifying Him.

John 16:16-33 – Jesus' Departure and Return: Jesus speaks about His impending departure and eventual return, using the metaphor of a woman giving birth to describe the disciples' sorrow turning into joy. He reassures them that their grief will be temporary and that they will see Him again. "So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy" (John 16:22). This promise of future joy offers hope and encouragement.

John 17 – Jesus' High Priestly Prayer: In this chapter, Jesus prays for Himself, His disciples, and all future believers. He prays for their protection, sanctification, and unity. "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you" (John 17:20-21). This prayer reveals Jesus' deep love and concern for His followers and His desire for their unity and faithfulness.

THINK ABOUT THIS: A Promise of Peace and Presence

Have you ever had to say goodbye to someone you loved? Maybe a close friend moved away, a family member passed on, or life just took you in different directions. Goodbyes can be hard because they leave us feeling alone.

Jesus' disciples felt the same way the night before His crucifixion. In John 14–17, Jesus told them He was leaving—but He also gave them a beautiful promise: "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18). He was sending the Holy Spirit, who would be with them forever.

We may not see Jesus with our eyes, but we are never alone. The Holy Spirit lives within us, guiding, comforting, and reminding us of God's truth. No matter what we face, Jesus has promised, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you" (John 14:27).

Think about a time when you felt God's peace in a difficult situation. Maybe it was during an illness, a loss, or a time of uncertainty. That peace is not just a feeling—it is the presence of the Holy Spirit, reminding us that Jesus is always near.

When life gets hard, we can hold onto Jesus' promise: We are never alone. His Spirit is with us, bringing peace, strength, and comfort.

Quotes to Reflect On

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever." — John 14:16

"The Holy Spirit is not a power to be harnessed, but a Person to be followed." — A.W. Tozer

"The Spirit of God first imparts love; He next inspires hope, and then He gives liberty; and this is about the last thing we have in many of our churches." — D.L. Moody

"We may be unfaithful, but God is always faithful. His Spirit never leaves His own." — Charles Spurgeon

LEAD-IN QUESTION:

Have you ever had to say goodbye to someone you love? How did you feel, and what did you do to comfort them?

+Imagine a grandmother saying goodbye to her grandchildren after a long visit. She might give them a special keepsake to remember her by, or promise to call them every week. This is similar to how Jesus prepared His disciples for His departure.

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 14-17 by embracing the guidance and comfort of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit as our Helper and Advocate reassures us that we are never alone. We can invite the Holy Spirit to lead us, teach us, and remind us of Jesus' teachings. As Jesus said in John 14:26, "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." By relying on the Holy Spirit, we can grow in wisdom, understanding, and strength.

Additionally, Jesus' command to love one another as He has loved us emphasizes the importance of cultivating a community of love and unity. We can practice this by showing kindness, forgiveness, and support to those around us. As theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "The church is the church only when it exists for others." By living out Jesus' commandment of love, we reflect His character and create a welcoming and nurturing environment for all.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "The Farewell Discourse—Preparing for the Spirit" - John 14–17

Trust in Jesus' Promise→Believing Jesus' assurance to prepare a place and send the Holy Spirit as a Helper and Guide.→John 14:1–3, 16–17

Intimate Relationship with Jesus→Abiding in Jesus' love and keeping His commandments as a mark of true discipleship.→John 14:15, 21

Receiving the Holy Spirit→Being open to the Spirit's presence, guidance, and empowerment in daily life.→John 14:26; 16:7-13

Peace Amidst Trials→Experiencing Jesus' peace that overcomes fear and anxiety, especially during hardship.→John 14:27

Unity Among Believers→Praying and striving for unity as Jesus and the Father are one, reflecting divine fellowship.→John 17:20-23

Witnessing with Boldness→Empowered by the Spirit, boldly proclaiming Jesus' truth to the world.→John 15:26-27; 16:8

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT:

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 14-17 reveals His desire for humanity to experience the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, and to live in unity and love. These chapters highlight the significance of Jesus' teachings and prayers, emphasizing the importance of His followers continuing His mission through the power of the Holy Spirit. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope, direction, and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on Jesus' farewell discourse, we are reminded of the depth of His love for us and His commitment to ensuring that we are equipped for the challenges ahead. Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit provides us with the assurance that we have a constant companion and guide. This encourages us to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in all aspects of our lives, allowing us to grow in faith and to be effective witnesses of Jesus' love and truth.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the Holy Spirit's presence and Jesus' command to love one another not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His love and grace with the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does Jesus promise to send His disciples after He leaves?
– Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit, whom He calls the Comforter or Helper. This Spirit will guide, teach, and remind the disciples of Jesus' words.
2. How does Jesus describe Himself in John 14:6?
– Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life". This is one of the seven "I am" statements in John's Gospel, showing Jesus' divine nature.
3. What does Jesus mean when He says He is the "true vine" in John 15:1?
– This is the last of Jesus' "I am" statements in John. It illustrates how believers need to stay connected to Jesus to bear spiritual fruit, just as branches need to stay connected to a vine to produce grapes.
4. How does Jesus say we can show our love for Him?
– Jesus tells His disciples that if they love Him, they will keep His commandments. This shows that true love for Jesus is demonstrated through obedience.
5. What does Jesus pray for His disciples in John 17?
– Jesus prays for the disciples' protection, unity, and sanctification. He also prays for future believers, showing His care for all who will follow Him.

What to Look For

Notice Jesus' promise of the Advocate (Holy Spirit). How does He describe the Spirit's role?

Pay attention to Jesus' command to "abide" in Him. What does this mean for daily living?

Watch Jesus' prayer for unity and protection. What does this reveal about His heart for His followers?

Personal Reflection Questions

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit's guidance or presence in your life?

What does "abiding in Jesus" look like for you during challenging times?

Session 12: "The Passion and Resurrection—Hope in Christ" - John 18–21

Focus- Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection bring the ultimate hope—victory over sin and death, and the promise of new life.

READ: [John 18–21](#) (Jesus' arrest, crucifixion, resurrection, restoring Peter)

OVERVIEW:

In John 18-21, the Apostle John presents the climactic events of Jesus' passion and resurrection, highlighting the depth of His love and the hope His resurrection brings. These chapters detail Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, emphasizing His sacrificial death for humanity's sins and His triumph over death. Through these events, Jesus fulfills His mission as the Savior and provides the foundation for the Christian faith, offering eternal life to all who believe in Him.

THOUGHT BY THOUGHT:

John 18:1-11 – Jesus' Arrest: After sharing the Last Supper with His disciples, Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Judas leads a group of soldiers and officials to arrest Jesus. When they arrive, Jesus steps forward and identifies Himself, demonstrating His willingness to fulfill God's plan. He tells Peter to put away his sword, saying, "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" (John 18:11). This moment reveals Jesus' obedience and submission to God's will, even in the face of suffering.

John 18:12-27 – Jesus' Trials: Jesus is taken to the high priest, where He faces questioning and false accusations. Peter follows at a distance and denies knowing Jesus three times, fulfilling Jesus' prediction. Despite the injustice and betrayal, Jesus remains composed and resolute. This passage highlights the human failings of fear and denial, contrasted with Jesus' steadfastness.

John 18:28-40 – Jesus Before Pilate: Jesus is brought before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. Pilate questions Jesus about His kingship, and Jesus explains that His kingdom is not of this world. Pilate finds no basis for a charge against Jesus but offers to release Him as part of a Passover tradition. The crowd, influenced by the religious leaders, demands the release of Barabbas instead. This section underscores the tension between earthly authority and Jesus' spiritual kingdom.

John 19:1-16 – The Sentencing: Pilate has Jesus flogged and mocked by soldiers who place a crown of thorns on His head. Despite finding no guilt in Jesus, Pilate succumbs to the pressure of the crowd and religious leaders, ultimately sentencing Jesus to be crucified. This passage illustrates the brutality and injustice Jesus endures.

John 19:17-30 – The Crucifixion: Jesus carries His cross to Golgotha, where He is crucified between two criminals. He speaks words of forgiveness and care, even from the cross. As Jesus nears death, He declares, "It is finished" (John 19:30), signifying the completion of His redemptive work. This moment encapsulates the sacrificial nature of Jesus' mission and His victory over sin.

John 19:31-42 – Jesus' Burial: After Jesus' death, His body is taken down and placed in a tomb by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. They wrap His body in linen and spices according to Jewish burial customs. This act of care and respect honors Jesus even in death.

John 20:1-18 – The Resurrection: On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and runs to tell the disciples. Peter and John also find the tomb empty. Jesus appears to Mary, calling her by name, and she recognizes Him. Jesus instructs her to tell the disciples of His resurrection. This event marks the triumph of life over death and provides the foundation for Christian hope.

John 20:19-31 – Jesus Appears to His Disciples: Jesus appears to His disciples, offering peace and showing them His wounds. He commissions them to continue His work and empowers them with the Holy Spirit. Thomas, who was not present, later sees Jesus and believes, declaring, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). This passage emphasizes the importance of faith and the personal encounter with the risen Christ.

John 21 – Jesus Restores Peter: Jesus appears to His disciples by the Sea of Galilee, where He performs another miracle of a large catch of fish. He restores Peter by asking him three times if he loves Him, corresponding to Peter's three denials. Jesus commissions Peter to "feed my sheep" (John 21:17), reaffirming his role as a leader among the disciples. This chapter highlights forgiveness, restoration, and the ongoing mission of Jesus' followers.

THINK ABOUT THIS: Hope Beyond the Darkness

Imagine a time in your life when everything seemed to fall apart. Maybe you lost someone you loved, faced a serious illness, or felt abandoned by friends. In those moments, it's easy to wonder, Where is God?

The disciples must have felt the same way as they watched Jesus arrested, beaten, and nailed to a cross. They had followed Him for years, believing He was the promised Messiah. But now, He was dead. All their hopes seemed buried in that tomb.

But Sunday morning changed everything! The empty tomb proved that Jesus was not defeated. Death did not win. Hope was alive! When Jesus rose, He showed us that even in our darkest moments, God is still at work. His love is stronger than our fears, and His power is greater than any sorrow.

Think about a time when you saw God bring hope out of something difficult. Maybe He answered a prayer in an unexpected way, provided for you when you didn't know what to do, or gave you peace when you needed it most.

Just as Jesus told Mary Magdalene at the tomb, "Do not be afraid" (John 20:17), He speaks those words to us today. No matter what you are facing, the resurrection reminds us: There is always hope in Christ.

Quotes to Reflect On

"He is not here; He has risen, just as He said." — Matthew 28:6

"Our old history ends with the cross; our new history begins with the resurrection." — Watchman Nee

"The resurrection gives my life meaning and direction and the opportunity to start over no matter what my circumstances." — Robert Flatt

"We live and die; Christ died and lived!" — John Stott

LEAD-IN QUESTION:

"Have you ever felt like all hope was lost, only to later see how God was working things out for good?"

Quote:

"God often uses our deepest pain as the launching pad for our greatest calling." – Rick Warren

Application:

Just as we sometimes face moments of despair, the disciples thought all hope was lost when Jesus was arrested and crucified. But God was writing a greater story—the story of the Resurrection! Today, we'll explore how Christ's passion and resurrection bring us lasting hope.

APPLY THIS CONTENT:

Christians today can apply the truths found in John 18-21 by embracing the hope and assurance provided by Jesus' passion and resurrection. The sacrificial love demonstrated by Jesus on the cross reminds us of the depth of God's love for us and the lengths He went to redeem us. This understanding encourages us to live lives of gratitude and service, seeking to share that love with others. As Romans 5:8 states, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." By reflecting on Jesus' sacrifice, we can find the motivation to love and serve others selflessly.

Additionally, the resurrection of Jesus provides a powerful reminder of the victory over sin and death that believers have through faith in Him. This hope enables us to face life's challenges with confidence, knowing that we have eternal life through Jesus. As Pastor Rick Warren emphasizes, "The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single most important event in history, and it has profound implications for our lives every day." By holding onto the hope of the resurrection, we can live with a sense of purpose and assurance, regardless of our circumstances.

SERIOUSLY THINKING- Growing Traits in the Person Who Takes Seriously "The Passion and Resurrection—Hope in Christ"- John 18–21

Faithfulness in Suffering→Remaining loyal to Jesus through trials, betrayal, and suffering, trusting God's plan.→John 18:15–18, 25–27

Courage to Confess Christ→Boldly acknowledging Jesus before others despite fear or danger.→John 18:25–27; 21:15–17

Hope in the Resurrection→Holding firm to the hope and reality of Jesus' resurrection as victory over death.→John 20:1–29

Experiencing Jesus' Peace→Receiving the risen Christ's peace and reassurance after His resurrection.→John 20:19–21

Commissioned to Witness→Accepting the call to share the Good News and continue Jesus' mission in the world.→John 20:21–23

Restoration and Forgiveness→Experiencing Jesus' forgiveness and restoration, especially in the reconciliation with Peter.→John 21:15–19

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The bigger picture of God's plan associated with John 18–21 reveals His desire for humanity to experience the transforming power of Jesus' passion and resurrection. These chapters emphasize the fulfillment of Jesus' mission as the Savior, highlighting His sacrificial love, His victory over death, and the hope of eternal life for all who believe in Him. By understanding and embracing these truths, we can find hope, direction, and purpose in our relationship with Jesus.

As we reflect on the events of Jesus' passion and resurrection, we are reminded of the incredible lengths to which God went to secure our redemption. Jesus willingly endured suffering and death on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins, demonstrating the depth of His love for us. This challenges us to respond with lives of gratitude, service, and love, seeking to honor Him in all that we do. The resurrection of Jesus also assures us of His victory over sin and death, providing us with a firm foundation of hope and the promise of eternal life.

By applying these principles in our daily lives, we can experience the fullness of life that God intends for us and be a source of encouragement and inspiration to others. Our commitment to growing in our knowledge and relationship with Jesus not only strengthens our faith but also enables us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those around us, reflecting the transforming power of the gospel in all that we do. Embracing the passion and resurrection of Jesus not only deepens our relationship with Him but also empowers us to share His message of hope and victory with the world, shining brightly for His glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How do you think the disciples felt as they watched Jesus being arrested and crucified?

+The disciples had given up everything to follow Jesus. They believed He was the Messiah who would bring God's kingdom. But in John 18–19, when He was arrested, beaten, and crucified, their hopes were shattered. Sometimes, we also face seasons when God's plan seems unclear. Yet, just as Jesus' death wasn't the end of the story, our trials don't mean God has abandoned us.

2. Why is the Resurrection so important to our faith? (John 20:1–10)

+The Resurrection is the foundation of Christianity. If Christ had not risen, our faith would be in vain (1 Corinthians 15:17). When Mary Magdalene and the disciples found the empty tomb, they didn't fully understand what had happened—but soon they would realize that Jesus had conquered death. His victory assures us that we, too, have victory over sin and eternal life in Him.

3. How does Jesus' conversation with Thomas (John 20:24–29) help us when we struggle with doubt?

+Thomas wanted proof before believing that Jesus had risen. Instead of rebuking him, Jesus met him in his doubt and provided what he needed. Many of us have moments when we struggle with faith. Jesus' words, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed," remind us that faith is about trusting God's promises, even when we don't have all the answers.

4. In John 21, Jesus restores Peter after his denial. What does this teach us about God's grace?

+Peter had denied Jesus three times, yet Jesus lovingly restored him by asking three times, "Do you love me?" This shows that failure doesn't disqualify us from God's plan. No matter how we've fallen, God's grace is always greater. He is in the business of restoration!

5. How does the Resurrection give us hope in our daily lives?

+Because Jesus lives, we have hope beyond this life. We can face trials, sickness, and even death with confidence, knowing that just as Jesus rose, we, too, will have eternal life with Him. Our faith is not just about this world—it's about a living hope that will never fade (1 Peter 1:3-4).

What to Look For

Notice Jesus' calm and purposeful attitude during His trial and crucifixion. What does this say about His mission?

Pay attention to the resurrection appearances. How do they transform His disciples and confirm His victory?

Watch for themes of forgiveness, restoration, and commissioning. How does Jesus prepare His followers for the future?

Personal Reflection Questions

How does the resurrection shape your understanding of hope and new beginnings?

In what ways has Jesus restored or renewed your life?

Overview of the Gospel of John

The Gospel of John is a powerful and deeply spiritual account of Jesus' life, ministry, and divine nature. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), which focus on Jesus' teachings and parables, John presents a more intimate picture of Christ as the eternal Word of God (John 1:1), emphasizing His divinity and mission to bring salvation to the world. Through vivid stories such as Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (John 3), the healing of the blind man (John 9), and the raising of Lazarus (John 11), John highlights the importance of faith, grace, and the transformative power of Christ. The apostle's purpose is clearly stated in John 20:31: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

John's message remains profoundly relevant in today's world, offering both hope and guidance in uncertain times. In a culture filled with doubt and spiritual confusion, John's emphasis on Jesus as "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) provides a firm foundation for those seeking purpose and meaning. Charles Spurgeon once wrote, "The Gospel of John is the gospel of simplicity, but it is the gospel of sublimity, too. It is so simple that a child may understand it, and yet it is so sublime that the most profound theologian may find it beyond his grasp." This dual nature makes John a timeless source of encouragement for believers of all ages, including those in their later years, who have spent a lifetime walking with Christ and can reflect on His faithfulness.

Furthermore, John's focus on love—especially Jesus' new commandment to "love one another" (John 13:34)—is a message the world desperately needs. Amid division and strife, the Gospel calls us to live out our faith by showing Christ's love in our daily interactions. Theologian N.T. Wright once observed, "When you read John's Gospel, you are invited not just to learn about Jesus, but to come to know him personally, as you would a close friend." This personal relationship with Christ is as vital today as it was for the early church. For senior believers, John's words offer reassurance that their faith journey is not just about knowledge but about deepening their relationship with the Savior who promises eternal life.

In studying John's Gospel, we are reminded that Jesus is still the light in the darkness (John 1:5), offering hope, renewal, and peace in every season of life. Whether facing joys or challenges, we can trust in the One who said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die" (John 11:25). This promise, rooted in John's Gospel, continues to sustain and uplift believers, reminding us that our hope in Christ is secure both now and forever.