

Chapter 9: “Come and See”, The Gospel of John.

The New Pentateuch of the Apostle John

The name “Pentateuch” of course was given long ago to the first five books of the Bible which Moses wrote—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Since the Apostle John also wrote five books, the last five of the New Testament, it seemed natural to call a volume on those five books, THE NEW PENTATEUCH OF THE APOSTLE JOHN. Those five New Testament books written by the Apostle John are easily identified by four with his name on them—John, I, II, and III John, and the other—Revelation—where he clearly identifies himself.

1. Revelation.

“I, John, both your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,’ and ‘What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.’” (Revelation 1:9-11)

2. The Gospel of John.

“Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, (John 13:13) and said, ‘Lord, who is the one who betrays You?’...This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.” (John 21:20,24)

NOTE: When after the book of Revelation we come to a study of the Gospel of John, we will discuss further obvious ways in which the Apostle John is the author of the Gospel of John.

3. I, II, and III John.

These three little epistles are not as clearly identified as Revelation and the Gospel of John, but such internal evidence as the usage of “little children”, “beloved”, and the reference to a fellowship that centered around him before a split in fellowship, certainly indicate the author as the Apostle John.

9-1: Law and Grace.

There is a more important reason to call the five books from the Apostle John THE NEW PENTATEUCH as contrasted to the Old Pentateuch which is the five books of the Bible, the law of Moses. It reminds us as the Apostle John expressed in his preface to the Gospel of John that while law came from Moses, grace and truth came from Jesus. (It is not that truth did not come through Moses and in the law, but rather that complete truth came from Christ!)

“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17)

Grace and Graciousness is what the books of John reflect as a spirit. True, it comes from Christ; but John reflects it best of any New Testament writers.

9-2: Law, Prophets, and Revelation.

You have suspected already that a great deal of integration is required in order to put commentaries on the whole New Testament of 27 books in a three-section-one-volume commentary. (Beyond that a significant amount of the Old Testament is covered.) Of course, it is easier than you think when the approach is made that there is a built-in integration to the whole Bible that the Spirit put there when He wrote it. Also there is sort a coding to the total Bible that comes from the ministry of the Apostle Paul as Christ started him in the Arabian desert and Paul back at Tarsus continued during the so-called “silent years”. We have spoken about it previously; however a reminder is in order: Paul at Tarsus re-read the whole Old Testament, recording quotes from it that were to be part of the 17 books that he wrote or edited. Those quotes form this encoding from the Old Testament, with proper interpretation from Christ, that would provide the overall integration of truth.

Many minor (only because not as easily apparent) built-in integrations in the Bible will be encountered throughout the three sections of this one volume. Such is one that relates to law, prophets, and Revelation. Basically stated this

is it: an understanding of the law provides background for a study of the Prophets and in turn a study of the Prophets provides a background understanding for the book of Revelation.

NOTE: Someone might reply, "Of course, a study of the Bible anywhere provides help in the study of the Bible elsewhere." And that is true. It is a good principle of hermeneutics, the science of biblical interpretation, to allow the clearer passages of the Bible to help in an understanding of the less clear passages. But more specific matters are referred to here than this basic principle of biblical interpretation.

Dr. B. H. Carroll in AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE expresses this idea of integration in the manner that is quoted below. In an introduction to the prophets and on an interpretation of prophecy and after discussing how the Prophets present "dark saying" and "enigmas", he writes what you read below.

9-3: The "Logos".

You see in the first chapters of Hebrews the way that the Apostle Paul proved that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: you see in the Gospel of John the way that the Apostle John proved that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The introductions to the Gospel of John and Hebrews are similar; however, with some striking differences.

In Hebrews chapter 1: God speaks through His Son; His Son is the heir of all things; through Him all the worlds were made; He is the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, the power to keep the world going, the one who alone purged our sins, and sat down at the right hand of the Father. In John chapter 1: the Word was with God, was God, and all things were made through Him; the world did not know it's own creator; however, to those who believed He gave the privilege to become children of God; this "Word" became flesh and dwelt among men; man saw the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

I. Revelation 19:1-16

I'm sure you've noticed the striking difference between Hebrews 1 and John 1. The Apostle John is unique in using the word "Word" to describe the eternal

and pre-existing Christ. Only John of the four Gospels uses the word "Word". Only John uses the word "Word" for Christ in all of the New Testament. Where did John get that word "Logos" for Christ? From the Holy Spirit of course; but more specifically it was revealed in the book of Revelation, Revelation 19:11-13.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he has a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

While some might protest that the Son of God would never make war on the people of earth, you must recall that very shortly in the book of Revelation all the non-believers will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. There is no way that this can happen without pain and suffering; so that surely the time will come (the time of judgment) when Jesus no longer turns the other cheek or tolerates any kind of behavior. Also recall that the passage in Revelation 19:11-13 reminds us that Jesus will both "judge and make war" in righteousness.

Even as Jesus urged Christians to "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24), even so does Jesus at the Second Coming judge righteously; and that is basically what the passage of Revelation 19:11-13 is all about. It begins with the great voice of the peoples in heaven saying of one accord that "true and righteous are his judgments" (Rev 19:2). Specifically in the last chapter Babylon was judged with destruction in one hour with the guarantee that a candle would not longer shine in her forever. God avenged the blood of the saints against her. And while we tend to think of the Babylon of Revelation as Rome, it could be any great and wicked city of the world that persecutes Christians. A candle still burns in the city of Rome and one stone is still left standing on another in Rome. So either this destruction is the final one on Rome or some other wicked city.

You may think of the Son of God as "gentle Jesus, meek and mild"; and that is true until the end time when this Word, the One from in the beginning was with God and the One through whom all things were made and through

whom all things consists will come and make war and judge righteous judgment. You can count on that! While it may be true as Parrington states that New England has never forgiven Jonathan Edwards for preaching on the wrath of God, those souls that were saved from the worse fate in life have forgiven him; and while Parrington also believes that Edward's unconsciously brought on the death of Calvinism, the word of God stands firm!

II. The "Word" in John 1:1-18.

The Greek word "Logos", translated "Word" in English was a common word in New Testament Greek times. The use of the word in secular terms meant either: (1) something that remained in a man as his thought or reason; or (2) something spoken from a man that denoted an expression of his thought. In philosophical Greek "logos" meant something like the "world-soul" or soul of the universe. You could identify with it in terms of Walt Whitman's Oversoul or that of the transcendentalists. While the Greeks who listened to John would know that the "logos" as John used it was something important, they had to listen to the total context of the Gospel of John to know that this God in Jesus was passionately involved in the Universe, a God who came where we are, took our nature, entered the world's struggle, and won man's salvation.

Those Jews who heard John would immediately recognized in John 1:1 with the "in the beginning" a similarity to Genesis 1:1. All would recognize from the Old Testament where the Word of the Lord is an agent for accomplishing the will of God. (Psalm 33:6). For God to speak is for God to do something. Even today we can not miss the almost independent existence of the Word as in Isaiah 55:11.

"...so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it"

As Leon Morris writes in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY: *"For him (the Apostle John) the Word was not a principle, but a living Being and the source of life; not a personification, but a Person and the Person divine. The Word was nothing less than God."*

1. The "word" stands for the whole Christian Gospel in Mark 2:2 and Mark 8:32. In Mark 2:2, Mark's record of the healing of the paralytic man, Jesus

preached the word to them. In Mark 8:32, Jesus “spoke this word openly” of how the Son of man must suffer, be rejected by the religious leaders, and crucified.

2. Preaching the word in the New Testament often implies or states that it is the same as preaching Jesus. (Luke 1:2, Acts 8:4, Acts 11:20, I Corinthians 1:23, II Corinthians 4:5, Gal 3:1, and Colossians 1:13.)

“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (I Corinthians 1:22-13)

Henry Steele Commager in *THE AMERICAN MIND* is buffaloes by an American people, so optimistic and self-confident, accepting the depravity of man; and also how an American people so distrustful of authority could submit to the authority of Scripture. Well, they see in it the Word of God.

III. The “Word of Life” in I John 1:1.

Whether you look at the book of Revelation or the Gospel of John or I John 1:1 as we look at now, you can not get away from the consistent objective of the Apostle John to show men the way to Jesus as the Christ the Son of God that they thereby might have eternal life.

1. John states it the introduction to the Gospel of John in the words of John 1:12,13. “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

If you see little else about the authority and power of Jesus, you should see that while most in the world reject Him and He knows it, He has the authority to make any who will believe the children of God through the new birth. They are not children of God by birth or the will of the mind or the strength of the human body but of God.

2. John records it in Revelation 19:9 as part of the Second Coming of Christ and the righteous judgment.

“Then he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ And he said to me, These are the true sayings of God.”

It is a true saying of God that the believers in the church of the firstborn will be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

3. Then you see it also in I John 1:1.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life – (here it is more than the Word or the Word of God, it is the Word of life) the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us – that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” (I John 1:1-4)

Wow, this passage is full of true sayings also!

- (1). When John says what we have seen and heard, etc. – the voice of personal experience – he is talking about what the Apostles saw and heard.
- (2). The Word of Life was manifested, this is the Son of God, this is Jesus Christ. What was revealed to be the Word of God in Revelation, what was presented to be the Logos or Word in the Gospel of John; now here in I John is the Word of Life.
- (3). This eternal life, alias this Jesus, was with God the Father from the beginning; and it is this incarnation of life eternal that the Apostles witnessed and are testifying to.
- (4). John and the other Apostles are declaring nothing less or more than what they saw and heard of this eternal and incarnate life in order that you the reader or listener can have the fellowship with the Apostles, with other Christians.
- (5). This fellowship is with God the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- (6). The record is made in I John as in Revelation and the Gospel of John in order that you may know the fullness of joy through Christ.

IV. We must see the connection between Jesus as the Word, the Son of God, and life itself.

1. Jesus words are the words of God. We see this in John 3:34; 14:10; and 17:8,14. Jesus made a prayer of intercession for his Apostles and for all that would believe through those Apostles. Among other things He prayed as follows to God the Father.

“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” (John 17:8)

2. It is extremely important for you to believe the words of Jesus, John 5:47. Jesus tried to tell the people of His own time that they did not listen to His words of the words of Moses. Then it is that hear from Jesus as recorded in John 5:47.

“But if ye believe not his writings (Moses), how shall ye believe my words?”

Recall that as John stated in the introduction that while the law came by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. In effect, Jesus is saying, ‘If you don’t pay any real attention to the Ten Commandments as far as obeying them, you will not also pay attention to the matters of life in grace and truth.

3. The abiding in the word of Jesus is the same as being a disciple of Jesus, or a Christian. (John 8:31). The Bible itself only uses the word “Christian” three times. The person who believes in Jesus is more appropriately referred to a believer or as a disciple.

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31,32)

4. Jesus words bring life. Jesus’s words are life. We see this in John 5:24; 6:68; and 8:51.

“Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” (John 6:68,69)

5. Jesus’ words bring cleansing (John 15:3).

“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”

Conclusion: The negative side of not listening to the words of Jesus is also in the Bible. There is a positive side: listen to Jesus, believe in Jesus and live. The negative side is that a refusal to listen to the words of Jesus will bring judgment. In short, those who will not heed the words of Jesus belong to the devil. Wow, let me see it in the Bible!

6. The refusal to heed the words of Jesus bring judgment (John 12:47f).

“And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” (John 12:47-50)

9-4: A Candle Still Burns in Rome Until the Fall of the United States Empire.

Of course the classic interpretation of Revelation chapters 17 and 18 is that Rome is the city of Babylon; and that is obviously true of chapter 17 with its references to the seven hills of Rome and the obvious sequencing of the Roman Emperors including the Nero that burned Rome. However, in chapter 18 the pattern changes; and the Babylon of chapter 18 could either be Rome in its ultimate destruction or another great and wicked city that persecutes Christians.

There is one obvious reason this is true and this is found in Revelation 1:21 and 23.

1. In Revelation 18:21 the city of Babylon is found no more.

“And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

We know that the city of Rome does still exist in the nation of Italy; people still toss coins in the fountains of Rome as they visit there; it is considered I suppose to be the home of the Mafia; and of course, it is the home of the Roman Catholic church.

2. A candle still burns in Rome, Revelation 18:23.

And that brings us to the second reason that the Babylon of chapter 17 is not the same as the Babylon of chapter 18. A candle still burns in Rome! In fact, many candles.

“And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee...” (Rev 18:23a)

I. The Babylon of Revelation 18 is closer to being the world itself, or at least any and several wicked and great cities that persecute Christians. There are several reasons besides the one of the introduction that are shown in the text.

1. The general nature of the groups of “all nations” and the “all that were slain on the earth” of Revelation 18:23,24 indicate that this is the final judgment on the earth.

“...for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived ed. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth...” (Rev 18:23,24)

. The words of Revelation 18:8 obviously remind the reader or listener of the destruction of the earth by fire predicted by Peter in II Peter 3:10. Compare the two portions of Scripture. a. II Peter 3:10.

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

b. Revelation 18:8.

“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

Babylon shall be utterly burned with fire: that sounds like the same fire that consumes the earth.

3. The events of the next chapter, Revelation 19, show us the Second Coming of Christ and the marriage supper of the church of the Firstborn.

4. The extent of the fall of Revelation 18:2 has also obviously not happened to Rome as it does still exist and as also a candle does still burn in Rome.

“...Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

5. If Babylon can be Rome in chapter 17, and obviously it is instead of the real Babylon, then the Babylon of chapter 18 could be a large city in the United States, or Europe, or could be representative of all large cities before the Second Coming of Christ.

6. The sins of Babylon of chapter 18 and even 17 is also what all other nations are guilty of as far as sin, Revelation 18:3.

“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”

Honestly, it sounds more like the United States and the cities of the United States to me.

II. Look at Revelation 17 and 18, especially the references about the merchants and the fornicators, and you will see the United States written all over it.

What is the sin of fornication? The regular dictionary gives three definitions for fornication: (1) voluntary sexual intercourse, generally forbidden by law, between an unmarried woman and a man, especially, an unmarried man; (2) any unlawful sexual intercourse, including adultery; and (3) worship of idols. Let us face the bottom line of what we are talking about here. Jesus summarized the existing Ten Commandments as “You shall love the Lord God with all your heart, mind, and soul; and the second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” The first is a summary of the first three of the

Ten Commandments: not to have any other gods before the LORD God, not to make an graven images or idols, and not to take God's name in vain. The love of neighbor as self summarizes the rest of the commandments as not stealing, no adultery, no false witness, etc. So when the Old Testament prophets called those named the children of God fornicators or whores, as they often did as you well know from reading your Old Testament, and the same in the prophesy of Revelation, it is an obvious reference to not giving God the first place in love of heart, mind, and soul.

And certainly you must see in all the references to merchants in Revelation 17,18 that it is America that leads the world in business. When you travel overseas what do you see General Motors, Exxon, MacDonald's, etc. Constantly since the failure of communism in Russia, the United States is sending businessmen to Russia to teach capitalism. The business of America is business, and the United States is the undisputed world leader in business. I recall visiting the various sites of missionary activity in Thailand with a CMA missionary named Neal Webber. He said that previously they gave the native Thais shoes. But soon it was heard from them that "you can get a pair of shoes if you become a Christian." And that is the way the world looks at us, as merchants of plenty.

Now, already we suspect that the fornication of cities and nations influenced by Babylon must be the last, the worship of idols; but let us continue. Vine's EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY gives the first and obvious meaning of "illicit sexual intercourse" and then the second as metaphorically, of the association of pagan idolatry with doctrines of, and professed adherence to, the Christian faith, Rev 14:8; 17:2,4; 18:3; and 19:2." And we must decide from a look at any concordance and the usage of the word "fornications" in the Old Testament, that the fornications of Revelation 17 and 18 are like that of Ezekiel 16 where the Prophet talks of the harlotry of Jerusalem. How they had taken idols to worship instead of God. It is background for Revelation 17 and 18 as Jerusalem like Babylon is called a whore.

American religion what is it? It is 1 part church, community, Bible, and Christianity; 2 parts freedom and democracy; and 3 parts merchandise, things, status, success, comfort, and the good life. Believe you me, the movies are influencing foreigners more than our missionaries; and what the people of the

world want is our goods and comfort. They by and large see little relationship between our Christianity and our democracy of things.

III. The nations like the United States are in trouble because the churches are also in trouble.

If that seems like an odd thing to you remember that of the seven original churches mentioned at the beginning of the book of Revelation only two were not in serious trouble. The church at Ephesus left its first love, and was threatened with removal; the church at Smyrna was the only one not in trouble; the church at Pergamos had members of very unsound doctrine and were fornicators in that they were influenced by idol worship, and were threatened with a fight from The Word of God; the church at Thyatira allowed Jezebel to influence fornication of idol worship, and those followers and Jezebel were threatened with destruction; the church at Sardis had a reputation of being active and alive, but the Risen Christ said they were dead; and the church at Philadelphia was also not in trouble. Now if five out of seven of the original churches had these magnitudes of problem to the extent of being threatened with extinction, what do you think the state of the churches in America almost two thousand years later is going to be like. Do you not recall that the Apostle Paul wrote of what would happen in Christianity and churches as time passed.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables.” (II Timothy 4:3,4) Now, do you think that time is here already or not. Look at the unsound doctrine of Roman Catholics all over the world that think they have salvation because they were baptized as babies; look at the Mormons who look so good with their TV ads, and evangelism, but have hideous doctrines that make salvation by works instead of faith (they call it the restored gospel); and look at some of our Southern Baptist Churches so deep in divorce that if a preacher presents the Bible on the subject, the people don't come to church.

Notice the way it goes –

First, people no longer have tolerance for sound doctrine. They don't want to hear it, and they will assure themselves that they do not listen to it. Second, motivated by certain pet sins that they desire to keep in their lives, they look for preachers and teachers to agree with them. To talk about something new like the government that will not miss with their sins. As the Old Testament says, "Like the priest, like the people." The teachers with itching ears become like the people that called them. Thirdly, after a period of time they gradually turn their back on truth. They, preachers and people alike, do not even recognize any longer what has happened to them. Fourth, they are turned into fables. You can see where other churches are headed by looking at the fables that the Mormons have turned into with their book of Mormon about a previous civilization here in America, about Jesus coming to preach here while He was in the grave, and so on.

IV. Where does that leave the individual Christian?

We've talked about the nations and the fate of the nations in Revelation; we've talked about the churches and the fate of the churches in Revelation and II Timothy. But where does that leave the individual? Notice that right in the middle of Revelation 18, what with all the activity of the merchants and the fornication by not loving God with all the heart, mind, and soul, and the announcement of destruction on their cities, comes an appeal to the individual Revelation 18:4.

"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Also, you will notice if you have not already done so that in the midst of all the disturbing information about five out of the seven churches is an appeal to the individual to still act wisely.

1. To the individual church members in the church at Ephesus, the Risen Christ said. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Revelation 2:7)
2. To the individual church members in the church at Smyrna the Risen Christ said.

“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” (Revelation 2:11)

3. To the individual church members in the church at Pergamos the Risen Christ said.

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” (Revelation 2:17)

4. To the individual church members in the church at Thyatira the Risen Christ said.

“But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak: I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.” (Revelation 2:24,13)

5. To the individual church members in the church at Sardis the Risen Christ said. **“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” (Revelation 3:4,5)**

6. To the individual church members in the church at Philadelphia the Risen Christ said. **“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” (Revelation 3:10-12)**

7. To the individual church members in the church at Laodicea the Risen Christ wrote.

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent.” (Revelation 3:19)

Chapter 10: Revelation, the Gospel of John, and the Epistles.

Since the book of Revelation provided motivation for the Apostle John to start writing and provided background for him to continue writing, in our continued Bible study we will utilize Revelation as BACKGROUND for the Gospel of John; and since the epistles of I, II, and III John came after the Gospel, providing IMPLEMENTATION of the Gospel and Revelation to the problems of a split in Christian fellowship, we will naturally use the epistles for the implementation of the Gospel. Therefore the outline of each paragraph of the Gospel will have these three points (no poem!):

1. Background from Revelation.
2. The Gospel of John.
3. Implementation in the Epistles.

I. The Word.

No other Gospel or book of the Bible refers to Jesus as the Word except the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation. No one even knew that name for Christ until it was revealed to John in the book of Revelation.

1. Background from Revelation.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and with righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. And He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. And He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.” (Revelation 19:11-13)

2. The Gospel of John.

Armed with this revelation from Christ Himself of the name only known by Christ Himself, John starts writing the biography of the life and times of Jesus Christ. Only John of the four Gospels goes back into eternity to begin with the pre-existent Christ. Matthew goes back to Abraham, Mark goes back to Isaiah to pick up the prophecy about John the Baptist as the messenger to prepare

the way for Christ, and then Luke goes back one generation more to the parents of John the Baptist. John starts like the book of Genesis with “In the beginning...” That was very purposeful on the part of John and the inspiration to John from the Holy Spirit. This is in Christ the new beginning of life. And in order to receive that life, which is the very purpose of John’s writing of the story of Jesus, you must see Christ as: (1) The Word that existed before the foundation of the world was laid, (2) The Word, Christ, who was with God from before the beginning of Creation; (3) That this Word is very God; (4) That this Christ was definitely not exclusively the God as He was with God in close fellowship; (5) Christ the Word was the mediating cause of Creation as all things in the heavens and the earth were made through Him; (6) Here is the subject of John—“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” (John 1:4,5) The darkness of earth with the sin and doubt and rebellion could not overcome the light and extinguish it, although it was tried!

3. Implementation in the Epistles of John.

I John 1-3 is a summary of the whole Gospel of John.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with out yes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—for the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with His Son Jesus Christ.” (I John 1:1-1)

Then John implements the story of life in Jesus with it’s practical application of joy in Christian fellowship.

**“And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” (I John 1:4)
There is the implementation of life in Christ: full joy.**

II. John the Baptist’s Testimony, John 1:6-13.

1. Background in Revelation.

Obviously this passage from John is about “light and life”, and the light of New Jerusalem comes from the Lamb of God, the Christ.

“And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it, and the Lamb is its light.” (Revelation 21:22,23)

Naturally if a person is to eternally enjoy this temple of God and this light of God, then they must begin right now on earth to find a way to get fellowship with that light and life!

2. The Gospel of John.

The Apostle John does not divert from the focus on Christ as the light and life as he introduces John the Baptist as the witness to the Light. **“That (Christ, the Word) was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world.” (John 1:9)**

NOTE: This could be a show stopper right here. That is, moments could be spent on this. In what way does Christ light every man that comes into the world. Certainly, the kind of spiritual light that gives life does not come to every man, so that John must have learned something from the Ascended Christ about physical light, and of Christ as the source of all light in the universe. 3. Implementation in the Epistles.

“Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.” (I John 2:8) This is true in you and in Christ: that the darkness that tried to comprehend Christ is passing away. Something is getting better on this earth, and that something is the darkness that the light of Christ is overcoming.

“Come and See”, The Gospel of John

“Come and See” is the invitation that Jesus gave to His first disciples, the Apostle John being one of them.

“Come and See” is the invitation that Jesus gives to people today. Not the same way as originally recorded at the beginning of the Gospel of John. However, the way is later in John: it is through the Other Jesus, the Comforter, the “alter ego” of Jesus, in other words the Spirit of Christ or the Holy Spirit

who came to take the place of Jesus on earth when He ascended back to the right hand of the Father.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world [the American Conscience] cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” (John 14:16,17)

“Come and See” is the essential gist of the Gospel of John. “Come and See” what Jesus did, what Jesus taught, and the life and death of Jesus.

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (John 20:30,31) Here is where you begin to see the uniqueness of the Gospel of John as compared to the other Gospels.

1. The “signs”. John carefully chose seven of the miracles and Jesus performed from the many, and selected events and teachings closely related to those seven miracles in order to give the focus of John.
2. These Seven Miracles were done in the presence of the disciples. The work of Christ by no means was done in secret. The personal experience of “come and see” is the tone throughout the book.
3. These are written. There was the need for a written record of what John and the other disciples had seen and heard for themselves. There was the need to wrap up the revelations of the New Testament.
4. The goal was simple, evangelism: that men might believe that this Jesus of Nazareth whom they followed was indeed the Promised Messiah or Christ of the Old Testament, and that He was indeed the very, only Son of God.
5. It was evangelism that lead to “life” – “that believing ye might have life through his name.”

10-1: John the Baptist.

Since the Apostle John does not use his own name in the book of John, you know that the “John” referenced in the first chapters is John the Baptist. This

is the John who came to prepare the way for Christ. The same John that was prophesied in Isaiah as “the voice crying in the wilderness”. Also in Malachi he is referred to as the new Elijah, because he came in the spirit and power of Elijah.

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.” (John 1:29- 31)

1. If again we replace in the text “American Conscience” for “world”, we have the encouragement that no matter what shape the collective American Conscience is in or the individual American conscience, Christ came to take away the sin of the American Conscience.

2. By referring to Jesus as the “Lamb of God”, a term of sacrifice from the Old Testament, John the Baptist was not only preparing the nation of Israel to listen to Jesus but also preparing them for His death on the cross.

3. The Apostle John uses the quote from John the Baptist about “he was before me” to keep going with the theme of the “Word” who was with God from the beginning. Naturally, as John the Baptist admitted Christ would be preferred before him, He existed before him. 33-2: “COME AND SEE” IS THE EVAGELISTIC INVITATION THAT JESUS GAVE TO HIS FIRST DISCIPLES.

Evangelism is first of all a matter of learning. Jesus did not ask the first disciples to believe immediately, but rather to come and live with him in order to see and learn. Jesus did not first say, “Believe”, he said “Come and See”. Jesus did not first say, “Repent”, He rather said “come and see”; first it was not “be baptized”, but “come and see”. First things and first, and the first priority is to learn Jesus before believing, repenting, and being baptized. Before working for Christ is believing, and before believing is coming to Jesus in order to learn about Him. These words recorded in John 1 were to two disciples that followed John the Baptist until that John identified Jesus as the Lamb of God, then when they expressed interest in Jesus, He told them to “come and see.” One of these two disciples was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Andrew found his own brother and said to him:

“We have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted, the Christ.” (John 1:41)

NOTE: You see that Andrew as many others in his generation were looking for the promised Messiah, promised in the Old Testament. In the next chapter of this book we will look at some of those prophetic expectations that were created in the minds of Old Testament readers by the many Old Testament prophecies about the “Christ”.

“And he brought him to Jesus...” Still the greatest thing any brother or friend can do for another person, to bring them to Jesus. It is another way of repeating the invitation of Jesus to “come and see”.

10-2: Come and See Jesus in the Gospel of John.

Jesus went into Galilee looking for disciples. He found Philip and said, “Follow me.” (John 1:43) This is the step beyond “come and see”; and if we are to understand the complete process of learning Christ, then we need to know the difference between coming to see and following Jesus.

Step 1: “Come and See”. Step 2: “Follow Me”.

What it comes down to is what did Philip know about Jesus that first disciples did not yet know when the invitation was simply to “come and see”. Well, to answer that, we must investigate learning. Educational theory indicates that in general people learn four ways: (1) Rote memory, (2) Example, (3) Trial and Error, and (4) Creativity. We must add a fifth way in order to include the special way that Christ is learned. True, the other four secular ways are also included in the learning process, but without the fifth and special way it is impossible to pass from the simple “come and see” to the “follow Me.”

To see this fifth way of learning, we need to look at what Jesus Himself told us about learning in the Gospel of John.

“It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.” (John 6:45)

1. Those who have heard directly from the Father are those who really learn Christ, heard from the Father through the Word of God and through the Holy Spirit.

2. Those who have learned from the Father are those who come to Jesus.

“Philip found Nathaniel and said to him: ‘We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’” (John 1:45)

Nathaniel was skeptical. He asked: “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46) (NOTE: Nazareth had a bad reputation in the time and generation of Nathaniel.

Philip had learned by example from Jesus. Philip said to Nathaniel, “Come and See.” Those who are skeptical, Phillip not being one of those since he immediately received the invitation to “follow me”, must “come and see” more than those who are not skeptical; and later in this book we will discuss not only the importance of hearing the Word of God in believing, but also the important of “evidence” in believing.) Jesus knew men even as He knows men today. He immediately took care of the skepticism. He provided Nathaniel with “evidence” for believing in Him as the Son of God.

“Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, ‘Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.’” (John 1:47)

1. Nathaniel was a real Israelite.

2. Nathaniel was sincere about being an Israelite.

Jesus replied: “Before that Phillip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.” (John 1:48) With a little demonstration of His powers as the Son of God, Jesus showed Nathaniel that He could exhibit the all-seeing capabilities of God the Father. How quickly it worked on Nathaniel! Instantly Nathaniel passed from the sceptic who must “come and see” to the disciple that is ready to “follow Me.”

“Nathaniel answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” (John 1:49)

This identified Jesus of Nazareth in the mind of Nathaniel, the former sceptic, as: (1) The Son of God, and (2) as the King of Israel, the Prophet Messiah of the Old Testament.

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

This was not a reprimand. It was rather an invitation to see more and believe more. Seeing Nathaniel under the fig tree was only a minor miracle, Nathaniel would see much more godlikeness in the miracles that Jesus would perform in his presence as in the presence of the other disciples. (NOTE: See how carefully John has selected what he writes in the Gospel of John. “the Son of God” from Nathaniel reinforces the preface of John where Jesus is the “word” with God and is God, and where a very minor miracle with a promise from Jesus of seeing much more, is preparation for the seven magnificent miracles around which the Gospel of John is weaved.)

10-3: “Come and SEE” is the Invitation of Today.

“COME AND SEE” IS THE INVITATION THAT JESUS EXTENDS IN THIS DAY AND TIME AND THAT TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT JESUS HIMSELF. A person recently said to me in an attempt to justify his lack of interest in Christianity, *“There is so much confusing about the Bible: all those translations, the priests had their own ax to grind and sins in their own lives, and the manuscripts have gone through so many languages.”*

To which I replied simply: *“Since there are 66 books in the Bible, what I do is to compare one book against the other 65.”*

That is what will be done in this volume and the other of the seven volumes of THE LEARNING CHRIST NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES. In the science of “hermeneutics”, or the science of Biblical interpretation, it is called comparing scripture with scripture. For example, you will find that it is the same Jesus being quoted in Matthew as in John. You will find that what Jesus says and does in John is consistent with what Jesus says and does in Matthew. For that reason, Matthew is quoted now on what Jesus said in other words with the equivalent of “come and see”. Actually it really goes a little beyond “come and see”, which John also does as we will see later.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30) See how that goes beyond “come and see” and even beyond “follow me”. Recently as I was driving along after my daily prayers, and thinking of some of the problems that I would commit to Christ since He “cares for me”, I was warmed within as I saw the billboard of the sign with the fireman carrying the child to safety and the word “Gotcha”. God and God through Jesus with much more power to carry it out says to the Christian disciple, “Gotcha!”

1. It is a today invitation.

(1). It is an invitation to those that work for a living.

Jesus has a preference, and always has, for the blue collar worker over the white color worker. Not only is it difficult for the rich and wise to believe, but the preference for the Gospel of Christ in the Bible is for the poor and humble in status. Those that “labour and are heavy laden.”

(2). It is an invitation to those that are heavy laden.

The invitation becomes more general here, for truly the rich and wise are as heavily laden with problems as are the poor and laborer. While the wise and established in this world have more of a problem with the special learning of Christ from God the Father, this general invitation is to the educated and uneducated, the down and outers as well as the up and outers, to the wealthy and the poor, and to the established as well as the struggling.

(3). It is an invitation for rest.

The Shepherd of the Old Testament is one with the Shepherd of the New Testament. Even as we can say of the Shepherd of the Old Testament, “Our Father which art in heaven...” and “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures...” and “He restoreth my soul”, so also we can say of the Shepherd of the New Testament He “will give you rest.”

(4). It is the invitation to take a yoke.

The invitation is also a call to the discipline of discipleship. The yoke like the yoke on the oxen is a discipline of direction and dedication in life. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me..." However, the yoke is easy and the burden is light.

(5). It is an invitation to learn. We need a reminder that this is what disciple means, a learner. The first disciples called Jesus "Rabbi", or Teacher before they called Him Master or Lord. The "come and see" was an invitation to come and learn. When these first disciples asked Him, "Where do you live?" it was really a question of how do you live and what is your life-style?

2. The Invitation to "Come and See" tells us something about Jesus Himself.

(1). Jesus is Meek.

Jesus is a supervisor that is concerned about His disciples. He will not beat them down or expect of them what they are not capable of doing. He will patiently teach and guide disciples.

He will give them what is best for they life and career as a disciple.

(2). Jesus is Lowly in Heart.

Jesus in not like the rich and powerful. Or even Christians who want to be bossy and exercise control. He is like among the humble folk. Even as Jesus taught that "blessed are the poor in spirit", another way to say the humble, and blessed are they that mourn, and blessed are the meek, and merciful, and pure in heart, and blessed are the peacemakers, first of all He offers all these things to disciples that will first "come and see" and then "follow me."

10-4: "COME AND SEE" IS THE CONTINUING AND PRESENT INVITATION OF THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, THE HOLY SPIRIT.

John's stay on the isle of Patmos put him in the authorship business: not only did he with the revelations of Revelation get the word "Word" for Christ with which to start the Gospel of John, but also he received as recorded in Revelation 22:17 the primary invitation of the Gospel of John.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17)

Come, Come, and Come in the book of Revelation as an introduction to the Gospel of John. Behind Revelation all the Gospel of John has to do is add the "See". See what Jesus said, See what Jesus taught, and See the character of Jesus: then when His life on earth is over, See how the Holy Spirit continues the work of Jesus on earth. The best way to visualize the relationship between the work of Jesus and that of the Holy Spirit is to consider the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus at work on this earth. Before Jesus lived on this earth, during Old Testament times, the Spirit of Jesus was at work among the authors of the Old Testament writing Scriptures; and after Jesus Ascended to the right hand of the Father, the Spirit of Jesus came back, sent by and from the Father, in a more powerful and more democratic fashion.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and notable day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." (Joel 2:30 and Acts 2:17-21)

1. Recall this is a prophecy from the Prophet Joel which the Apostle Peter said was being fulfilled before their eyes on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Jesus.
2. This is in the "last days".
3. See the democratic outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, with the Spirit on all flesh, the young men, the old men, the men and women.
4. Since one day is to God as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, the first coming of Christ blends in together with the Second Coming in the "great and notable day of the LORD."
5. The most significant aspect of those days between is that "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

So...the "bride" says COME in Revelation 22:17. The bride is, of course, Christ: "I Jesus", we read in verse 16 of Revelation 22. It is the root and offspring of David and the bright and morning star who says "Come" first in Revelation and then in the Gospel of John in the sequence of writing. Or in the actual historical sequence first during His life on earth as recorded in the Gospel of John and then in the book of Revelation that occurred after His Ascension back to the right hand of the Father.

Everyone that hears says "Come". All Christians that have personal experience because of their listening to the Holy Spirit say "Come." The Spirit says COME.

Let everyone that is thirsty COME.

Jesus said that He was "the bread of life" and "the water of life", and the Holy Spirit today reminds us of those facts. As Jesus taught:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go way: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment..." (John 16:7,8)

1. The Spirit reproves the world of sin.

Jesus explains further in the next verse (John 16:9) that the primary sin is that of unbelief: "of sin, because they believe not on me..."

The only condemning sin that Jesus and the Spirit are concerned about is the sin of unbelief. The sin of unbelief is the only unforgivable sin. The Spirit works with men today to remind them that Jesus is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, the Spirit reminds men that Jesus is the Christ, the Promised Messiah; and the Spirit reminds men that Jesus of Nazareth was and is the Son of God.

NOTE: This is a problem with the American Conscience today especially as practiced by the fundamentalists. They try to usurp the work of the Holy Spirit, themselves desiring to reprove the rest of the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. This besides making themselves feel godlike, also eases the guilt of their own conscience and provides a certain superiority complex.

2. The Spirit reproves the world of righteousness.

“...of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more...” (John 16:10) We can not see Jesus today exactly as the first disciples did in flesh, but the Spirit was sent to remind us of what Jesus is like. Jesus is righteousness and when we look at the character and works of Jesus and the teachings we see righteousness.

3. The Spirit reproves the world of judgment.

Simultaneously while the Spirit is at work in the world today reminding us of sin and righteousness, He is also reminding us of the judgment to come if we do not believe on Jesus as the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

“...of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged...” (John 16:11)

The New King James Version calls this “prince of this world” the “ruler of this world.” This is of course Satan! He is the top leader in the “world” that is to be shunned: He is the top leader in the world of the American Conscience. So if the top is judged so also will be all that chose to follow Satan in the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ through unbelief.

You see how this rejection is more than a disbelief, for you know that Satan having been an angel in heaven knows that Jesus is the Son of God. Unbelief is a positive rejection of the Lordship of Jesus over life, a rebellion, if you will, against the high God of the universe.

10-5: “COME AND SEE” IS THE ESSENTIAL GIST OF THE BOOK OF JOHN!

(NOTE: To contend for the faith is to take the faith back from the simulators of Christianity. They simulate Christianity in that they replace methods and a sensitized American Conscience with the correct learning of Christ. The manner in which the faith is taken back from them is: (1) Identify their status, popularity, nice suits and buildings for what they are (contrast what you know about the way Christ lived with what you see today); (2) put doctrines especially the doctrine of Christ up front in priority beyond their methods; (3) Provide examples of how Christ is learned since there are some Christians left

in the fundamentalists churches that are overwhelmed, leaderless, and surrounded.)

“Come and see” is the invitation of the Gospel of John. It is an invitation to read about, to hear about, and then later to believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

John the Apostle tells the reason that he wrote the Gospel of John.

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (John 20:30,31) You must see some similarity between “the signs on the earth beneath” of Acts 2 and Joel with the “signs” of Jesus in the Gospel of John. Indeed the last days shows signs above and below!

1. Jesus did “signs” in the presence of His disciples. What are signs? Signs are something that you can see, the essential gist continues of coming in order to see.

a. The character of Christ is a sign. The thief on the cross said, “We are being crucified justly, but He has done no wrong.”

b. The teachings of Jesus are signs. It was said of Jesus when he was on earth and is still said of him today that “Never man spake like this man.”

c. The works of Jesus are a sign. When Jesus turned the water into wine, or walked on water, or made the deaf to hear and the lame to walk, it was a “sign” from God that this Jesus of Nazareth was the very Christ. Nicodemus said to Jesus as other have:

“Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.” (John 3:2)

d. The death of Christ on the cross was a sign. As John the Baptist said, This was the Lamb of God – the Lamb which God provided – taking away the sins of the world.

e. The resurrection of Christ was a sign. Where else have you heard of God bringing someone from the grave on the third day. And it is easily

verifiable as a fact that would stand up in a court of law. As Peter said on the first day of Pentecost after the resurrection, “This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.” (Acts 2:32)

2. To be a personal and reliable witness was the purpose of John’s writing of the Gospel of John. Jesus did these signs in the very presence of John and the other disciples. Nothing was done secretly.

3. John was selective about the signs that are recorded in the Gospel of John. Jesus performed many works and miracles, some in Matthew, others in Mark and Luke, and not all recorded.

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” (John 21:13)

John was selective to achieve the goals of (1) Come and see, and then (2) believe and have life.

“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (John 20:31)

4. The correct response to the Gospel of John is to believe.

It is written for no lesser purpose but that you the reader might have everlasting life after death and abundant life on this earth. The book of Revelation describes it as out of the belly comes rivers of living water.

a. The Gospel of John is the Gospel of Belief. The word “believe” is mentioned an overwhelming number of times in John.

b. It is a selective belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, as the Promised Messiah or Christ of the Old Testament. It selective belief is to believe as John the Baptist said that Jesus is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world; to believe like John the Apostle recorded that “He is the Christ”; to believe like Phillip told Nathanael, “We have found him, of whom Moses wrote in the law and the prophets, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” (John 1:45)

10-6: In John 3 we have Nicodemus coming to see Jesus.

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night...”

This tells us four things about this “man” that came to see Jesus: (1) he was a Pharisee; (2) his name was Nicodemus; (3) he was a ruler of the Jews; and (4) he came secretly at night.

1. Nicodemus was ruler of the Jews.

The Roman government was in power, but they permitted each culture they dominated to retain their own form of government. For the Jews, it was the Sanhedrin that ruled both the politics and religion of Israel. In fact, the religious laws were also the laws of the nation. You will recall that Paul was a lawyer before he became a Christian, and that meant that he was trained in the religious laws which were the laws of the nation. Well, Nicodemus was a member of that religious and political and even social ruling body, the Sanhedrin.

Later in the gospel of John, it will be members of the Sanhedrin that plot to put Jesus to death lest the Romans come and take away their place and their nation; later in John, it will be the Sanhedrin, or at least the Pharisees and chief priests of that body, that look for Jesus during the Passover; and later in John, it will be member of this body, with help from Judas, that come to arrest Jesus. You see that this Sanhedrin was very concerned about their status as religious and political leaders in the nation – they didn’t want to lose it – and they did not want to lose their status in the Roman Empire. (It reminds you of certain Baptist churches today who are so fearful of losing their position in the association and in the Southern Baptist Convention.) And we must also recall the statement from the Bible that it is very difficult for a person of wealth and status to become a Christian.

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, nor many noble, are called.”

And this was what Jesus had in mind when He said that it was harder for a rich man to go to heaven than it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Why? Simply the status, position, wealth, and possessions get in the way of putting Christ first in life. However, we do know looking ahead in the story

that Nicodemus did take seriously the teachings of the new birth, but that is for later.

2. Nicodemus was a Pharisee.

There were two parties in the Sanhedrin: the Sadducees that did not believe in a resurrection from the dead and the Pharisees that did; yet it was primarily the Pharisees that made themselves an enemy of Jesus which seems strange since believing in the resurrection, one of their main accusations against Jesus was that He would rise from the dead on the third day. John the Baptist condemned both of these religious and political parties.

“But when he (John the Baptist) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come.”

The most stinging accusations that Jesus made against people or groups of people while on earth was against the Pharisees and Sadducees. Just before chapter 3 of John and in the second half of chapter 2, Jesus has an encounter with the Pharisees and Sadducees in the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus said they were making His Father’s house a den of thieves and mon-

Chapter 11: Signs for Believing in Jesus from the Gospel of John.

11-1: We Preach Christ: The Seven Signs of the Gospel of John.

People who study the Bible know that the chief subject of the Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ. If I had only one sermon to preach or a last sermon to preach it would have to be on Christ! The Apostle John was overcome by what was shown him in the book of Revelation, so that by the time the revelations had built up in Revelation 19 he was about to fall down and worship the one presenting him the revelations. The revelator told him, "Don't do that!"

And then told him what John and all of us should do: "worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy." (Revelation 19:10) Today we worship God; today we do so by a testimony to Jesus; this is the real spirit of all prophesy.

I. What do we learn about Jesus from the book of Revelation that will contribute to our testimony about Him, and add to the spirit of prophesy. It will also assist us in the worship of God.

1. The introductory words of Revelation 1 and the vision John recorded of the Risen and Ascended Christ enhance that testimony, spirit of prophesy, and worship.

(1). The very first words of Revelation (1:1) tell us that it is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ". We might be inclined to forget that in our curiosity and need to know about future things. It is primarily the Revelation of Jesus Christ. That is what is meant by the fact that the very spirit of prophesy is the testimony of Jesus. Further God gave this Revelation of Jesus Christ to Christ.

(2). Notice in Revelation 1:2 what the Apostle John is really writing about and therefore bearing record to in the order of priority: (1) The Word of God, and recall that it is in the book of Revelation that the secret name for Christ is revealed as the "Logos", the Word of God; (2) the testimony of Jesus Christ; and (3) all things that he saw. The predictions and world events are third to the testimony of Jesus and to a record of the Word of God.(3). John begins a

worship of the One True God in Revelation 1:4 as he first addresses the seven churches and deliver a benediction of peace from the God is, was, and is to come; also from the Seven spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ. Here we learn something about what we can Preach of Christ; for here Jesus Christ is:

- a. The faithful witness;
- b. The first begotten from the dead;
- c. The Prince of the kings of the earth; and
- d. Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

(4). John is busting out to make a written record of what he saw and heard, but first he has to preach a mini-sermon about Christ in Revelation 1:7.

“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindred of the earth shall wail because of him.”

(5). What John saw and heard of the Ascended Christ helps us to Preach Christ.

a. When John saw the Ascended Christ He looked like the “Son of Man” that John had known, but He was different in that He was clothed with a garment down to His feet and girt about with a golden belt (1:13).

b. Christ’s head and hairs were white like wool and like snow, His eyes like a flame of fire (1:14); His feet like burning brass, His voice as the sound of many waters (1:15); out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun (1:16).

c. When John fell almost dead at His feet, Jesus said:

“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.” (Rev 1:18)

II. Armed with these revelations of the book of Revelation about the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus, and having been given the very name in Revelation 19 with which to begin the Gospel of John, the Apostle John starts the introduction to a unique preaching and teaching of Christ with the “Word of God”, the “Logos”.

1. We Preach the Christ who “in the beginning” at the Creation of the world was there with God, was God, and through Whom all things were made (John 1:1,3).

2. We Preach the Christ who is very Life itself. In Him was the life and this life was the light of men. The life Jesus lived on earth gives life and light: the light of Jesus character and teachings gives life and light. (1:3-5). Even though the darkness of the world and Satan tried to overcome and overwhelm this light and life of Christ, the light shined through the darkness!

3. It was not a “they lived happily ever after” story as the introduction to John (1:9,10) tells us that although the world was made by Christ, and therefore He came into His own (1:11), His own did not know and recognize Him; and let us not be deceived this is still true. Although this true Light of Jesus lights every man without exception that comes into the world, He is not received or recognized by the majority of the world.

4. We Preach Christ by preaching this “Word of God” or “Logos” made flesh that dwelt among us, making, here on earth; the Apostles and others beheld His glory, it was as the only begotten Son of God the Father; and what they beheld was full of grace and truth.

5. We Preach Christ by preaching that this “Word of God” made it possible for making to see the God that had never been seen before. Jesus made God known; and as we Preach Christ this morning from the Gospel of John we will see more and more what both God and Christ are like. (1:18)

6. We preach the Christ of grace and truth; for although the law came through Moses, it was through Christ that grace and truth were fully know. Christ made clear the real truth to the law of Moses, and Jesus showed us the grace in the law of Moses. (1:17)

III. The Seven Miracles or Signs of the Gospel of John supply us with information to Preach Christ.

1. The Water turned into Wine (John 2).

a. We Preach the Christ who in the beginning made all things and therefore was quite able to exercise authority over just a couple of those

elements that He made in the world. When at the marriage feast in Cana, the host ran out of wine, Jesus turned the water into wine.

b. We Preach the Christ Who by turning water into wine showed Himself to be THEJOY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. This marriage feast was a festive occasion and in a home; and Jesus was concerned enough about those social occasions of life to perform the first miracle of the book of John.

c. We Preach the Christ Who turned the water into wine, a sign that began the proof to the world that Jesus was the Son of God, and that increased the faith of the first disciples in Himself as the Son of God.

“This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory: and His disciples believed in Him.” (John 2:11)

2. The healing of the nobleman’s son (John 4).

a. We preach the Christ who in the beginning created man in the image of God, and therefore was quite capable of exercising control over the illnesses of the Bible.

“So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, ‘Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no mans believe.’ The nobleman said to Him, ‘Sir, come down before my child dies!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go you way: your sons lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, ‘Your son lives!’ Then he inquired of them the hour when he go better. And they said to him, ‘Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.’ So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, ‘Your son lives.’ And he himself believed, and his whole household. This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.” (John 4:46-54)

I want you to notice almost the casual, or at least effortless manner, in which Jesus healed the son and dealt with the man. The goal of Jesus was the eternal

salvation of men's souls, and in order for them to go beyond the mere healing of the human body to the salvation of the soul and body, they must believe in Jesus. He addressed the crowd who heard the nobleman, letting them know that the goal of these signs was to engender faith; and also in the nobleman. After he learned when his son began to heal, the very moment at which Jesus said your son is healed, he believed; and also his household believed.

b. We preach the Christ who can exercise control over fear and anxiety as He brought hope and peace to the heart of a grieving parent.

3. The healing of the paralyzed man (John 5).

The nobleman's son had been in his sick condition for only a short period of time, the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem had been paralyzed for 38 years. This required a little more power than the turning of water into wine or the healing of the nobleman's son. With this miracle of the healing of the paralyzed man we Preach the Christ who is a Restorer of both physical and spiritual life, realizing that we must Preach primarily the spiritual life as Christ also did. After the paralyzed man was healed, later Jesus found Him and encouraged him to a faith that would prevent a worse faith than lying impotent every day by the pool of Bethesda. **"Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, 'See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.'"** (John 5:14)

4. Feeding of the 5,000 hungry people (John 6).

a. We preach the Christ who proved that He could also be the Great Shepherd of the Sheep in whose presence they and we can say "I shall not want". We shall not want for bread and meat, we shall not want for healing of the physical body and salvation; and we shall not want for the festive occasions of life, the joy of the Christian life.

Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes and multiplied to feed the crowd of five thousand.

b. We Preach the Jesus who is the Promised Christ, the Prophet that was promised in the Old Testament.

"Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, 'This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.'" (John 5:14)

c. We Preach the Christ who is the Bread of Life. It is not without significance that in the same sixth chapter of John after this miracle with the five loaves and two fishes and after the walking on the water, that Jesus presented His great discourse on the bread of life. "And Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.'" (John 6:35)

5. The walking on water (John 6).

The walk on water by Jesus as He illustrated that He could certainly overcome the very works which He in the beginning made, was more than a simple walk, it was also a calming of the storm and sea.

a. We Preach the Christ who can calm the sea and storm, the Christ who can calm all the storms of life.

b. We Preach the Christ who patiently shows His disciples step by step to a profession of faith. Most of Jesus' disciples were fisherman by trade, and by showing His authority of the elements where they made their living, He engendered faith from them as the Son of God. 6. The healing of the man blind from birth (John 9).

a. We Preach the Christ who is the Light of the world as John told us in the introduction to the Gospel of John. Jesus and His disciples discussed the blind man and the factor of sin in his life before he was healed. It was in that discussion, Jesus said: "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5)

It was then Jesus spat on the ground, made an ointment and placed it on the man's eyes, telling him to go wash in the pool of Siloam; and the man did so, he came back seeing.

b. We preach the Christ of the Introduction to John. I think we appreciate the introduction now more of the Gospel of John. The Apostle John in the Gospel of John had no smaller goal than to prove to people that Jesus was the Promised Prophet and Messiah of the Old Testament, and the Son of God; and in order that they might believe and have life. What John introduced about Christ is what the seven miracles were all about. In the making of water into wine, the Mediator of all Creation—the One of the all things were made

through Him—was able to reconstruct the things He made at first; in the healing of the nobleman’s son, the healing of the paralyzed man, and the healing of the man born blind, the Lord of Creation showed He concern for the Man as the Crown of Creation and His ability and will to overcome any deficiencies that had occurred in His Creation; and in the feeding of the five thousand, the One through whom all the good things to eat had originally been provided, Jesus illustrated the simplicity with which He can still create something out of nothing or out of little; and in the walking on water, the Lord of Creation who made the heavens, the earth, and the seas did not suddenly become a victim of what He had made, rather an Overcomer.

7. The raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11).

a. Lastly in the miracle of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, we Preach Jesus as the Resurrection and Life. And that is exactly what Jesus told the people present before He brought Lazarus back from the dead.

“I am the resurrection and the life, He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:13,14)

b. Herein is the rest of the introduction to the Gospel of John. Jesus is the Life. Starting in John 4:45, we look at as many places in John as time permits where the word “sign” or the equivalent is written. In John 4:45 it is the equivalent of signs: that is the “having seen all these things”, talking about the signs that the Galileans had already seen from when Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover. As we look at these “signs” and the equivalent, don’t forget that the prime subject, or main theme, of John is SIGNS FOR BELIEVING IN JESUS AS THE SON OF GOD. We see that clearly in John 20:30,31:

“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:30,31 NJKV)

11-2: You Will Recall the Signs that Jesus Earlier did at Jerusalem.

1. The Sign of the Zeal of His Passion toward His Father’s Temple.

The exact sign of the work of Jesus was the driving out of the moneychangers, overturning their tables, and herding the cattle out of the outer court of the temple. What the sign really pointed to was the Zeal of Christ for God's Temple. To illustrate how this was what the sign pointed to, John the Apostle, who was there at the time it happened, said that the disciples suddenly had triggered in their mind the scripture of the Old Testament which said, "Zeal for Your house has eaten me up." It was a well-known quote from the Old Testament as recorded in Psalm 69:9, and it was well known as a quote that referred to the Coming "Messiah" or Christ. Did you notice in the purpose of John as recorded in 20:30,31 of what you are to believe about Jesus. First you are to believe that Jesus is the Christ, then the Son of God, and then by believing you might have life in His name. Well, the Christ is the Greek for the same word in Hebrew Messiah. So all that was promised in the many prophecies of the Old Testament about the Coming Messiah, John says you are to apply that to Jesus of Nazareth; and that is the burden of proof that John accepts for the Gospel of John. Well, Jesus' zeal for the temple was a sign along with the memory of the disciples who had learned those promises about the Messiah from youth.

2. The Sign Requested by the Jews: and the Answer of the Destruction of the Temple of Jesus Body and the Restoration in Three Days.

Since you have the zeal to do these things, the Jewish leaders in the temple said, show us a greater sign than this! Jesus said only one sign will be given you; and you have to be patient to wait for it until the end of my life. Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. They scoffed and laugh. During the time of Ezra and Nehemiah it took 46 years to build this temple. This was not the original temple with all its splendor built by Solomon, but the temple rebuilt after the restoration of the Jewish people from Captivity. John comes to the rescue of the reader of John.

"But He was speaking of the temple of His body." (John 2:21 NJKV)

But the disciples of Jesus remembered this statement when He was risen from the dead, so that it engendered faith on their part: faith in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and faith in the words of Jesus. **{NOTE: Parenthetically I think it should be noted here how the actions and words, signs if you would,**

correlate with memories to cause faith or belief. You have seen it twice already here in the review of John 2.) The disciples immediately after Jesus cleansed the temple REMEMBERED their training on the Old Testament of how the Christ was to have zeal or passion for the temple of God. This second time, how it lodged in the mind of the first disciples how Jesus said, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will rebuild it”; and then remembered it three years later after His resurrection. Now the Apostle John is trying to get us to remember what Jesus did at the Passover Feast in Jerusalem, that the Galileans also remembered as Jesus came back in their province, and they flocked to see and hear Him.]

3. These Galileans were among that “many” of John 2:23 that believed on the name of Jesus when they saw the signs that He did. Remember that verse.

“Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.” (John 2:23)

At some point we must elaborate on what it means to believe “in the name of Jesus”, and an introduction should be offered here. It means to believe in the fulness of the meaning of His name as given and designated by God and prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures. His names are Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was given by an angel to Mary and to the nation of Israel. You shall call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins. Christ was the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament, and the Lord puts Him equal with the LORD of the God of this Universe and of heaven.

4. The Sign of Turning the Water into Wine. John marks Cana of Galilee forever as the historical spot where Jesus performed the first miracle-sign.

“So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine.” (John 4:46a NJKV)

But John turns quickly to a new impending sign, and the second miracle-sign.

11-3: The Miracle-Sign of the Healing of the Nobleman’s Son.

You have to be careful in the reading of the Gospel of John. Sometimes “sign” is the kind of Greek word that refers to a miracle-sign, and sometimes it refers to another kind of sign like the driving of the moneychangers out of the temple, or sometimes to the teachings of Jesus. Later we will see that Jesus

Himself refers to all these signs in the Gospel of John as “the works which the Father gave Him to do.” Thus when you read in John 4:54 of the healing of the nobleman’s son as the second sign that Jesus did as He came out of Judea into Galilee, these are the miracle signs; and in the Gospel of John, it is hard to believe, but the whole book is built around only seven miracle signs. Like John concludes that there are many other things that Jesus did that are not written in this book, and many other signs of teaching and works are written in this book; but only seven miracle-signs. Well, the second miracle sign is the healing of the Nobleman’s Son. Jesus did not even go to the household. When He saw the faith of the man in Him as having the capability to heal, Jesus said simply, “Go and your Son lives.” Previously the Son was at the point of death. The man believed the word that Jesus spoke and went home. On the way home, the servants met him to say your son lives, and when he requested at what time he began to amend, it turned out to be the save hour when Jesus said your son lives. The man believed and his household believed in the name of Jesus when told what happened.

11-4: A Re-Occurring sub-theme of the Gospel of John is the Request of the People for Signs.

Before we pass on to the next chapter and to the next mention of signs or the equivalent, there is one more in John 4. It points out a sub-theme of the Gospel of John. It is a request from the people for a sign. You recall how the Jewish leaders in the temple at Jerusalem asked Jesus for a sign to back up the authority He showed in cleansing the temple. The Nobleman was just an opportunity for Jesus to say something that would stick in the memory of the Apostle John and the other disciples. The Nobleman really had one thing primarily on his mind: he wanted his son healed and he knew that Jesus could do it. Why, because he probably was in Jerusalem during the Passover when Jesus performed many signs, or since it was a small country and Galilee was next to Judea the word had arrived before Jesus. Anyway the first reply of Jesus to the Nobleman who request was to come down to his home, Jesus letting him know initially that He did not even need to be there with enough faith.

“Then Jesus said to him, ‘Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.’ (John 4:48)

That alone points out how there are other signs not classified as miracles, but rather classified as wonders; and no doubt the cleansing of the temple would be considered a wonder of authority, as would the teachings from Jesus.

11-5: “These things” Jesus did on the Sabbath Day of John 5:1-18, refers to the Miracle Sign of the Man made to walk at the Pool of Bethesda.

In John 5:16, we find the reaction of the Jewish leaders to Jesus healing the man and their attack on what he told the man to do. The attack was because He did these things on the Sabbath Day. It did not matter to them that Jesus had healed the man; it did not matter that the Jesus who had the authority to heal was also the One who had the authority to tell the man to carry his bed on the Sabbath...Well, it really did matter to them; because the healed man was listening to the authority of Jesus more than the Jewish leaders, and that was a threat to their own authority. They could not heal, that did not have that power from God; and Jesus healed and the people knew it, so that the leaders were jealous. The point of their attack was the Old Testament law which prohibited work on the Sabbath Day. They surely had not come to see Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath Day as well as Lord of all. Even for the disciples that would come later. And before we pass on to the teachings of Jesus as signs, we should note that by the time of this third miracle-sign the opposition of the Jewish leaders had crystallized so that as a group they sought to persecute Him and to kill Him.

“For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things (signs) on the Sabbath.” (John 5:16) Persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him!

11-6: The Teachings of Jesus as Signs that Jesus called The Works that the Father gave Him to do.

We come in John 5:19 to one of the extensive discourses of Jesus. This discourse was prompted by Jesus knowing that the Jews were starting to persecute Him and attempting to kill Him. For the rest of this fifth chapter of John I would focus on the “works” statement of Jesus in John 5:36.

“But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish – the very works that I do – bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent me.” (John 5:36 NJKV)

They knew it was true: Jesus could do miracles and other wonders that the Jewish leaders could not do, and they knew it. They had to eliminate Him for that reason. Those miracles and wonders which Jesus called “works” were themselves as witness that the Father sent Him. You see again how signs point to something beyond themselves, especially the signs that Jesus performed, they pointed to God the Father as the source as only God could work such wonders and miracles. However, we should briefly develop the argument of Jesus in John 5 as it is something repeated often by Jesus, the Apostle John, and all the Apostles of the New Testament.

1. Jesus was Humble in that He admitted the real source of the miracles and other signs as having been learned by the Father. Jesus said that He could do nothing within Himself, but only what the Father told Him to do and showed Him how to do it. Jesus went a step beyond that.
2. The Father loves the Son and therefore Shows Him all these things. These miracles and other signs were signs of love from the Father, signs of love for His only Son.
3. Greater works than these were in store to come from the Father by way of the Son. You will see greater works and you will marvel. Since the Father can raise the dead, and I am sure that you would admit of that, since God is the source of life and He can give life to all: well, the Son is going to give life to all starting with some limited cases that you will see shortly.
4. Jesus jumps from here into the Judgment of God, and if you are not careful you will get lost here. Here is where Jesus starts making it clear that He is the same Lord over healing and over water and Lord over the Judgment of God also. Even as the Father has committed all things to the Lordship of Christ in heaven and on earth, the Father doesn't Judge anybody but rather commits all Judgment to Christ. If you are fearful of Judgment you had best pray to Jesus. Jesus is taking care of Judgment, not God the Father.
5. God's Plan is that All will Honor the Son even as the Father is honored. A lot more people honor or think they honor God than do honor Jesus. The intention of God according to the teachings of Jesus, and I believe them, is that all people of this earth will honor Jesus even as God is honored. In fact Jesus

said that if you do not honor Him, then you really can not honor the Father that sent Jesus in the first place.

6. Jesus explains the way the Father has committed Judgment to Him. Judgment is a matter of life and death; and since those who hear the words of Jesus and believe them, subsequently passing from death into everlasting life, then they also have passed from Judgment into life. There is no more Judgment. The book of Revelation echoes this as it says whoever name was written in the Lamb's book of life did not pass into Judgment.

7. Jesus said the time is coming and the time is now that the dead will come to life. These walking dead in trespasses and sins will hear, Jesus said, the voice of the Son of God – they in person and us through the Apostles and the words they recorded from Jesus like here – and the ones who really hear, and this is important as it is selective hearing and I will have more to say about that from the book of Hebrews, then when they really hear, they will really live, everlasting life that begins at the moment of belief. God the Father Himself is very life, and has life in Himself; and He gives that life to the Son in order that He can pass it on to others. With this life comes the authority of Judgment that was mentioned earlier.

8. Jesus means more than now, the hour is coming, He says, when those that have already died will come back to life. Jesus said that “all” in the graves will hear His voice and come out of the grave: some who have done good – and this spells out the Judgment – to the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.

9. Jesus says that He goes by what He sees and hears in order to pass Judgment, and He Judgment is just because it is not self-seeking, rather a reflection of the will of God the Father.

10. Then Jesus gets into the witness to Himself beyond His own witness.

(1). The Witness of John the Baptist. John was a bright and shining light who said of Jesus, “Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world”, and you went out to listen to him.

(2). The Works the Father gave Jesus to do are a greater witness. The very works that I am do, Jesus said, are from the Father; and bear witness to me.

Here, we see that the works are almost the equivalent of “these things” and the wonders and signs.

(3). Jesus said the Father in His own voice gave witness to Him. Jesus has in mind several ways that the Father’s own voice was a testimony to Him: (a) Of course at the baptism by John the Baptism, the Spirit in the form of a dove came from the Father to fall on Jesus and a voice came out of heaven saying “This is My Beloved Son, listen to Him”;; (b) Through the Spirit of the word that abides only in believers; and (c) the Old Testament Scriptures that testify of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God.

11. Now Jesus gets very blunt and straightforward with them in a way they can not fail to understand. How would you like to have the Son of God talking to you this way. Well, it could happen on the Judgment Day.

a. You think you have eternal life based on the Scriptures, but you don’t and those very Scriptures are the ones that specific the faith in Jesus.

b. You do not have the love of God in you and I know it. Wow, how would you like to hear that when you thought you had eternal life based on the Bible.

c. Jesus said to them, I have come in My Father’s name and you do not receive me; and yet you receive and honor leaders that come in their own name.

d. How can you really believe when you accept honor from one another and yet do not seek the honor that comes from above, from the Father?

e. Moses will condemn you instead of me because Moses wrote of Jesus and you do not believe it!

11-7: John chapter 6 is full of signs: the word “sign” itself is used four times.

It is as if John as we come in our reading to the sixth chapter, wants no mistake that we see that the theme of the Gospel of John is to believe in the signs of Jesus. Therefore we will look carefully at: (1) Those four usages of the word sign and what they refer to; (2) We will look at the extensive discourse of Jesus in chapter six to see how it relates to the signs and belief in Jesus; and (3) then we will look at the reaction of the people and the leaders to these signs – we

already know that many have believed on Jesus because of the signs, and we already know that these signs have engendered hatred, persecution, and an attempt to kill from the leaders of the Jews.

1. Usage of the word “sign” in John 6.

(1). Signs of healing on the sick that caused multitudes to follow Him.

“After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.” (John 6:1,2 NJKV)

This is preliminary to the famous miracle-sign of Jesus when He fed the five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fishes.

2. This miracle-sign of the Feeding of Five Thousand yielded faith from the multitude in Jesus as the Prophet like Moses that would come into the world.

“Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, ‘This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.’ (John 6:14 NJKV)

You recall how Jesus said that Moses in the Old Testament Scriptures was a witness to Him, and how we quoted earlier how Moses predicted in Deuteronomy how a Prophet like Him would come, and the people would listen to Him in all things. Well, these people tried to descend on Jesus right then and there to take Him by force and make Him a King. They knew him to be a Prophet but as yet they did not see Him as also the Suffering Messiah of the Old Testament that would die on the cross. They did not understand the Temple of His body that must die and be rebuilt on the third day. They did not understand the nature of His kingdom as larger than this world. So Jesus escaped from them and went to the other side of the Sea.

3. Here we have a sign not labeled as a sign by the Apostle John and yet nonetheless a miracle.

Jesus went to the other side of the Sea without a boat. The next day the multitude knew that no other boat had been there except the one the disciples of Jesus go into, and Jesus was not with them. The multitude got into boats,

coming across the Sea to Capernaum, and they asked Jesus, “Rabbi (they also recognized him as a Teacher as well as a Prophet) when did you come here.”

4. Jesus Himself in reply mentions Signs.

“Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.” (John 6:14 NJKV)

and what follows is the teaching that the miracle sign of feeding the five thousand refers to...**“Do not labor for the food which perished, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” (John 6:27 NJKV)**

Remember how Jesus quoted to Satan in the wilderness that “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” The tacit assumption here is that every word of the Old Testament proceeds from the mouth of God; and Jesus told us already earlier in John that the words like these teachings that came from Him were really from God.

5. The fourth specific mention of the word “sign” in John 6 does us a big favor in that unmistakably correlates “signs” with “works”. Of course, the Apostle John and Jesus did that for us somewhat in Jesus discourse on witness and how the works the father gave Him to do are witness.

“Therefore they said (the multitude that followed Jesus across the Sea) to Him, What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?” (John 6:30 NJKV)

You see how they asked the question two different ways, no doubt from different ones in the crowd; and the Apostle John was alert to record it with the help of the Holy Spirit. What work or sign will you do that we may see and believe?

6. What follows in Jesus teaching of the Bread of Life goes back to what the miracle sign points to a food from God that when eaten does not perish but leads to Everlasting Life.

11-8: The Teaching of Jesus that He is the Bread of Life and the Response of the People. After the multitude asked Jesus what sign or work would He

perform that they might believe, they mentioned how their forefathers in the wilderness were fed manna from God. It looks like the people were looking to be fed much more than once as with the two fishes and five barley loaves. They even quoted from Exodus how “He gave them bread from heaven.”

1. Jesus identified Himself as the True Bread from Heaven. Jesus explained how He called Himself the true bread from Heaven, because He himself came down from heaven for the very purpose of giving life to the world. Hey, here was the reaction of the crowd: they said, “Lord, give us this bread always.” You see they were still looking to be fed for life. Jesus again tried to explain to them that as the bread of life and when people would come to Him in faith they would never hunger and they would never thirst.

2. Jesus Explains why some of them would actual be there listening but could not believe. You really see Me, Jesus says, as a Prophet and miracle worker, but you do not truly believe. The only ones that can come to Him, Jesus says, is the ones that are given to Him by God the Father. In other words, God the Father decides which ones can come to Jesus in the full sense of the word of received the bread of life. And those that God gives to the Son will not be rejected. Jesus reminds again that He came down from heaven to do the will of God, and since it is the will of the Father that Jesus should not lose those given, He gives them life and will raise them up at the last day. This, I think, is the first mention in John of the “last day” so that we should look at it.

“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will rise him up at the last day.” (John 6:39,40 NJKV)

{NOTE: And now we will complete this Bible study with a combination of signs or works with the diverse reactions (R is for reaction and the type of reaction is numbered) of the people. It is felt that the same reactions of the people in the First Century is the same as the reactions that are possible to people today. And that these are in certain categories.}

11-9: (R1) The Jewish Leaders Murmured because Jesus said that He was the Bread of Life and that He came down from heaven.

“The Jews then murmured against Him, because He said, ‘I am the bread which came down from heaven.’ (John 7:41)

The first reaction we considered is in John 6:41 where the Jewish leaders reacted because Jesus called Himself the Bread of Life and said that He came down from heaven. So this is a reaction to the teaching sign of Jesus of the bread of life that followed the miracle sign of the feeding of the Five Thousand. The sign of course of the feeding of five thousand pointed to Jesus as the Bread of Life. They had investigated this Jesus of Nazareth more than they admitted. Why He is the son of Joseph, we know His Father and Mother.

Once again as He heard the murmuring among the leaders, Jesus reminded them that they could not come to Him unless the Father draw them.

11-10: Some of the Jews quarreled among themselves as to how Jesus could give them His flesh to eat.

“The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, ‘How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?’” (John 6:52)

(R2) The Disciples of Jesus said this is a hard saying.

“These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can understand it?’” (John 6:60 NJKV)

Does this offend you. And He explains how it is the Spirit, the Holy Spirit that gives life.

(R3) Many disciples went back and walked no more with Jesus, but Simon Peter made the famous confession of Faith. (John 6:66 and 68,69).

(R4) At this point even the brothers of Jesus did not believe in Him (John 7:5).

(R5) Murmuring among the people that He is Good and others that He deceived the People. (John 7:12).

(R6) The Jewish leaders as Jesus taught in the Temple marveled about where Jesus received His education (John 7:15,16), and Jesus explains where His doctrine or teachings come from, from God the Father.

(R7) Some People Replied that Jesus had a Demon because He said that the leaders were trying to kill Him (John 7:20,21), because of one work they were trying to kill Him. Others from Jerusalem said this is He that they seek to kill (John 7:13ff); is this Christ, but we know where He is from.

(R8) They sought to take Him but could not as it was not time (John 7:30); but many believed (7:31) when they saw the Signs that He performed.

“Then they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, ‘When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done.’” (John 7:31 NJKV)

(R9) The Pharisees and chief priests sent officers of the Sanhedrin to take Him as they heard what the people were saying about Jesus (John 7:32).

(R10) On the Last day of the Feast as Jesus spoke of the Living water (John 7:37- 39) the reactions were diverse: many said this is the Prophet; many said this is Christ; others will Christ come out of Galilee; and there was a division among the People (John 7:43)

(R11) The Sign of Jesus forgiving the woman in adultery pointed to His teaching as the Light of the Word, and the reaction of the Pharisees was that He was a witness to Himself (John 8:13).

(R12) The Jews argumentatively said “Will you kill yourself?” (John 8:22), and then they asked Him “Who are You?” (John 8:13). But many believed on Him when they heard His answer (John 8:30).

(R13) Jesus tried to tell the disciples who believed in Him that they were disciples indeed if they would abide in His word or teachings (John 8:31); and some replied that since we are Abraham’s seed we have never been in bondage (John 8:33).

(R14) The Jews called Him a Samaritan and a Demon (John 8:48); then after His replies took up stones to stone Him (John 8:59).

(R15) The Pharisees became divided after Jesus performed the miracle-sign of healing the man blind from birth, some said that He could not be of God since

He did not keep the sabbath, and others said how can a man that is a sinner do these signs.

“Therefore some of the Pharisees said, ‘This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.’ Others said, ‘How can a man who is sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them.” (John 9:16)

We should carefully note the reaction of the man healed and then that of the Pharisees who cast him out of the Temple.

More reactions from this sign in John 10:19-21,

(R16) Reaction to the If you are Christ tell us plainly; and I and My Father are one; as they took up stones to stone Him. (John 10:22-42).

It is maintained that human nature being essentially the same from generation to generation, the reactions today would be the same as when Jesus lived and walked on the earth. Perhaps the only real difference is that the people of that time knew far more Bible, and the religious laws were also the socio-political laws. Recall that Paul was trained as a lawyer which meant the law of Israel and well as the religious law. There were some restrictions under the Roman rule in that the people were not allowed to perform executions.

11-11: Who Is Jesus from John 6-10?

We will look at this Bible Study, “Who IS JESUS?”, in terms of Who Jesus said that He was to His contemporaries; in terms of what the Apostle John wrote who He was to them; and in terms of the different reactions and divisions among the people and the leaders as to who Jesus was.

Note how intense it is in these five chapters of John, from chapter six to ten. Jesus does a lot of teaching and Jesus performs miracles; but everything He says unless it is in private to the disciples is challenged, from the Jewish leaders, the people, and even His brothers. We find during the events of these five chapters that many of the disciples that followed Jesus around – some looking for a permanent way to be fed – ceased to follow Him. They could not understand how He was the bread of life. They choked at eating His flesh as the means for everlasting life. In fact one of the many reactions of the people was, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” Jesus explained that to His larger group of disciples, but many still left following Him. {NOTE: And now

we will complete this Bible study with a combination of signs or works with the diverse reactions of the people. It is felt that the same reactions of the people in the First Century is the same as the reactions that are possible to people today. And that these are in certain categories.}

1. The Jewish Leaders Murmured because Jesus said that He was the Bread of Life and that He came down from heaven.

“The Jews then murmured against Him, because He said, ‘I am the bread which came down from heaven.’ (John 6:41)

The first reaction we considered is in John 6:41 where the Jewish leaders reacted because Jesus called Himself the Bread of Life and said that He came down from heaven. So this is a reaction to the teaching sign of Jesus of the bread of life that followed the miracle sign of the feeding of the Five Thousand. The sign of course of the feeding of five thousand pointed to Jesus as the Bread of Life. They had investigated this Jesus of Nazareth more than they admitted. Why He is the son of Joseph, we know His Father and Mother. Once again as He heard the murmuring among the leaders, Jesus reminded them that they could not come to Him unless the Father draw them.

2. Some of the Jews quarreled among themselves as to how Jesus could give them His flesh and blood to eat, and many of the disciples said this is a hard saying. “The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, ‘How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?...These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can understand it?’” (John 6:52,60 NJKV)

Does this offend you. And He explains how it is the Spirit, the Holy Spirit that gives life.

3. Many disciples went back and walked no more with Jesus, but Simon Peter made the famous confession of Faith. (John 6:66 and 68,69).

“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Do you also want to go away?’ Then Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’” (John 6:66-69 NJKV)

4. The brothers chastised Jesus for not more public appearances: At this point even the brothers of Jesus did not believe in Him (John 7:5).

Jesus was walking openly in Galilee more than Judea because the Jews sought to kill Him. And when it was close to time for the Feast of Tabernacles, his brothers chastised Him for not going at first in order that the larger body of disciples could see His works. "Show yourself to the world," was their words.

"For even His brothers did not believe in Him." (John 7:5 NJKV)

5. Seeking of Jesus by Jews, and Murmuring among the people that He is Good and others that He deceived the People. (John 7:12).

Later we will come to a series of three questions from the Pharisees. Here we have some of the Jews, that is Jewish leaders asking "Where is He?" They were actively seeking Him and could not find Him. Of course, their motives already were to persecute and kill Jesus. Already the Jews had placed the people on notice that if anyone believed in Jesus, since it was heresy, they would be put out of the Temple; so the people "murmured among themselves" in a semi whisper.

Some murmured, "Jesus is Good."

Others murmured, "No, Jesus is not good because He deceives the people."

"And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him. Some said, 'He is good'; others said, 'No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.' However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews." (John 7:12,13)

6. The Jewish leaders as Jesus taught in the Temple marveled about where Jesus received His education (John 7:15,16), and Jesus explains where His doctrine or teachings come from.

"And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How does this Man know letters, having never studied?' Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether I speak on My own authority.'" (John 7:15-17 NJKV)

7. Some People Replied that Jesus had a Demon because He said that the leaders were trying to kill Him (John 7:20,21), because of one work they were

trying to kill Him. Others from Jerusalem said this is He that they seek to kill (John 7:13ff); is this Christ, but we know where He is from.

“The people answered and said, ‘You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘I did one work, and you all marvel.” (John 7:20,21 NJKV) This was back at Jerusalem where they knew primarily of only one miracle-sign, that of the healing of the man on the sabbath at the pool of Bethesda.

9. They sought to take Him but could not as it was not time (John 7:30); but many believed (7:31) when they saw the Signs that He performed. The Pharisees and chief priests sent officers of the Sanhedrin to take Him as they heard what the people were saying about Jesus (John 7:32).

“Then they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. And many of the people believed in Him, and said, ‘When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done. The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.” (John 7:31,32 NJKV)

10. On the Last day of the Feast as Jesus spoke of the Living water (John 7:37-39) the reactions were diverse: many said this is the Prophet; many said this is Christ; others will Christ come out of Galilee; and there was a division among the People (John 7:43)

Since this is the most positive reaction of the crowd in Jerusalem to the Teachings of Jesus, we should look at it carefully. What did Jesus teach them?

- (1). Let those that are thirsty come to Him;
- (2). Who believes in Jesus out of his heart, according to the Scripture (Isaiah 12:3,43:20,44:3, and 55:1), would flow rivers of living water.
- (3). John explains this phenomena of water out of the heart as the Holy Spirit, which was not yet come, did come on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension. **“Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, ‘Truly this is the Prophet.’ Others said, ‘This is the Christ,’ but some said, ‘Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem,**

where David was?' So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him." (John 8:40-44 NJKV)

11. The Sign of Jesus forgiving the woman in adultery pointed to His teaching as the Light of the Word, and the reaction of the Pharisees was that He was a witness to Himself (John 8:13).

"The Pharisees therefore said to Him, 'You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.'" (John 8:13 NJKV)

12. A series of questions: from the Pharisees, "Where is your Father?" (John 8:19); from the Jews, "Will He kill Himself?" (John 8:22); from the Jews, "Who are you?" (John 8:13)8-13: (R13) But many believed on Him when they heard His answer (John 8:30). Here is the crux of the whole matter as to how the world has accepted Jesus, how we should accept Jesus. These three key questions, His answers, and then the final answer about His lifting up caused many to believe on Him. Following is the intense sequence.

1. What triggered the first question: the Pharisees stated that His testimony to Himself, when He said "I am the light of the world" was not true because He was His own witness. In other words, He was patting Himself on the back.

2. Jesus replied that He knew where He came from and where He was going back to; then reminded them of the law of the Old Testament which said that the testimony was true from two men; and the conclusion was since the Father and Himself bore testimony to Him as the Light of the World, the testimony was true.

3. The Pharisees could not let it stand there, and the first question in this series came, "Who is your Father?" Always the questions were attempts to trap Jesus. Jesus answered the question in two parts (John 8:19-21): (1) You don't know the Father and you don't know me or stated a different way If you had known the Father you would also know Jesus, the two go hand in hand; and (2) I am leaving, Jesus said, and you will seek me for salvation, but you will die in your sins since you cannot come where I go.

4. This triggered the second question in that series of three, again from the Pharisees, and among themselves but so that the people and Jesus could hear, "Will he kill himself?" They tried to start the rumor that Jesus was going to commit suicide. This question came after Jesus said where I am going you cannot come. Jesus answer this time was once again the heart of the Gospel: (1) You are from this world and I am from another world; (2) You will die in your sins because you do not believe that I am He.

5. This in turn triggered the third question from the Pharisees, probably the most important question that can ever be asked and then answered properly. Let us see what the answer of Jesus is? First the third question, "WHO ARE YOU?" "Who are you, Jesus?" is the most important question than any human on earth can ask.

The answer of Jesus is:

(1). Exactly what I have been saying to you from the beginning, no doubt the beginning of His ministry.

(2). I have many things to say and to Judge of you; but as God is true, I speak to the world the things that I heard from Him. Jesus says that He is only an echo of the Father. What He heard, He repeated! (The Apostle John adds that they did not know that He spoke of the Father since He used the words "He" and "Him".)

(3). Then comes the Gospel of the Atonement. Jesus said that when you have lifted up the Son of Man then you will now know who He is; and that nothing is done by Jesus except what the Father taught Him (the implication here being that it is also recorded by the Father in the Scriptures of the Old Testament). The Father is with Him at all times.

(4). As He spoke these words many believed on Him.

"As He spoke these words, many believed in Him" (John 8:30 NJKV)

(5). You know how Billy Graham seeks to instruct those who believe after they have made a public profession of faith. Well, here Jesus is doing the same thing. We have the Master Teacher telling us exactly what it means to be a Christian, what it means to have faith.

- a. You are indeed my disciples if you abide in my word.
 - b. You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.
13. Some of the believers mixed with the Pharisees were very questioning, they reacted that they were already free since Abraham's seed, never having been in bondage. (John 8:33). Probably more the Pharisees than the believers.

“They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, ‘You will be made free.’” (John 8:33 NJKV)

They wanted to believe, but they did not want to be insulted. They were not slaves to anybody including the despised Roman government that ruler over their country. So Jesus explained what it meant to be in bondage and to be freed by the truth:

14. The Jews called Him a Samaritan and a Demon (John 8:48); then after His replies took up stones to stone Him (John 8:59).

15. The Pharisees became divided after Jesus performed the miracle-sign of healing the man blind from birth, some said that He could not be of God since He did not keep the sabbath, and others said how can a man that is a sinner do these signs. **“Therefore some of the Pharisees said, ‘This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.’ Others said, ‘How can a man who is sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them.” (John 9:16)**

We should carefully note the reaction of the man healed and then that of the Pharisees who cast him out of the Temple. (More reactions from this sign in John 10:19-21.)

16. Reaction to the If you are Christ tell us plainly; and I and My Father are one; as they took up stones to stone Him. (John 10:22-42).

The people seldom, if ever, reacted adversely to the miracles as the miracles did something for them: they reacted to the teachings because that required something from them. Now the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders did react to the miracles as that caused the people to leave them to follow Jesus.

11-12: We should look briefly at the sequence of questions from the Jewish leaders, and the answers of Jesus.

1. “Where Is He?” (John 7:11) The answer of Jesus was by showing up during the middle of the feast time.
2. “How did This Man Get An Education?” (John 7:15) Jesus explained to them that His doctrine or teachings came from the God that sent Him, and that anyone that was actually seeking God’s will they could tell whether it was from God or not. If it comes from a man himself, it is for his own glory; but it is true if the doctrine seeks the glory of the One that sent Him.
3. “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go t the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks” after he said “You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come?”

THE REACTION TO JESUS

“Why” you might ask, “spend so much time on the reactions to Jesus?” Because: (1) like the rest of the Bible these reactions are given to us as examples of how people did and will classically react to the claims of Jesus to be the Savior of the world, the Son of God who died on the cross for the sins of the world; (2) your own reaction to Jesus, the Risen Christ who knocks at the door at every heart will determine your own salvation; (3) to lead momentarily to THE REACTION that is appropriate for salvation {After all, that is the prime reaction in which we are interested!}; and (4) to be somewhat thorough on a historical survey of the real Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of John by the Apostle John, one who was perhaps closest to Jesus than anyone else on earth during Jesus’ life on earth. {What better person to “LEARN CHRIST” from?}

Momentarily we will look at THE REACTION of the Apostle Peter to Jesus, the same one required of us for salvation and the only one that writes our names on the church roll in heaven; but first a little putting of this chapter of John on Jesus in the context of this volume of the LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS commentaries. This title of the set of commentaries. {The number is always changing and growing but the goal is to have nine of them after I rewrite and incorporate some of my ONE COMMENTARIES on the Bible written before 1995, like the one on the LIFE

AND 14 LETTERS FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL, "REMEMBER MY BONDS", the ONE COMMENTARY ON EPHESIANS, the ONE COMMENTARY ON JOHN, and a single, complete commentary on the book of Revelation.}

Sorry you haven't found these in the book stores, as I have chosen to make an individual distribution of the books. The other day an acquaintance, a school teacher from Eastern New Mexico who heard me preach at University Baptist Church, said she has been expecting to see a book with my name on it in the book stores. I explained how both Dr. Charles Meister and myself had sought for many years to find a publisher, and finally, especially after bouts with Broadman Press over the title of my commentary on Romans, GOSPEL PRIDE. {By the way that is another one I should include in the 7 LEARN CHRIST COMMENTARIES, provided the snows don't rise and God is willing. Also by the way, Dr. Meister did find a publisher in South Carolina for his books on Russian poetry, but I am still going the personal distribution route with a priority for my kids and grandkids, those with whom I discuss Christ and the Bible, and other convenient methods as I seek to do the work of a Bible Evangelist in this day when so many churches have "heaped to themselves teachers with itching years", "will not endure sound doctrine", and "have turned away from the truth and turned into fables." You must see that we are in the Falling Away in order to understand what is happening in our world, our country, our churches, and our denomination. It is too pervasive and widespread to have any other explanation. Let us only pray that the Holy Spirit has not yet been withdrawn as Paul predicted in II Thessalonians 2 at the same time he said The Falling Away must take place before the Second Coming of Christ. I apologize for preaching right now, but as these commentaries are so personal, going first to my kids and grandkids, THEY MUST KNOW THAT AS CERTAIN AS IS THE SECOND COMING SO ALSO IS THE FALLING AWAY; AND IT IS AMONG THE CHURCHES OF THE UNITED STATES AS MUCH AS ANY PLACE IN THE WORLD. IT IS NOT A FALLING AWAY FROM THE CHURCHES.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE MAY GO UP. IT IS A FALLING AWAY FROM GOD, CHRIST, THE BIBLE, AND THE SOUND DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE. IT CAN NOT BE BLAMED ON THE YOUNG, FOR IF THIS LAST FALLING

AWAY IS LIKE THE FIRST OF HEBREWS THEN THOSE UNDER 21 ARE SAFE.}

Enough on the personal, back to the LEARN CHRIST commentaries and this third volume of "Christ for Individuals" to set the background and context for what must be your THE REACTION to Jesus' claim to be the Son of God.

1. The purpose of the LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS can be summarized with three points. (Homiletics teachers would say "three points and a poem". Well, I don't have the poetry, that was Dr. Meister's specialty, along with American Studies and "science and religion" which we discussed often before he died about a year ago.)

(1). Paul in the book of Ephesians {my favorite book} gave me the clue when he wrote to the church at Ephesus, a church that he had established and where his longest minister was centered:

"But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus..." (Ephesians 4:20,21 NKJV)

(1). Look carefully at these two verses and follow my exegesis. Can you imagine that Paul must tell a church he established that they have not appropriately learned Christ; and we are not talking about simply learning Christ in an intellectual manner. We are talking about them not learned Christ is the way they acted and lived, and in the manner necessary for salvation. Wow, the Ephesians had the best preacher in the world, next to Jesus, and a long two year minister, and yet Paul must tell them that they did not learn Christ in the proper manner. {I am sure that Paul learned this from Timothy and other messengers after he was imprisoned, and it much of the basis from writing to Timothy in II Timothy. {also the same subject of not enduring sound doctrine and falling away in I Timothy}}

(2). Paul then questions the salvation of the church members at Ephesus. "if indeed you heard Christ and have been taught personally by Christ." Wow, can you imagine sitting across from a church member or church members and point blank questioning their salvation. "if you are in Christ indeed?"

(3). The really great part about this point blank frankness, and concern, from the Apostle Paul to a church were he had labored so long and hard is that we

see in these few words the REAL way to LEARN CHRIST in the fullest sense of salvation.

- a. “if indeed you have heard Christ.”; and
- b. “if indeed you have been taught by Christ.”

That’s it: that is the whole plan of initial salvation. If you hear Christ like Paul is talking about here, and if you have been taught and become taught by Christ, then you are indeed saved. The inverse is true: if you have not really heard Christ for yourself, and if you have not personally been taught by Christ yourself, then you are not saved.

Someone would say, “That is not fair.” How come we are cheated because we are not able to listen to the teachings of Jesus and be personally taught by Jesus as were the Apostles Peter and John and the others. No, that is not what is being discussed by Paul. You see Paul never personally met Jesus like the other Apostles were able to do, but oh yes, Paul did hear Christ and Paul was taught by Christ in an invisible way. {Pardon the word indivisible as I don’t know any other way to describe the way Christ spoke and taught after the Ascension and the assistance of the Holy Spirit: it was and is an invisible work and method!} And now Paul in his writings of Ephesians 4:20,21 and the Apostle John in his writings of John 14 want to share it with YOU.

Let me use John 14 to explain “how” we hear Christ and “how” we are taught by Christ, centered around three questions the disciples asked Jesus, and His answers, as recorded in John 14.

1. Thomas asked Jesus “how can we know the way since we do not know where you are going”. {this is a paraphrase, later I will quote it} Jesus was preparing the first disciples for His crucifixion and Ascension, and the personal loss they would feel from an absence of His companionship and teachings. {even a loss of security}

- a. The question from Thomas.

“Thomas said to him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You ae going, and how can we know the way.’ (John 14:5)

b. The teachings of Jesus before the question from Thomas that provoked the question from Thomas.

“Let not our heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you.” (John 14:1-6)

[1]. Jesus saw the disciples felt troubled and insecure. [2]. Jesus knew that they believed in God, and He sought faith, similar faith from them in Himself. He had spent much time telling them and teaching them and showing them the works that supported His claim to be the Son of God, the Savior of the sins of the world. THAT IS WHAT THE BOOK OF JOHN IS ALL ABOUT, AND IF YOU DON’T SEE THIS YOU MISS THE MESSAGE OF JOHN!

[3]. “in My Father’s house are many mansions”--perhaps Jesus had not previously made it clear in His teachings about how many vacant mansions were left in His Fathers house. Jesus does now as He teaches there in the Garden before the Crucifixion. {Of course, it has become clear to us as we have just finished the study of the last chapters of the book of Revelation, and we know about the 1500 mile high side of New Jerusalem that houses all the mansions.}

[4]. “if it were not so, I would have told you”--you see this is true about the Father’s house of many mansions, otherwise Jesus would have told us differently.

[4]. Wow, here it gets very personal: “I go to prepare a place for you”. Maybe your mansion needs a little house warming, but Jesus Himself has been there for almost two thousand years supervising the angels as they prepare that mansion for you. You see, it is not just a house or a hut, but a mansion. There is real security!

[5]. Now Jesus says that if He is going to prepare a place for them, He will also provide a mode of transportation for them to get there. It is not easy to get an indivisible mansion in an indivisible house in an indivisible city in an indivisible heaven where the indivisible God lives! Well, the Son of God who mediated the Creation of the world and mediated salvation and presently

mediated the confession of our sins before the Father, will come back again and provide transportation as at His Second Coming we meet Him in the air to ever be with Jesus and the Father.

[6]. We want to be where Jesus is, don't we? We want to be where Jesus is there with the Father, don't we? Well, "I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

[7]. "where I go you know" -- TO THE FATHER AND HEAVEN!

[8]. "the way you know" -- TO BELIEVE IN JESUS LIKE WE BELIEVE IN GOD. {for us faith may come in both about the same time}

c. THE ANSWER OF JESUS TO THE QUESTION OF THOMAS.

Having considered in a the question of Thomas and having considered in b the teachings of Jesus before the question that provoked the question from Thomas, we now have the privilege of hearing the answer from Jesus. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" (John 14:6) {You want the "way" to God the Father, eternity, and salvation, Jesus said "I am the way"; you want the truth about life, salvation, and all the perplexing religious question, Jesus said, "I am the truth"; you want LIFE, fuller life with God and Christ here on earth and complete eternal life in eternity, Jesus said, "I am the life."}

2. The second question in John 14, this time asked by Philip.

"Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.' (John 14:8) Philip is saying just Show us what God is like. Let us see God, and that is all we need.

THE ANSWER OF JESUS TO THE QUESTION FROM PHILIP. {Maybe you would get the flow better just to read it for yourself in John 14:1-24, but I pray this is a guide for further understanding and reinforcement.}

"Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that

I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.” (John 14:9-11)

(1). Jesus taught the disciples and showed miracles and showed His character and loved them, and He expects that evidence, called “works”, to engender faith. We have engendered faith by reading about those works in John as “Signs for Believing”.

(2). When you see the visible Jesus you are looking at the invisible Father. Anyway Jesus was visible to Philip and He was visible to John as was He visible to Peter and Matthew, and they made Jesus’ life visible to us by writing it down in visible words in a visible book. {This is a simple introduction to Christian Evidences and Christian Apologetics, the classical and voluminous faith enhancing books to prove that Jesus is the Son of God, that God exists, and that the Bible of 66 books that we have is the Word of God.}

(3). Jesus said that He and the Father are in each other, inseparable.

(4). God the Father is the source and authority for all the words from Jesus.

(5). The Father dwelling in Jesus did all the miracles and other works and teachings that came from Jesus while on earth. {By the way, the Father dwelled invisible in Jesus just as the Father and Jesus must dwell invisibly in us as we will see in the answer of Jesus to the third question.}

(6). “BELIEVE ME”, Jesus says: a. that I am in the Father and the Father in ME, or b. Believe ME for the sake of the works recorded in Gospel of John.

3. The third question in John 14, this time from Judas, not Judas Iscariot.

“Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” (John 14:22)

Isn’t that where we are today in 2004 and beyond? How can Jesus manifest Himself to us so that we can see Him and yet not be seen by the rest of the world?

THE ANSWER OF JESUS TO THE THIRD QUESTION FROM JUDAS. {Finally we are here, this is how to Learn Christ by hearing Him and being taught by Him.} **“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep**

My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” (John 14:23)

I wish that I could make it more simple than this, for this is salvation, this is how to learn Christ, and this is the reaction from the Apostle Peter {still to be discussed} that we must emulate. {Many times we try to make it too simple and Christ is not really learned. The disciples had approximately three years to listen to the teachings of Jesus, watch Jesus, and develop faith; and still it had come to the point where three of the disciples had to ask the three questions of John 14. I think Jimmy Swaggart is correct on this one subject in effectively calling 40 DAYS OF PURPOSE mediocre and border-line itching ears, to think that you can simply have 13 mechanical steps to becoming a Christian.}

(1). You must keep in the process of loving Jesus. “If anyone loves Me...” (2). The person that loves Jesus must also keep the teachings of Jesus, and will indeed keep the teachings of Jesus as proof of that love. {Also I might say, as proof that he or she has indeed Learned Christ, or has been “born again” as some so glibly say with their little automatic formulas for salvation.}

(3). God the Father will love the person who loves Jesus and keeps the words of Jesus. {You see here is part of the reason that our little formulas and automatic plans of salvation do not work. We do not control God the Father. His love comes to us as He ordains, and He will love us when we love Jesus and the teachings of Jesus. That is, if He so desires and so ordains.}

(4). Now here is the miracle of this love of God through love of Jesus Christ:

God the Father and God the Son will invisibly (This is actually the work of the Spirit of God and of Christ, the Holy Spirit. I wish I had space to discuss it here, but read about the Holy Spirit in the chapter on “Some Sounds of a Sound Faith”, and even here in John 14 where Jesus taught about the work of the Holy Spirit.) come and dwell in the heart of the LOVER and Practiced. This is sometimes called the new birth, but I think this is simpler and more powerful. {The new birth, of course, was taught by Jesus and recorded by John in John 3; but the disciples had been taught that, and still they needed to hear this teaching of Jesus. Much like we also need to hear LEARN CHRIST today.}

“...and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” (John 14:23b)
Now finally THE REACTION from the Apostle Peter that we must seek to emulate. You see that all of this is a very personal and individual matter. Parents can not do it for us; a particular preacher or pastor or church or denomination can not do it for us; a community of believers no matter how persuasive can not do it for us; and this is at the very foundation of “Christ for Individuals”, building on the foundation of Learning Christ and from the Apostles and Prophets.

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” (Matthew 16:13 KJV)

“And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” (Matthew 16:14 KJV)

“He saith unto them, But whom say ye and I am?” (Matthew 16:15 KJV)

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16 KJV)

Just remember however that this is in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus’ teachings of John 14 are in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, much later than Peter’s confession of faith, supposedly for all the disciples. While this may have worked for Peter, you can see by the three questions in John 14 that it did not work for Thomas, Philip, and Judas. At least it was a good starting point for teaching and after a while in the Garden from Jesus in John 14 the bottom line on salvation.