got life?
How John's Gospel leads to truth and faith in an age of cynicism and doubt

A Bible Study by Stan Key
—Student Workbook—
Volume II
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WHO’S YOUR DADDY?¹

John 8:1–59

I. Like Father, Like Son

A. In the image of ________________.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve reflected the image of their Creator. They were thus holy and good. Like Father, like son. When they sinned, this image was not destroyed, but it was severely ________________.

B. In the image of ________________.

When Adam had a son, he bore the image of his earthly father. Like father, like son.

_Citation here:

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God....When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after ________________, and named him Seth. (Genesis 5:1–3)_

This means that ________________ of Adam’s descendants have his spiritual DNA. They are born with a ________________ nature, a heart ________________ on sinning, an ________________ to see the truth, and an ________________ to choose the right. Like father, like son.

- “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that ________________ intention of the thoughts of his heart was ________________ evil ________________.” (Gn 6:5).
- “The heart is ________________ above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” (Jer 17:9).
- “For out of the ________________ come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander” (Mt 15:19).

C. In the image of ________________.

Upon reflection, one realizes that the situation is even ________________! Because Satan is the “father” of the original sin Genesis 3, we discover that our spiritual heritage goes back further than the sinful Adam and Eve! Our real spiritual father is the devil! In the Genesis account, two characteristics of Satan are highlighted:

1. He is a ________________. God said that if Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit they would “surely die” (Gn 2:17). The ________________ words of the serpent reveal his character:

- Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast.... He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the _

¹ “Who’s your daddy?” is a slang expression used in a wide variety of contexts, usually with a boastful claim of dominance over the intended listener:
- Music—“The Zombies” (1968) song “Time of the Season” (“What’s your name? Who’s your daddy?...”)
- Movies and culture—Denzel Washington, in “Remember the Titans,” uses the line to show dominance over two athletes.
- Sports—Duke basketball of the 1990s, Indiana basketball (“Hoosier daddy?”), Pedro Martinez 2009 World Series, etc.
- Video Games—“Who’s Your Daddy?” is the title of an online multiplayer game.
tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1–5)

He lies about:

- The ___________ of what God has said: “Did God actually say...?”
- The ___________ of what God has said: “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden.”
- The ___________ of sin. “You will not surely die.”
- The ___________ and intentions of God (he implies God has sinister motives). “…your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God...”

2. He is a ___________.

Because Satan knew that the wages of sin was ___________ (cf. Rm 6:23), in tempting Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit he was clearly intending to kill them! Furthermore, Genesis 4:1–8 reveals the distinctive fingerprint of Satan in how he inspired Cain to kill his brother. “Sin is crouching at the door” (Gn 4:7; see I Jn 3:12). Satan’s murderous nature means that his intentions with humans is always to: ____________, ____________, and ____________. (see Jn 10:10).

D. John 8 helps us to understand who are the children of the God and who are the children of the devil. Discerning who one’s daddy is may be _____ than you think!

II. Examining the text.

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Notes on the text:

A. The woman taken in adultery (Jn 8:1–11).

1. Because these verses are not found in the earliest manuscripts of John, most scholars believe that the story was not part of the original gospel but was added later. Even if it is not part of what John wrote, it has the ring of truth and we will consider it as part of the whole.

2. The Pharisees are “testing” Jesus. The real “trial” here is not of the woman, but of Jesus! They have laid a trap: if Jesus opposes her execution then he is soft of Moses but if he supports it he will be usurping Roman law and thus guilty of treason.

3. There is something suspicious about the Pharisees in that the male partner in this illicit liaison is not included in the impromptu trial! According to Moses, he should be executed as well (Lv 20:10).
4. This is the only reference to Jesus writing anything! And it is in sand... thus, it can’t be preserved. Though there is much speculation about what he actually wrote², we simply do not know.

B. The light of the world (Jn 8:12–30).
   1. When the words “I am” (ego eimi) occur in John, it often has an object: “I am the bread of life,” “I am the light of the world,” “I am the door,” etc. However, on several occasions, the words stand alone, without an object (Jn 4:26; 6:20; 13:19; 18:5–8). Three of these absolute usages of “I am” occur in this chapter:
      - “Unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins” (Jn 8:24).
      - “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am” (Jn 8:28).
      - “Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn 8:59).
   2. Though many believe in Jesus (Jn 8:30), it is a shallow faith that will not last (vv. 31, 48, 59). True disciples abide in Jesus’ words (Jn 8:31; cf. Jn 15:4–6; II Jn 9).

C. The truth will set you free (Jn 8:31–38).
   1. The claim that they have “never been enslaved to anyone” (Jn 8:33) is absurd. They had been enslaved on numerous occasions in history (in Egypt, in Babylon, etc.).

D. You are children of the devil (Jn 8:39–59).
   1. When the Jews say, “we were not born of sexual immorality” (Jn 8:41), they may have been making an allusion to Jesus’ questionable birth.
   2. We reflect the nature of our parents. This is true for Jesus (Jn 8:14, 16, 18, 23, 29, etc.). But it is equally true for the people to whom Jesus is talking. Jesus acknowledges their genetic pedigree (Jn 8:37) but shows that their behavior reveals their true spiritual ancestry (Jn 8:39–44). For Jesus spiritual pedigree is more important than genetic descent. Behavior is proof of your ancestry. Origin determines character.
   3. The proper grammatical way to claim pre-existence would have been to say, “Before Abraham was, I was” (Jn 8:59). In using the present tense, Jesus is making a brazen and blatant claim to deity by attributing the Divine Name to himself (see Ex 3:13–14; Isa 43:10).

III. Light on a dark subject.

Though several themes can be traced through this passage (light, truth, fatherhood, witnesses, Jesus’ identity, etc.) our focus will be on the theme of ___________. The word “sin”³ is used some seven times but the concept is found throughout. This chapter helps us to better understand the ______________ of sin and more importantly, its ______________!

A. The nature of sin.
   1. Sin is not just based in our actions, but in our ______________ (Jn 8:1–11).

² Some suggest he wrote the sins of the accusers. Others suggest he wrote a Bible reference. Other think he was perhaps just doodling, giving time for his words to sink in.

³ Greek, harmartia (noun) and harmartano (verb): missing the mark.
The woman taken in adultery was “caught in the act” (Jn 8:4). Her behavior made it clear that she was a sinner. However, Jesus sees sin not just in outward behaviors but also in inner attitudes and motivations. Speaking to very religious people he said, “Let him who is without sin among you, cast the first stone” (Jn 8:7). Name the sins of the Pharisees:

- ________________
- ________________
- ________________
- ________________
- ________________

2. Sinners ________________ they are sinners (Jn 8:12).

To sin is “to walk in darkness” (Jn 8:12). But the darkness is not caused by the absence of light! The light of the world is here! The darkness is caused by ________________. Increasing the brightness makes no difference for one who is blind. ________________. The most important reality to comprehend about sin as darkness is that you can’t see what you can’t see; you don’t know what you don’t know. In other words, the most dangerous part of being a sinner is ________________ (Jer 17:9). Tax collectors and prostitutes get into the kingdom of God before religious people do (Mt 21:31) not because their sins are “less serious” but because they know they are dirty, rotten sinners! Thus, there is ________________ for them.

3. Sin always leads to ________________ (Jn 8:21, 24).

We see this graphically portrayed in how adultery is a capital offense in the Torah. But Jesus is talking to the Pharisees. All sin, like all ________________, if left untreated, will ultimately lead to death (Rm 6:23).

4. Sin is a form of ________________ (Jn 8:31–38).

“Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin” (Jn 8:34; see Rm 6:16; II Pt 2:19). Sin is more than walking in darkness; it is walking in chains! And just as people who are blind don’t know they are blind, so people who are slaves don’t know they are slaves! “We are the offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?” (Jn 8:33).

Cornelius Plantinga⁴ outlines the “Dynamics of Addiction” as a way to help illustrate the slavery that comes from sin:

a. ________________ of pleasurable and therefore habit-forming behavior, plus escalating tolerance and desire.

b. Unpleasant aftereffects of such behavior, including withdrawal symptoms and ________________.

c. ________________ to moderate or quit, followed by relapses and attendant feelings of guilt, shame, and general distress.

d. Attempts to ease this distress with new rounds of addictive behavior.

e. Deterioration of work and relationships, with accompanying ________________, delusions, and self-deceptions.

f. Gradually increasing preoccupation, then ________________.

g. ________________ in addictive behavior (one’s will has become enslaved).

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⁴ Plantinga, 145.
h. A tendency to draw others into the web of addiction, people who support and enable the addiction (co-dependents).

5. Sin is a ___________ issue (Jn 8:39–47).

Sin not only blinds people to their blindness and their bondage, it also makes them unaware of who their _______________ is. The Jews naively believed that Abraham was their father (Jn 8:33, 39) and that they were children of God (Jn 8:41). But their behavior confirms that, in reality, their father is the devil! Two factors make this irrefutable:

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a _______________ from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a _______________ and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

The Jews were seeking to kill Jesus (Jn 8:37, 40, 59). Not only that, they don’t believe the truth Jesus is speaking precisely because it is the truth! “Because (not “although”) I tell you the truth, you do not believe me” (Jn 8:45). Just as the Father in heaven cannot lie, so the devil cannot tell the truth.

B. The cure for sin.

1. When sin is exposed, the overwhelming temptation is to do what Pharisees have always tried to do. These simply do not work:
   a. _______________. “Sin? What sin?”
   b. Rationalize. “Life’s been hard lately, and therefore I…”
   c. Justify. “My peer group was just pushing me too hard to go along…”
   d. _______________. “If my parents hadn’t divorced, then…”
   e. Deny. “I didn’t do anything.”
   f. Practice some form of ________________.
   g. Kill the ________________.

2. This chapter gives a better way:
   a. Love ________________ and walk in it (Jn 8:12).

   “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son ________________ us from all sin” (I Jn 1:7). The only way to defeat the bondage of a lie is with a ________________.! Only truth can set you free! But this demands humility. The first step to victory over sin is the humble acknowledgment that:
   - I am blind and ignorant and ________________ my true condition.
   - I am a slave to sin.
   - I am a child of the devil.
   - I am a ________________!

   b. ________________ in Jesus (Jn 8:24, 28).

   “Unless you believe that I Am, you will die in your sins... When you have lifted up the Son of Man, they you will know that I am...” (Jn 8:24, 28). The cure for sin is not behavior modification; but believing in the
forgiveness and cleansing that come from the cross where “the Lamb of God ____________ the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29).

c. Be ________________.
The only way to change our genetic code so that the ________________ of Adam and Satan does not dictate our character and fix our destiny is to be born of the Spirit (Jn 3:1–8).

d. ________________ in Jesus and in his words (Jn 8:31–32, 51).

True faith in Jesus involves much more than mental acknowledgment of certain facts. It means we live in him, walk with him, and keep his commandments.

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. What did you learn from this lesson about the nature of sin?
2. What did you learn about the cure for sin?
3. If sin makes us blind and deceives us about our true condition, what hope can any of us every have to see things clearly?
4. Is there any sin in your life that is making you a slave? Which of the characteristics of addiction may be present in your life?
5. Is it really possible to change one’s spiritual DNA?

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**Lord, We Are Vile, Conceived in Sin**

Isaac Watts

*(Sung to the tune of Sweet Hour of Prayer)*

Lord, we are vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts his race, and taints us all.
Soon as we draw our infant breath
The seeds of sin grow up for death;
The law demands a perfect heart,
But we’re defiled in every part.

Behold, we fall before thy face;
Our only refuge is thy grace:
No outward forms can make us clean;
The leprosy lies deep within.
No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
No hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away.

Jesus, thy blood, thy blood alone,
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make us white as snow;
No Jewish types could cleanse us so.
While guilt disturbs and breaks our peace,
Nor flesh nor soul hath rest or ease;
Lord, let us hear thy pard’ning voice,
And make these broken hearts rejoice.
HERE’S MUD IN YOUR EYE:

John 9

I. Blind to the Light of the World

A. A lesson from a cave.

In the darkness of Mammoth Cave, some fish have adapted to their environment by ceasing to grow. Obviously, turning on a light will not enable such an animal to see! These eyeless fish help us better understand that two things are required in order to see the truth that is right in front of us:

1. __________: even perfectly formed eyes will be useless in the dark.
2. __________: bright lights make no difference for someone who is blind.

B. Philosophy 101.

The branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge is called __________. It seeks to answer the question: How do we know what we know? Answering this question is challenging because it demands that we think about how we think; that we look at how we look. This is difficult because our eyes can see everything in the universe except our __________! Thinking about thought is a bit like examining the glasses you wear. We typically look through them, not at them. Occasionally, however, it is good to take them off and examine them.

C. You can know that you know.

John’s Gospel, though __________ enough for children to understand, has __________ teaching about epistemology. By examining themes such as the following, one discovers what John has to say about how we know what we know:

• “To know”—The verb ginōsko is used 56 times and the verb oida 85 times.
• “Light”—The noun phos is used 23 times in John’s Gospel and 6 times in I John (more than a third of its New Testament occurrences). The word “darkness” (scotia) is used 8 times in the Gospel and 6 times in I John.
• “Truth”—The noun aithēria is used 25 times; its adjectival forms, 23 times.
• “To believe”—John uses the verb pisteuo 98 times, but not even once does he use the noun.

All of these themes come together in a dramatic way in John 9.

D. God alone can open blind eyes!

It is important to realize that there are __________ stories in the Old Testament about miraculous healings of the blind. This is something only God can do (Ex 4:11; Ps 146:8). Further, there are __________ New Testament accounts of the apostles giving sight to the blind (other than when Ananias restored sight to Paul in Acts 9:17–19). However, there are more stories of Jesus giving sight to the blind than of any other sort of miracle! Obviously, opening blind eyes is a

\[1\] The phrase “Here’s mud in your eye” is sometimes used as a toast, along the lines of “Cheers” or “Good health.” Though it sounds negative, it actually has a very positive meaning. Its origin comes from John 9:6, where Jesus healed a blind man by anointing his eyes with mud.

powerful _________________ of who the Messiah is and what he has come to do. The physical healing points beyond itself to a deeper truth.

E. Chapter 9 plays a pivotal role in the Gospel of John.

1. Its length, level of detail, and the care used in _________________ show us its importance in the broader narrative.

2. It is the ironic and _________________ conclusion (Jn 9:35–41) that reveals the primary importance of this story.
   - The blind man _________________, with spiritual as well as physical sight.
   - The Pharisees, who claim to see spiritual truth clearly, are _________________.

3. The light of the world has come (Jn 8:12; 9:5), and yet many remain in darkness! How can this be? The reason is that light both illuminates and ________. Though its purpose is to enlighten, its presence inevitably causes ________. In other words, the coming of light is the coming of ________!

So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still ________ believe in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Therefore they ________ believe. For again Isaiah said, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.” Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. (John 12:35–41)

II. Examining the Text

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<th>The Neighbors How were your eyes opened?</th>
<th>The Pharisees This man is not from God for he does not keep the Sabbath</th>
<th>The Parents We don’t know how he has regained his sight</th>
<th>The Pharisees We know Jesus is a sinner… and you are too!</th>
<th>Jesus For judgment I came into this world</th>
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A. Sight is closely related to _________________. Notice how John emphasizes knowledge in the telling of this story:

1. Three times the former blind man humbly acknowledges his ____________:
   “Though my physical eyes are healed, there is still much I do not see.”
   - The neighbors ask him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.” (Jn 9:12).
   - “Whether he is a sinner I do not know.” (Jn 9:25).
   - Jesus asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “Who is he, sir?” (Jn 9:35–36).

2. Three times, the Pharisees boldly assert their total ________________:
   “We know that we see clearly!”
   - “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath” (Jn 9:16).
   - “We know that this man is a sinner” (Jn 9:24).
• “We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from” (Jn 9:29).

B. This story lays out the blind man’s ______________ in faith. Beginning from not knowing anything about Jesus to worshipping him as Lord and Savior, the story is a sort of paradigm for growth in discipleship:

• He refers to the one who healed him as “the _______ called Jesus” (Jn 9:11).
• When asked specifically about Jesus’s identity, he calls him a “_____________” (Jn 9:17).
• Later, he concludes that Jesus is “_____________” (Jn 9:33).
• Finally, he confesses: “I believe [that you are the Son of Man]” and he _______ Jesus (Jn 9:35–37).

C. This story begins by raising the question of the relationship between blindness and ______________ (Jn 9:1–4). Both the disciples (Jn 9:2) and the Pharisees (Jn 9:34) assume that blindness is ______________ by someone’s sin (the man or his parents). However, Jesus rejects this causal connection. Notice that while the connection between sin and physical blindness is non-existent, the connection between sin and ______________ blindness is emphasized!

Jesus said, “For ______________ I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains. (John 9:39–41)

III. Why can’t I see? Why can’t I believe? Why can’t I know the truth?

A. If you are honestly asking the question, there is ______________!

The problem is that many don’t ask because people don’t know what they don’t know; they don’t see what they can’t see. The first step toward sight is the ______________ recognition that one is blind. This relates to two very different types of people:

1. Some are ______________ blind. They can’t see because they can’t see. For these people, there is great hope.

2. Some are ______________ blind. These people have made a choice to reject the light and live in darkness. For these people, time is ______________.

“The light is with you a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you.” (Jn 12:35).

B. A review of Biblical history can help.

Light has come! The problem is not the darkness but rather our blindness. But God (and God alone!) can still open blind eyes to see the Truth.

1. When Hagar became pregnant, Sarah dealt harshly with her and she fled into the desert. But the angel of Lord found Hagar and reassured her and blessed her.

So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, “You are a God of seeing,” [or, You are a ______________], for she said, “Truly here I have seen him who looks after me” [or, Have I really seen him who sees me? Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi [the well of the Living One who sees me]; it lies between Kadesh and Bered. (Genesis 16:13–14)
LESSON: To see, we must first realize that ____________! The cure for blindness begins only when we discover that God is watching over us all the time.

2. Later, Sarah cast out the slave woman Hagar and her son Ishmael. Again, Hagar went into the desert. When her water ran out, she knew she and her son would die, so she “lifted up her voice and wept.” God heard her cry and “________________, and she saw a well of water” (Gn 21:15–21).

LESSON: We tend to think that our difficulties in life are caused by God’s absence and inaction. Wrong! God has _______________ the well! But because of our grief, bitterness, and unbelief, we can’t see it—until he opens our eyes.

3. Not only are we blind to the blessings of God that are all around us, we are also blind to the ______________ that threaten our safety and well-being. Balaam’s donkey saw what the prophet could not see: an adversarial angel blocking their path.

\[ \text{Then the Lord} \text{_____________ of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand... And the angel said to him... “I have come to oppose you because your way is perverse before me....”} \] (Numbers 22:31–32)

LESSON: Spiritual blindness makes us _______________ of the dangers when we wander from the straight path of truth.

4. When the Syrian army surrounded the city of Dothan, intending to do harm to Elisha, who was trapped inside, the prophet’s servant was terrified; “Alas, my master! What shall we do?”

\[ \text{He said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Then Elisha prayed and said, “O Lord, please} \text{_____________ that he may see.” So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (II Kings} \text{6:16–17)} \]

LESSON: Spiritual blindness makes us unaware of the ______________ of God at our fingertips. But again, we can see them only when the Lord enables us to see.

5. After the resurrection, Jesus was present with his disciples, but “their eyes were kept from recognizing him” (Lk 24:16). But when he blessed, broke, and shared bread with them, “their eyes were opened, and they recognized him” (Lk 24:31).

LESSON: Before concluding that the difficulties of life prove the ______________ of Jesus, ask God to open your eyes. He may be sitting ________________!

6. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things ________________.... And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that ________________ and that he ________________ those who seek him... These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having ________________ and greeted them from afar... [By faith Moses] considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was ________________ to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as ________________ him who is invisible’” (Hebrews 11:1, 6, 13, 26–27).

LESSON: Without faith we simply cannot please God. And faith is the gift of God that makes it possible to see him in ________________!
C. __________ God to open your eyes; trust him to give you the ____________.

The problem is not the absence of light but our blindness. Some are innocently blind (like the blind man in John 9). Others are willfully blind (like the Pharisees). But Jesus can open the eyes of anyone who ______________ comes seeking a divine touch that will enable them to see. But don’t delay: night is coming! Those who reject the light will be ______________ by its brilliance! Those who receive the light will become sons and daughters of light.

For at one time you were ______________, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will ______________.”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS

1. In this passage, Jesus says that sin is not the cause of the beggar’s blindness but it is the cause the Pharisee’s blindness. Discuss this.
2. The narrative describes the growing faith of the man who had been healed: he believed Jesus was a man, then a prophet, and finally he worshiped him as Lord and Savior. What should we learn from this?
3. What have you learned from this lesson about epistemology? How do we know that we know?
4. Are there areas of your life where you just can’t see? Describe those areas. Has this lesson enabled you to “see” something you didn’t see before?
5. Think of someone you know who is spiritually blind. How will this study affect the way you think, pray, and witness to him/her?
FINDING THE DOOR

John 10:7–10

I. Looking for the Door

A. It seems that humans have always recognized the ________________ of doors. We find doors used in various religions, in dreams, in architecture, and especially in ________________. The metaphorical power of this simple symbol is seen when we think about how a door:

1. Gives a ________________ of what is on the other side.
2. Provides a ________________ from here to there. It enables you to walk through a wall!
3. May be open or closed; inclusive or exclusive; __________ or __________.
4. Indicates that something is either about to __________ or to __________.
5. Is typically quite ________________ and small.
6. Confronts us with an opportunity; a ________________.
7. Preaches a ________________ every time we pass through one.

B. Consider, for example, how doors are used in:

1. Shintoism (religion of Japan). The archway is perhaps the primary symbol.
2. The Roman god Janus was the god of doors (beginnings, endings, transitions, etc.). He is usually depicted as having two faces.
3. The story of “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves” tells how a poor woodcutter (Ali Baba) discovers a cave full of treasure which is sealed so that the door can only be opened by speaking the magic words “Open Sesame.”
4. An early scene in Les Misérables (Victor Hugo) tells how Jean Valjean, just released from 19 years in prison, comes to a village and knocks on many doors looking for shelter and hope. Every door is slammed in his face. In despair, he slumps on a park bench. A woman comes to him and, hearing his story, says, “Have you knocked at that door, there?... Knock there” (11).
5. In the Disney movie Frozen, Anna says to Hans: “All my life has been a series of doors in my face and then suddenly I bump into you.” Then she sings, “Love Is an Open Door.”
6. In the movie Titanic, Rose is saved by finding a floating door that is just big enough to save her alone. As Jack sinks in death, he makes her promise that she will live a long life and never give up.
7. The Chronicles of Narnia are full of doors. The wardrobe is a passageway that leads from England to another world. Perhaps the most powerful portrayal is in Prince Caspian when Aslan builds a doorway in a field that appears to lead nowhere. But those who stepped through this door immediately entered another world. In his essay “The Weight of Glory,” C. S. Lewis explains his love for the symbolism of doors.

Apparently, then, our lifelong nostalgia, our longing to be reunited with something in the universe from which we now feel cut off, to be on the
inside of some door, which we have always seen from the outside, is no mere neurotic fancy, but the truest index of our real situation... At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door... But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumor that it will not always be so. Some day, God willing, we shall get in.”

II. The Door: A Biblical History

Nowhere is the imagery of doors more powerful than in the Bible! From the first page to the last, the inspired writers talk about “the door.” Our study will end in John 10:7–10 with Jesus saying, “I am the door.” But to capture the dramatic impact, we must first explore the biblical history of the door.

A. The door (gate, entrance) to the _______________. Genesis 3:24.

In the beginning there was no ______ and thus, no door. God’s world and man’s world were one and the same (Paradise). Adam and Eve had fellowship with God. But sin created separation and they were expelled from Eden. An angel (cherubim) with a flaming sword was placed at the eastern entrance, making it impossible for Adam and Eve to enter their original home ever again. The ____________!

Point to Ponder: Picture a wall that separates humans from God and our true homeland. Human history is thus lived east of Eden, in the land of Nod (wandering) (Gn 4:16). We are ______________ but can’t get home because even if we could find the door, the entrance is guarded by angels who are armed and dangerous!

B. The door in _______________. Genesis 6:16; 7:16.

God gave Noah specific instructions about the door and when the rains began, he himself shut the door; thus all on the inside were ______________ (safe, secure, full of hope) and all on the outside were ______________ (doomed, lost, full of despair).

Point to Ponder: God’s ______________ provision for salvation from judgment and the wrath to come was the ark. There was only one door and God determined when it would be shut. The same door that saves is the door that condemns. God’s part in salvation is to provide the ark and open the door. Man’s part is to enter in. “One door and only one, and yet its sides are two / Inside and outside, on which side are you?”

C. The door at the _______________ (Heaven’s Gate). Genesis 11:1–9.

The multinational effort to build a tower “with its top in the heavens” (Gn 11:4) was an impressive effort to reach ______________. The Akkadian name bab-ilu, meant “gate of god.” However, God was displeased with such arrogance and confused their speech and ended the futile project.

Point to Ponder: The story of the tower of Babel is meant to be an unforgettable object lesson showing the ______________ of all human efforts to find the doorway that enables us to live in fellowship with God. Those who are brazen enough to claim to be able to reach heaven’s gate by their own noble efforts will invite divine ______________ and the work will end in ______________.

1 Lewis, Weight of Glory, 36–37.

2 A sobering representation of this door is found at The Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky. Visitors get a graphic feel for what it must have meant to be inside the door—and outside!

3 A tragic illustration is the California cult named “Heaven’s Gate” founded by Marshall Applewhite. On March 26, 1997, 39 members of this cult participated in a mass suicide in hopes that they might reach an extraterrestrial spaceship that was supposedly passing by in conjunction with the Hale-Bopp comet.
D. The door at the top of _________________ (Genesis 28:10–17)

Jacob’s ladder (stairway) succeeded where Babel’s tower failed. This stairway was not built by man but _________________ and “the top of it reached to heaven” (Gn 28:12). The angels going back and forth illustrated the mind-boggling possibility of being able to communicate with God! Jacob exclaimed: “This is the _______________” (Gn 28:17).

Point to Ponder: Apparently, this stairway to God had always been there but Jacob, in his _______________ had not seen it: “The Lord is in this place and I did not know it” (Gn 28:16). Note especially how Jesus uses the story of Jacob’s ladder to explain to Nathanael both who he is and why he came: “You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending _______________” (Jn 1:51). In other words, Jesus is the ladder, he is the door between heaven and earth, between God and man.

E. The door of the _________________ (Exodus 25–40)

The Tabernacle was designed by God to _________________ how his redeemed people could live in daily fellowship with him. There were actually three entrances (gates, doors, curtains) that led progressively closer and closer to the presence of God.

1. The _________________ into the courtyard (Ex 27:16; 38:18–19). On the eastern side of the fence that surrounded the Tabernacle was a single gate. It was made “of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework.”

2. The _________________ into the Tabernacle (Ex 26:36–37; 36:37–38). The entrance to the Holy Place included five pillars. This was also made “of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework”.

3. The _________________ that designated the Most Holy Place (Ex 26:31–35; 36:35–36). The massive curtain was also made “of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen” but it had an additional feature: “It shall be made with _________________ skillfully worked into it”⁴. Behind this veil was placed the Ark of the Covenant (where the presence of God resided).

Point to Ponder: When Jesus died on the cross, the veil was torn in two, “from _________________” (Mt 27:50–52). Theologically, this meant that believers now can come boldly into the very throne room of God (Heb 4:14–16).

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a _________________ opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:19–22)

F. The door to _________________ (Ezekiel 40–47; especially 43:4–5; 44:1–3; 47:1–12)

After Solomon’s Temple was destroyed, the Lord gave Ezekiel a vision of what the new Temple would look like. The eastern door would remain _________________ because the glory of the Lord had returned! A life-giving, healing river that flows in increasing strength is flowing out from _________________ of the temple toward the Dead Sea. “There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God” (Ps 46:4; see also Joel 3:18; Zec 14:8; Rv 22:1–2).

⁴ This was certainly a reference to the cherubim who guarded the entrance to the Garden of Eden and the tree of life (Gn 3:24).
Point to Ponder: This passage connects the ________________ with ________________! Jesus was very conscious of this connection. Notice how the water that flows under the door increases both in depth and breadth as it flows, though it has no tributaries! Notice how this water both heals and gives life.

G. The Door in ________________ (Revelation 4:1–2; 19:11; 21:1–3).

John’s vision of the end of human history includes several doors. He sees a “door standing open in heaven” (Rv 4:1–2). Looking inside, he sees a ________________ going on of cosmic proportions. When Christ returns in power and glory, he will come through that open door (Rv 19:11) and then “the kingdom of the world [will] become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever” (Rv 11:15). As the new Jerusalem descends like a bride adorned for her wedding day, we realize that the wall of separation has ________________ and creation and the redeemed are once again united in fellowship with God; a sort of reestablishment of the Garden of Eden. Once again, men and women have access to the ________________.

Point to Ponder: When Christ returns to establish his kingdom on earth, there will be no need for a door because the redeemed are all ________________ with him in intimate fellowship forever. The only “door” that remains is the one that leads to ________________ (see Rv 1:18; 9:1–320:1–15. The redeemed are “shut in” with God. The lost are on the other side, “shut out” forever.

H. ________________ is the door (John 10:7–10)

Jesus not only shows the door, he ________________ the door! Just as a shepherd lays down to sleep across the entryway of the sheepfold to protect the sheep from thieves and from predators, so Jesus is himself the doorway. He is Jacob’s ladder (Jn 1:51). He is the way, the ________________ way, and no one comes to the Father except through him (Jn 14:6).

Point to Ponder: Though the way may seem narrow and hard (see Mt 7:13–14), this is the door that leads to ________________ living (Jn 10:10).

III. Conclusion

A. There is ________________. There really, truly is a point of access between this world and the Kingdom of God; between me and God. Though the wall of separation is broad and high, there is a door that enables one to connect with the other side.

B. The door is ________________. Today is a day of grace and the invitation is given: come inside!

C. There is ________________ door and it is ________________ and hard (Jn 14:6; Mt 7:13–14). The “hardness” does not relate to human effort or meritorious good works. No! It is hard because it is hard to accept (see Jn 6:60). The narrow door means I can’t take any baggage or possessions along with me and I must be ________________ to get it.

D. The door will one day be ________________. Jesus told two parables that emphasized the tragedy of coming to the door when it was already shut (Mt 25:1–13; Lk 13:22–30) The decision is urgent. Today is the day, now is the time. What could be more ________________ and tragic than coming to the door and finding it locked?

E. Jesus is the door. To ________________ him and to ________________ in his name is what it means to walk through the door (Jn 1:12–13).

F. The great privilege of ________________ is to stand by the door. When Jesus gave Peter (and the church) the ________________ to the kingdom (Mt 16:19), he was commissioning his followers to tell others where the door is! Sam Shoemaker
(1893–1963), one of the co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, wrote a poem that captures the true spirit of witnessing: “I Stand by the Door.”

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. Why do you think the imagery of “the door” is such a popular theme in literature and the arts?
2. Which of the doors in our survey of biblical history spoke most deeply to you? Why?
3. Jesus not only shows us the door, he is the door! Explain the distinction.
4. Why is it so “hard” to accept that there is only one door and few people find it? Is there any way to soften this reality?
5. How did the poem by Sam Shoemaker impact you? What would it mean for you to understand your role as a witness as someone who stands by the door?

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**Come to the Ark**

By Anonymous (1846)

(Sung to the tune of “O God, Our Help in Ages Past)

> Come to the ark, come to the ark,  
> To Jesus come away:  
> The pestilence walks forth by night,  
> The arrow flies by day.

> Come to the ark: the waters rise,  
> The seas their billows rear;  
> While darkness gathers o’er the skies,  
> Behold a refuge near.

> Come to the ark, all, all that weep  
> Beneath the sense of sin:  
> Without, deep calleth unto deep;  
> But all is peace within.

> Come to the ark, ere yet the flood  
> Your lingering steps oppose:  
> Come, for the door which open stood  
> Is now about to close.
I Stand by the Door
By Sam Shoemaker (193–1963)

I stand by the door.
I neither go to far in, nor stay to far out.
The door is the most important door in the world—
It is the door through which men walk when they find God.
There is no use my going way inside and staying there,
When so many are still outside and they, as much as I,
Crave to know where the door is.
And all that so many ever find
Is only the wall where the door ought to be.
They creep along the wall like blind men,
With outstretched, groping hands,
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door,
Yet they never find it.
So I stand by the door.

The most tremendous thing in the world
Is for men to find that door—the door to God.
The most important thing that any man can do
Is to take hold of one of those blind, groping hands
And put it on the latch—the latch that only clicks
And opens to the man's own touch.

Men die outside the door, as starving beggars
die
On cold nights in cruel cities in the dead of winter.
Die for want of what is within their grasp.
They live on the other side of it—live because they have not found it.
Nothing else matters compared to helping them find it,
And open it, and walk in, and find Him.
So I stand by the door.

Sometimes I take a deeper look in.
Sometimes venture in a little farther,
But my place seems closer to the opening.
So I stand by the door.

There is another reason why I stand there.
Some people get part way in and become afraid
Lest God and the zeal of His house devour them;
For God is so very great and asks all of us.
And these people feel a cosmic claustrophobia
And want to get out. 'Let me out!' they cry.
And the people way inside only terrify them more....

The people too far in do not see how near these are
To leaving—preoccupied with the wonder of it all.
Somebody must watch for those who have entered the door
But would like to run away. So for them too,
I stand by the door.

I admire the people who go way in.
But I wish they would not forget how it was
Before they got in. Then they would be able to help
The people who have not yet even found the door.
Or the people who want to run away again from God.
You can go in too deeply and stay in too long
And forget the people outside the door.
As for me, I shall take my old accustomed place,
Near enough to God to hear Him and know He is there,
But not so far from men as not to hear them,
And remember they are there too.

Where? Outside the door—
Thousands of them. Millions of them.
But—more important for me—
One of them, two of them, ten of them.
Whose hands I am intended to put on the latch.
So I shall stand by the door and wait
For those who seek it.

'I had rather be a door-keeper
So I stand by the door.'
I. To be a sheep or not to be a sheep, that is the question.

A. Story of the Calvinist who had a nightmare.

B. On ________________, John 10 is about sheep and shepherds. Studies and sermons that work at this level are rich and rewarding, typically focusing on:

1. The qualities of _____________ (defenseless, noisy, herd mentality, dumb, etc.).
2. The qualities of a ________________ (provides food, protects from danger, sleeps in the doorway, etc.).

C. But when one goes ________________, one discovers an even richer and more rewarding wealth of wisdom. At a deeper (theological) level, this chapter is about how to become a sheep; aka ________________ (ordo salutis). This term refers to that series of conceptual steps that denote the progressive ________________ of events that must take place for someone to experience salvation (become a sheep). Some of these steps take place in the ________________ and some are the _________________. What may seem abstract and theoretical, however, has profound and practical implications for how we understand:

- And experience salvation.
- The security of the believer.
- Predestination.
- And practice evangelism.

D. Read John 10, noting especially the words:

1. Voice (Jn 10:3–5, 16, 27); call (Jn 10:3); hear (Jn 10:3, 8, 16, 20, 27)
2. Believe (Jn 10:25–26, 37–38, 42)
3. Know (Jn 10:4, 14–16, 27, 38)
4. Life (Jn 10:10, 28); be saved (Jn 10:9)
5. Division (Jn 10:19). Jesus’ presence divides people into two groups: those who are sheep and those who are not.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Good Shepherd Calls His Sheep</th>
<th>But Many Are Not His Sheep</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They hear his voice</td>
<td>They haven't heard his call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They believe in him</td>
<td>They haven't believed in him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They follow him</td>
<td>They are not his followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thus they have eternal life</td>
<td>Thus they will perish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 10:1–21</td>
<td>John 10:22–42</td>
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Notes on the text:

1. The Old Testament provides many references for the metaphor of God being the good shepherd and Israel being the sheep of his pasture (Ps 23, etc.). However, the passage that offers the richest background for understanding John 10 is _________________.

In this sermon, the prophet castigates the shepherds of Israel because they have not cared for the sheep (fed them, protected them, sought them when they went astray, etc.). Rather, the shepherds have exploited the sheep (fleeced them for wool to wear, slaughtered them for meat to eat, etc.). God is very angry at the shepherds and will judge them severely. The climax of the sermon is the stunning announcement that ____________ will come and be the shepherd for his flock!

2. Though many details enrich the text, the emphasis of the passage is clear:
   - The primary characteristic of a true sheep is that he ______________ of the shepherd. Sheep may be dumb, but they are not stupid.
   - The primary characteristic of a true shepherd is that he ____________ for the sheep. No price is too great to provide for their care and well-being.


So the Jews... said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not _________________. The ________________ that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not _________________. My sheep hear my voice, and _________________, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will ________________, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who ________________ to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:24–29)

A. I would believe if only I could.

The Jews make what seems to be a reasonable demand: “If you are the Messiah, just say so!” They outwardly appear to be ________________ about Jesus. They would believe in him if only they could. They need more ________________—then they will decide.

B. I could believe if only I would.

Jesus refuses to answer with a simple yes or no. First, he tells them that he has already answered that question (see for example Jn 2:19; 3:14–15; 5:46–47; 6:48; 7:37–38; 8:12, 58). Then he mentions the “works” that he has already done: turned water to wine, healed a paralytic, fed 5,000, walked on water, gave sight to a man born blind. Jesus knew that their problem was not a ________________! Jesus knew their problem was not intellectual but rather a willful refusal to believe. They could believe if only they would.

Jesus has turned the tables! The Jews think that ________________ because of the outrageous claims he is making. Jesus, however, reveals that it is the Jews who are on trial because of their obstinate unbelief. The problem is not the lack of evidence but the ________________ and deafness of the human heart! How can ears not hear the Voice of the Shepherd calling them by name? How can eyes not see the Light of the World? Jesus is saying, “I’m not the one on trial here. You are!”

C. The world tends to say, “If Jesus would just show us who he is, then we would believe. Seeing is believing, right?” Jesus says, “If you would just believe then I would show you who I am. _______________!” Augustine put it this way: “Seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand.”

D. Point to Ponder: How much evidence does it take to enable someone to believe? Reason takes you to the diving board and helps you know that jumping is not
But faith is what enables you to _______________! See John 12:28–31a for a dramatic illustration.

E. This text takes us deep into the divine mysteries of the Order of Salvation. It introduces us to great doctrinal truths such as:

1. _______________—The Father “has given” (Jn 10:29) the sheep to Jesus long before Jesus even met the sheep.

2. _______________—When Jesus tells the Jews that they “do not believe because [they] are not among his sheep” (Jn 10:26), he seems to know those who are sheep and those who are not. It seems as if some are elected to salvation and perhaps some aren’t.

3. _______________—Jesus’ sheep “hear” his voice (Jn 10:27) and then believe and follow their shepherd. Others don’t have this experience, but is it because God is not calling or because they are not listening?

4. _______________—Believing in the identity (one with the Father) and mission (to lay down his life) of Jesus is the key to becoming a sheep. But some people simply won’t (can’t?) believe. They say they need more evidence. Really?

5. _______________—Once a sheep is in the fold, Jesus and his Father hold him secure. No outside predator is able to snatch a sheep out of their hands!

The question is: how do these great doctrines (and others) fit together? In what order do they come? Welcome to the doctrine of the Order of Salvation.

F. Two historic interpretations of the Order of Salvation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CALVINISM</th>
<th>WESLEYAN ARMINIANISM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Predestination (the sovereign decrees)</td>
<td>Foreknowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election (unconditional)</td>
<td>Election/Predestination (conditional)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calling (irresistible grace)</td>
<td>Prevenient Grace (resistible)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(based in a limited atonement)</td>
<td>(based in a universal atonement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration (new birth)</td>
<td>Calling (resistible)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repentance &amp; Faith</td>
<td>Repentance &amp; Faith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Regeneration (new birth)</td>
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<td>Perseverance</td>
<td>Perseverance (conditional)</td>
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<td>Glorification</td>
<td>Sanctification</td>
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<td>Glorification</td>
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G. A type of biblical order appears in Romans 8:29–30.

For those whom he _______________ he also _______________ to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also _______________, and those whom he called he also _______________, and those whom he justified he also _______________. (Romans 8:29–30)

III. How to be a sheep!

A. It begins _________________.

God created you for a good purpose. He has a glorious plan for your life. In his infinite grace, he loved you and sovereignly provided the means for your salvation.
Though he knows in advance how your life will turn out, his foreknowledge is not determinative. You are no ________________!

B. ________________ grace.

The light that ________________ (Jn 1:9) makes it possible for you to see the truth though you are blind! And though you are “dead in your trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1), this grace that “goes before” salvation enables you to hear his call and respond. The greatest illustration of this is when Jesus called Lazarus out from the grave. The dead man heard the call! “Lazarus, come out!” (Jn 11:43).

C. The Call.

Sheep know the voice of their shepherd. They hear when he calls ___________. Salvation is not when we call out to God but when he calls out to us. “You did not choose me, but I chose you” (Jn 15:16). But this call confronts us with ___________. Will we listen? Will we respond? Will we follow? Prevenient grace makes the choice a real one!

D. Repentance and Faith.

As we respond to Jesus’ call, we turn from our sins and put our trust in the one who calls. There is no ________________ in this. The ability to respond is not the result of our own noble efforts or hard work. “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is ________________, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8–9).

E. The image of God.

Repentance and faith make it now possible for the sanctifying Spirit of God to begin a work of ________________. We are born again and the work of sanctification begins, which restores the image of God. This means that holiness is more than a positional state as we are covered with robes of Christ’s righteousness. It means that our heart is genuinely changed and we are perfected in love.

F. Assurance of salvation.

Our salvation is absolutely secure as long as we remain in the sheep fold. No one can snatch us out of his hands (Jn 10:28–29). Salvation is not dependent on my hold on God but on ________________! However, the reality of indwelling sin makes it possible for one to wander out of the fold and potentially one day reach such a state of disobedience that ________________ occurs, and salvation is lost.

G. Glorification.

For those who continue in faith to the end, a crown of life awaits. “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears ________________, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure” (I Jn 3:2–3).

IV. Predestined to Choose.

A. You are gods.

When Jesus quotes Psalm 82:6 (“You are gods”), he is neither introducing some new pantheistic doctrine of divine humanity nor equating his own unique divine status (“I and the Father are one”) with humans. The reference seems aimed at the unbelieving Jews, reminding them that they were masters of ____________. They had a “godlike” ability to choose—and like all divine choices, the consequences will go on forever! Deep within every human soul resides a kingdom where ________________. Not even
Almighty God will intervene! God will go to every conceivable length and expense to save people, but he will never rob them of their God-given ability to choose!

B. Yet no one can boast.

God’s wisdom has ordained so that prevenient __________________ enables even dead sinners to respond and so that there is just enough __________________ to make faith possible. If we are ultimately saved, it will be by grace alone (He did it!). But if we are lost, it will be our own fault (I did it).

C. Today, if you hear his voice.

Salvation, like marriage, is an ongoing __________________. There may have been an original choice, but, like any relationship, salvation is composed of decisions made every day. ___________ is the day of salvation! “Today, if you ______________, do not harden your hearts...” (Heb 3:7–4:11).

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. What is the primary characteristic of a sheep?
2. If sinners are dead (and thus deaf and blind), how is it possible for them to hear the voice of the One who calls them or to see the light of the world?
3. What are the implications that flow out of our theology of how we understand the Order of Salvation?
4. Discuss the phrase “predestined to choose.”
5. How do most people in the church today understand the security of the believer? Has this study confirmed that understanding or challenged it?

_The battle is lost or won in the secret places of the will before God.... The battle may take one minute or a year, that will depend on me, not on God; but it must be wrestled out alone before God.... Nothing has any power over the man who has fought out the battle before God and won there..._ (Oswald Chambers, 362).
‘Tis Not that I Did Choose You
By Josiah Conder (1836)

Lord, ’tis not that I did choose You;
That, I know, could never be,
For this heart would still refuse You
Had Your grace not chosen me.
You removed the sin that stained me,
Cleansing me to be Your own;
For this purpose You ordained me,
That I live for you alone.

It was grace in Christ that called me,
Taught my darkened heart and mind,
Else the world had yet enthralled me,
To Your heav’nly glories blind.
Now I worship none above You;
For Your grace alone I thirst,
Knowing well that, if I love You,
You, O Father, loved me first.

Haste then on from grace to glory,
Armed by faith and winged by prayer.
All but heav’n is transitory;
God’s own hand shall guide you there.
Soon shall end this earthly story;
Swift shall pass the pilgrim days,
Hope soon change to heav’nly glory,
Faith to sight and prayer to praise.
I. In search of the real Jesus.

After spending three years in daily fellowship, Jesus asked Philip a surprising question: “Have I been with you so long, and you still _______________?” (Jn 14:9). Yes, it’s true. One can spend lots of time with Jesus and yet fail to really know him.

A. The quest for the historical Jesus.

History is full of examples of those who have spent time with Jesus, wanting to know him, but in the end the “Jesus” they discovered was only _______________ reflected in a distorted mirror. For example, some have discovered:

1. The _______________ Jesus. Pious, contemplative, monastic, and ready to teach a class on Spiritual Formation.
2. The _______________ Jesus. Chill out and drop out of the rat race and move to a farm in Montana and form a community of love.
3. The _______________ Jesus. It’s cutting edge, cool, and hip to be a Jesus follower.
4. The _______________ Jesus. It’s all about helping the hungry, the marginalized, the poor, and those who have been victimized.
5. The _______________ Jesus. Whether on the left or the right, Jesus is identified with a specific political agenda.
6. The _______________ Jesus. Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a little child. Jesus looks and acts a lot like Mr. Rogers.
7. The _______________ Jesus. Jesus can help you discover healing from past hurts and enable you to find true self-esteem.
8. The _______________ Jesus. Jesus wants you to be healthy, wealthy, and happy.

B. The only Jesus who has power to save is the true Jesus revealed in the New Testament.

I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims _______________ than the one we proclaimed... you put up with it readily enough. (II Corinthians 11:3–4)

C. One of the ways people have misunderstood the real Jesus is in terms of his _______________. He may occasionally smile, but for the most part he is stoical, calm, and collected. This is what it means to be spiritual, right? To picture him angry, sad, or agitated is difficult. However, two tragic consequences result from a _______________ Jesus:

1. Like Philip, we don’t really know him. This is serious and has the potential to put our very _______________ at stake. “Another Jesus” has no power to save.

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1 Thus, many picture Jesus as emotionless, perhaps like Spock of Star Trek. Being half-Vulcan, Spock is a type of humanoid that lives by reason and logic with as little interference from emotion as possible.
2. An emotionless Jesus is not fully human. Thus, we have neither the model to help us express nor the power to express them properly.

D. This study of John 11 will focus especially on the emotions of Jesus—and what that means for you and for me. We will center our attention on verses 33–38.

II. A brief survey of John 11:1–53.

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<tbody>
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<td>Comforts Mary &amp; Martha</td>
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<td>He dies</td>
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<td>Mary &amp; Martha</td>
<td>“Jesus, come and help!”</td>
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<td>Faith</td>
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Notes:

1. The main character, Lazarus, never speaks and is passive throughout the narrative. He only responds when is called (Jn 11:43), illustrating the truth of John 10:3, “The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.”

2. This story is not really about life and death but about and . Mary and Martha are heroines because, in the most desperate of circumstances, they believe! Their faith is not in what Jesus will do but in ! “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God...” (Jn 11:27). Key verse: “If you believe you will see...” (Jn 11:40). The world says that is believing. The Gospel says, believing is seeing. “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent” (Jn 6:29).

3. The High Priest Caiaphas was arrogant, unloving, cynical, and self-serving, and yet he still preached a really (Jn 11:49–53): Jesus will “die ” (on behalf of, in the place of)—not only the Jewish people, but people!

4. John wants us to see the similarities between the resurrection of Lazarus (Jn 11:38–44) and the resurrection of Jesus (Jn 20:1–29): burial in a cave, a great stone, the role of women, the grave clothes, etc. But especially he wants us to see the !

a. The stone. The stone at the entrance to Lazarus’ tomb was rolled away so that Lazarus could . But the stone at the entrance to Jesus’ tomb was (miraculously!) rolled away so that the disciples could !

b. The grave clothes (the wrapping, the shroud). Both Lazarus and Jesus were wrapped like a mummy. When raised, Lazarus could thus only shuffle until to get out of this straight jacket (Jn 11:44). How different was the situation with Jesus (read Jn 20:5–8). The linen clothes surrounding the body had like a cocoon—the body had somehow passed through the wrapping and the face cloth was by itself. Just seeing this produced faith in disciples!

c. The body. Lazarus re-inhabited his old body. Technically, we should call what happened to him a or a of a
corpse.2 One day, he would go through the death experience all over again—poor fellow. Similarly, Jesus came to life again in a ______________ body (he was no ghost). He could be touched and he could eat food (Lk 24:36–43). His body was so ordinary, Mary Magdalene mistook him for the gardener (Jn 20:15) and the travelers on the road to Emmaus thought he was just another Passover visitor in Jerusalem (Lk 24:16, 18, 31). And yet, in this new and glorified body, Jesus could appear and disappear behind closed doors. He could move immediately from one location to another. Jesus’ resurrection was the first installment of the final great resurrection at the Last Day (Jn 5:28–29), when all believers will receive a “_______________” like his: imperishable, glorious, and powerful (I Cor 15:35–53; Phil 3:21).

III. Sanctified Emotions.

In telling the story, John is just as struck by the emotions of Jesus as he is by the raising of Lazarus. Rather than downplaying these emotions, John ______________ them! Nowhere else do we have such a glimpse into the emotional life of our Lord. As he faced death,3 Jesus’ emotions were ignited to fiery heat.

*When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was ______________ in his spirit and ______________. And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus ______________, So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?” Then Jesus, ______________ again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. (John 11:33–38)*

A. Though, Jesus exhibited other emotions throughout his life and ministry,6 we will focus only on the three mentioned here:

1. ______________ mixed with ______________.

   Jesus is “deeply moved” (Jn 11:33, 38). The Greek word (*embrimaomai*) is very strong and can even be used to describe the snorting of a horse. The word typically refers to anger and indignation. Notice what provoked this emotional response in Jesus in this setting. He saw:

   • Mary and the ______________—empathy, sympathy, etc.
   • The ______________—death, separation, etc.
   • ______________, only a few days away—separation, condemnation, and hell!

   On other occasions Jesus got visibly upset. Note especially the things that made him angry (the ______________) and how his anger was mixed with ______________:

   a. Religious ______________.

      When the Temple was misused and worship was turned into a market, Jesus took a whip and cleaned house. “Zeal for your house will ______________ me” (Jn 2:13–17). See also Matthew 23.

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2 Lazarus had a type of near-death experience.
3 Paul calls death “the last enemy” (1 Cor 15:26). Though Jesus seemed calm when confronting disease, demons, and sin, he was profoundly agitated when he looked death in the face!
4 Other translations: “groaned” (KJV), “a deep anger welled up within him” (NLT), “moved with indignation” (Living Bible).
5 Other translations: “visibly distressed” (J.B. Philips).
6 Notably, compassion and joy.
b. Hard hearts and ________________ unbelief.

When the Pharisees complained that Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath, “he looked around at them with anger, ________________ at their hardness of heart” (Mk 3:5).

c. Neglect of ________________.

When his disciples hindered children from coming to him, Jesus became “__________________” (Mk 10:13–14). The Greek word (aganakteo) also carries the idea of grief.

d. Spiritual ________________.

Though the word “anger” is not used, the church of Laodicea provoked a visceral reaction for Jesus. Their lukewarm faith made him __________ (Rv 3:15–16).

NOTE: Though Jesus is a ________________, he can become very angry.7 Indeed, ________________ is one of his primary characteristics! This has profound implications for his followers. The point is not to get rid of (suppress, deny, etc.) our anger but to model our anger after his (Eph 4:26). This is done when:

• We become angry for the ________________.
• We express anger in the ________________.
• Our anger is mixed with ________________.

2. Inner ________________.

Jesus is “greatly troubled” (Jn 11:33; see also Jn 12:27; 13:21). The Greek word (tarasso) means to stir up, to disturb, to be terribly upset. It can be used of water that has been troubled (Jn 5:7) or a mob of people that is agitated (Acts 17:13). Though Jesus is “troubled,” he tells his disciples not to be: “Let not your heart be troubled” (Jn 14:1, 27).

NOTE: In ministry to others, often to bring peace to someone else’s troubled heart means that my own inner world ________________.

3. ________________.

Jesus “weeps” (Jn 11:35). The shortest verse in the Bible actually conveys a profound truth. Notice the ________________ between Jesus and the others at the tomb. Martha and her friends are ________________ loudly and ________________ hysterically (klaio—Jn 11:31, 33). Jesus is crying, shedding tears (dakruo—Jn 11:35). This is the only place in the New Testament where this verb is used.8 It is almost as if the picture of Jesus weeping is ________________ in all human history!

NOTE: A single tear quietly running down the cheek of the Master reveals a deeper grief than the noisy histrionics of everyone else. Emotions must never be measured by ________________ signs alone.

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7 When the sixth seal is opened during the last days, kings, generals and other unrepentant sinners will cry out in terror for mountains and rocks to fall on them to shield them from “the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev 6:16).
8 Though the noun form (“tears”) is used often.

Think about these three emotions (anger, inner turmoil, grief). In Jesus, these emotions are expressed _________________—without sin. Jesus shows us what it means to be _________________. *Behold, the man!* (Jn 19:5). What about you? How are these emotions expressed (or not expressed) in your life? Find a quiet corner and ask the Holy Spirit to help you answer the following questions:

1. **Anger**
   - What makes you angry?
   - What *should* make you angry?
   - How should you express this anger?

2. **Inner turmoil**
   - What causes your heart to be troubled?
   - What *should* cause your heart to be troubled?
   - How should you express this inner turmoil?

3. **Grief**
   - What makes you sad and causes you grief?
   - What *should* cause you grief?
   - How should you express this grief?

**Conclusion:** God does not want to remove our emotions, he wants to _________________ them!

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did you learn from this lesson about the emotions of Jesus?
2. What did you learn from this lesson about your own emotions?
3. Share with your group some of your own discoveries from the self-discovery questions you answered in III. B.
Jesus Wept!
John R. MacDuff & J. Calvin Bushey
(sung to the tune of “Once in Royal David’s City”)

Jesus wept! Those tears are over,
But his heart is still the same;
Kinsman, friend, and elder brother,
Is his everlasting name.
Savior, who can love like thee,
Gracious one of Bethany?

When the pangs of trial seize me,
When the waves of sorrow roll,
I will lay my head on Jesus,
Refuge of the troubled soul.
Surely, none can feel like thee,
Weeping one of Bethany!

Jesus wept! And still in glory
He can mark each mourner’s tear;
Loving to retrace the story
Of the hearts he solaced here;
Lord, when I am called to die,
Let me think of Bethany.

Jesus wept! That tear of sorrow
Is a legacy of love;
Yesterday, today, tomorrow,
He the same doth ever prove.
Thou art all in all to me,
Living one of Bethany.
I. The Importance of Symbols.
   A. Imagine a religious cult whose leader was executed in an __________. But rather than being embarrassed, the members actually began to celebrate their leader’s execution and the electric chair became the symbol of their faith and worship.
   B. As strange as the imagined story may sound, the rise of Christianity is even stranger! The cross is no incidental part of the Christian faith. Without the cross there is no Christianity! The Christian faith and practice are _______________. The cross defines what we believe and how we live. It is _______________ that unlocks the mystery of the gospel.
   C. Though some may think that the _______________ of the cross is something imposed by a group of morbidly pessimistic theologians in later centuries, nothing could be further from the truth! The fundamental importance of the cross is spelled out clearly in the teachings of Jesus and the apostles:
      • “And Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man _______________ many things and be rejected… and be killed… And he said this plainly” (Mk 8:31–32).
      • “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to _______________ as a ransom for many” (Mk 10:45).
      • “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd _______________ for the sheep” (Jn 10:11).
      • “I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him ____________” (I Cor 2:2).
      • “Far be it from me to boast except in _______________ of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal 6:14).
   D. Few passages emphasize the centrality of the cross with greater clarity than John 12.

II. The Hour Has Come.
   A. In discerning the will of God, sometimes the When? is as important as the What? For Jesus to accomplish his mission, _______________ is of utmost importance. The Gospel of John emphasizes this:
      1. Repeatedly, Jesus resisted pressure from other people who tried to push him to action and to declare who he was and why he had come. Over and over, he said, “My hour has _______________ come” (Jn 2:4; 7:6–8, 30; 8:20).
      2. But in John 12, the situation changes. Now it becomes crystal clear to Jesus that “the hour _______________” (Jn 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).
   B. The hour for what?
      In speaking of his “hour,” Jesus was referring to _______________ on which he was sent. Infinitely more important than healing the sick, feeding the hungry, teaching the uninformed, or raising the dead, Jesus’ mission, as the _______________, was to “______________” (Jn 1:29). He could accomplish this purpose only by _______________ as a sacrifice—on a _______________—at _______________. 
In theological terms, the purpose of the _______________ is the _______________. The reason God became man was so that men could be reconciled to God. *Christ without the cross* can perform miraculous signs, but he has no power to deal with sin. *The cross without Christ* may appear heroic and exemplary, but it is only just another example of senseless cruelty. But if the One suffering on the cross is indeed God in human flesh freely giving himself to take away sin—then the consequences are _______________! 1

C. In John 12:1–36, ____________________________ signaled clearly to Jesus that his hour had come: it was time to give his life as a sacrificial lamb.

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<td>Jesus enters Jerusalem as king</td>
<td>Non-Jews desire an audience with Jesus</td>
<td>“Now is my soul troubled... Now is the judgment of the world... The light is with you only a little longer... So believe!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jesus is being prepared—Jn 12:1–11</td>
<td>for _______________! Jn 12:12–19</td>
<td>Jesus’ glory is revealed—by _______________! Jn 12:20–26</td>
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D. Brief notes on the text:

1. Mary anoints Jesus body (Jn 12:1–11).
   Though no one else has a clue about the true nature of Jesus’ mission, Mary of Bethany does. She ____________! At least to some degree, she understands that Jesus has come to give his life—he has come to die. Her lavish expression of love is actually a way of preparing his body for burial (see Jn 19:39–40). This has caused some to call Mary the first Christian _______________! 2

2. Jesus enters Jerusalem as king (Jn 12:12–19).
   Until now, Jesus has been quiet and ____________ about his true identity and the kingdom he has come to establish. But now, Jesus goes public in a big way. The message is loud and clear: Israel’s king is here! But wait—why the ____________?

3. Greeks desire an audience with Jesus (Jn 12:20–26).
   Among the visitors in Jerusalem for the Passover were some Greeks (non-Jews). Their request to meet Jesus is the final _______________ that causes Jesus to say, “The hour as come....” It is now time to give his life for the sins of “the _______________” (Jn 1:29; 3:16; 12:19; etc.).

4. Jesus pauses in sober contemplation concerning what is about to happen (Jn 12:27–36).
   John’s Gospel does not tell the story of Jesus’ agonizing prayer in Gethsemane. Rather, it gives us this snapshot of Jesus’ _______________ as he faces the cross. He considers asking his Father to save him from this hour, but then solemnly reaffirms that the very reason he has come is for this hour (Jn 12:27).

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1 The title of N. T. Wright’s new book on the cross is illustrative: *The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus’s Crucifixion* (HarperOne, 2016).

2 See Carolyn Custis James and her book *When Life & Beliefs Collide*. 
Before we ______________ the cross (Jn 18–19), let’s first pause and absorb what John 12:1–36 tells us about this most defining reality of our faith.

A. The cross is ______________. Jesus came.

Many depictions of the gospel (movies, books, sermons, etc.) imply that the cross was a tragic end to an otherwise good life. “Poor Jesus, he was trapped and victimized by wicked men. It’s too bad that it had to end like this.” No! The cross is no accident. Jesus is not a helpless victim. His life was not ______________ from him—he ______________ it!

• “For this purpose I have come...” (Jn 12:27).
• “No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again” (Jn 10:18).
• “Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions [6,000 x 12 = 72,000] of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?” (Mt 26:53).

NOTE: God’s purpose is not to save us ______________ suffering but to save us ______________ it. Our pain can be a means of redemption for those around us! “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you... as though something ______________ were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings...” (I Pt 4:12).

B. The cross turns our world ______________.

Jesus speaks of his crucifixion not as being “humiliated” or even being “executed” but rather as being “______________,” “______________,” and “______________” (Jn 12:23, 32, 34; also see Jn 3:14; 8:28). Jesus sees the cross as being elevated in glory, lifted up in regal splendor; a place of power, not weakness; of glory, not shame; of triumph, not failure; of life, not death. Jesus sees the cross as his ______________!

NOTE: Viewing the cross as a royal throne is the ______________ of almost every human value! For those who follow Christ, the cross completely redefines how we think about:

• ______________: not the ability to get what I want but the ability to help others get what they truly need.
• ______________: not doing my will but doing God’s will.
• ______________: not being at the top of the food chain and having many servants but humbly taking a servant’s role so that others’ needs can be met (washing feet).
• ______________: not having all the answers but rather knowing the one who does; being wise enough to know what a fool I am.
• ______________: not hoarding earthly treasures but discovering that it really is more blessed to give than to receive.
• ______________: not counting our days but making our days count: to live is Christ, to die is gain (Phil 1:21)!

The Latin word for cross is crux. Literally, “the crux of the matter” is “the cross of the matter.” Idiomatically, the phrase refers to something that is the central or most important element of an issue. We might say, therefore, that the crux of the matter is the matter of the crux/cross!
C. The cross ________________ those who we tend to ________________.

Jesus had said earlier, “I have ________ that are not of this fold. I must bring them also... so there will be one flock and one shepherd” (Jn 10:16). So when the Greeks come to see Jesus, he realizes that his hour has come. The Jews are smug about their privileged position as God’s _________ and feel it a tragedy when “the world” follows Jesus (Jn 12:19). The cross is God’s ultimate affirmation of love for all people everywhere! “For God so loved _________ that he gave his only son...” (Jn 3:16).

NOTE: The cross will turn our lives inside out! Rather than being ________________ focused on our own needs, the cross will turn our focus ________________, on the needs of others. It’s not about me!

D. The cross confronts us with ________________.

As Jesus faced the cross he said, “Now is the ________________ of the world... The light is with you a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you...” (Jn 12:31, 35). When the aroma of Christ’s passion “fills the house” (Jn 12:3), some people love the smell, others hate it (like Judas). When Jesus comes into our lives as king, riding on a donkey, we either welcome him or look for ways to get rid of him. No one can remain ________________ in the presence of the cross!

NOTE: When Jesus is “lifted up” he has the capacity to “draw all people to himself” (Jn 12:32). Yet, no one can come to him “unless the Father draws him” (Jn 6:44). Therefore, if you are being drawn to the crucified Christ, ________________ is the day of salvation. Tomorrow will be ________________.

E. The cross is ________________ for life and ministry.

Jesus said: “If anyone would come after me, let him ________________ and take up ________________ daily and follow me” (Lk 9:23). There is not one cross in the gospel—but two! To follow Jesus is to live a life that is ________________! “And Jesus showed them his hands, and said... 'As the Father has sent me, even so, I am sending you’” (Jn 20:20–21). This is how life comes to the world: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it _________________. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it...” (Jn 12:24–25).

NOTE: Though many think that the cross is all about determining where you go when you die, the New Testament simply does not talk in these terms. Rather, the cross is about where you go ________________! The cross is intended to define our lives and turn our world right-side up! The point of the cross is to enable us to be God-reflecting, image-bearing, life-giving, love-offering models of holiness and agents of redemption. Death works in us so that ________________ can work in others (II Cor 4:12).

SUMMARY: The cross is ________________ to everything. Easter ensures that the cross will be interpreted in the right way: not as the reversal of a defeat but as the proclamation of a ________________!
### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you think enabled Mary to see that Jesus’ mission was to give his life when nobody else could see it?
2. Describe what those in the crowd must have thought when they saw Jesus coming to Jerusalem as king...yet riding on a donkey.
3. What was it about the coming of the Greeks that caused Jesus to think about the cross?
4. This lesson mentions five truths about the cross (listed below). Which of these truths about the cross is most difficult for you to grasp?
   a. The cross is the reason Jesus came.
   b. The cross turns our world upside down.
   c. The cross welcomes those we tend to exclude.
   d. The cross confronts us with a decision.
   e. The cross is our model for life and ministry.

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**At the Cross**  
By Isaac Watts (1707)

 Alma! and did my Savior bleed  
And did my Sov’reign die?  
Would He devote that sacred head  
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I had done  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity! grace unknown!  
And love beyond degree!

Well might the sun in darkness hide  
And shut his glories in,  
When Christ, the mighty Maker died,  
For man the creature’s sin.

Thus might I hide my blushing face  
While His dear cross appears,  
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,  
And melt my eyes to tears.

But drops of grief can ne’er repay  
The debt of love I owe:  
Here, Lord, I give myself away,  
’Tis all that I can do.

**Refrain:**  
At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,  
And the burden of my heart rolled away,  
It was there by faith I received my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day!
I. Missing the Obvious
   A. Story of the man with a wheelbarrow.
   B. Hidden in plain sight
      1. The public ministry of Jesus climaxes with the raising of Lazarus (Jn 11:1–44),
         the triumphal entry (Jn 12:12–19), and a Voice from heaven affirming Jesus’
         identity and mission (Jn 12:28). These are all very ______________ declarations that make it ______________ both who Jesus is and why he has come. Then we read: “Jesus departed and hid himself from them” (Jn 12:36b). But how can the Light of the World hide himself? Good question! John wants us to know that Jesus is hidden in ______________.
      2. The Jews failed to see what was obvious! For 1,900 years they had waited for
         their Messiah. But when he came, they ______________ him (see Jn 1:9–11). Why oh why did Israel not recognize her Messiah? How did the people of God miss God? How did they fail to see the Light of the World or to hear the Voice of God? Rather than being embarrassed by such questions, the Bible ______________ them! Why? Because this is more than history. It still happens today!
   C. Let’s look again at the big picture of John’s Gospel.

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II. Two Questions that Won’t Go Away
   John 12:36b–50 brings us to the end of the first part of John’s Gospel. In these few
   pregnant verses, John highlights two earth-shaking questions.
   A. How did they miss him?

   
   When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.
   Though he had done ______________ before them, they still ______________ in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

   “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us,
   and to whom has ______________ been revealed?” [quoting Isa 53:1]

   Therefore they ______________. For again Isaiah said,
   “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart,
   lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart,
   and turn, and I would heal them.” [quoting Isa 6:10]
Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God. (John 12:36b–43)

1. Think of all the signs Jesus has done up to this point: water to wine, healings, feeding 5,000 people, walking on water, raising the dead, etc. These were ______________ and ______________. Think of all the words that Jesus has said: “I am the bread of life,” I am the light of the world,” “before Abraham was, I am,” “I am the resurrection and the life,” etc. And yet people still did not believe. Apparently, this was not enough. ______________ does it take to convince someone of the truth? Perhaps if God spoke audibly from heaven, you say? (see John 12:28–31).

   If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. (Luke 16:31)

2. Notice that at first the people “would not believe.” Then, they reached a point when they “could not believe.” This shows both how we are free to examine the evidence and ______________ to believe or not. But when we choose not to believe, there comes a point when we are no longer in control of our destiny. Humans are ______________ to choose but ______________ to control the results of those choices.

3. But God is not ______________ by such brazen unbelief from his own people and we should not be surprised by it either. The prophet Isaiah foretold that this would happen!

B. What is it he really wants?

   And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever ______________ me sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as ______________, so that whoever ______________ in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.” (John 12:44–50)

1. What God really wants is for us ______________ the reality of his Son and what he came to do for us on the cross. But to see we must have light. Therefore, above everything else God wants you and me to ______________! This is what it means to believe.

2. What happens when a bright light is turned on in a dark closet?

   • We see ______________ of what is there (reality).
   • Rats and roaches scurry away because they ______________ (evil).
   • At first, the light is ______________ (the pain of seeing the truth).

1 Isaiah 6:9–10 is quoted often in the New Testament (Mt 13:13–15; Mk 4:12; Jn 12:38; Acts 28:27). This passage was crucial in helping the early church explain why Israel did not recognize Jesus as her Messiah.
• We make a ____________________ (embrace the light or go back to what is was before).

Those who reject Jesus have been ____________________. Though Jesus did not come to judge them, that, in effect, is the result of his coming.

III. How to Miss Your Messiah

The Gospel of John tells the tragic story of how the people of God missed their Messiah when he came. They did not know who he was. Can this still happen today? Is it possible that Light comes into our lives (truth, witnesses, evidence) and we fail to see God in our midst? Like Israel, we too can miss our Messiah:

A. When we love ____________________.

Jesus said that his purpose for coming into the world was “to bear witness to _____________________. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice” (John 18:37). Truth, like light, exposes things as they really are. If you don’t want that, then you don’t want Jesus. Jesus explained the unbelief of the Jews this way: “Because I tell you the truth, you do not believe in me” (Jn 8:45).

• Some love ____________________ and care so much about their ____________________ that they allow peer pressure to determine what they believe. “How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?” (Jn 5:44; 12:43).

• Some “love ____________________ rather than the light because their deeds are evil.” They hate the light because it exposes who they really are (Jn 3:19–21).

• Our supreme love must be the Truth; which is the same thing as saying that our supreme love must be ____________________, who is the truth (Jn 14:6).

We will never recognize our Messiah until we love the truth and embrace the light that both ____________________ our sins, ____________________ what we truly are, and ____________________ us in the way we should go.

B. When we don’t ____________________.

God loves the whole world (Jn 3:16), both Jews and Gentiles, everyone. And when his call goes forth, his sheep hear his voice and respond (Jn 10:3–5). No one becomes a believer in Jesus who has not heard his Voice. The question is not “Are you called?” but rather “Are you ____________________?”

C. When we refuse to let God ____________________.

There’s a story of seven-year-old Johnny drawing a picture in Sunday School.... There is a reason the 2nd commandment ____________________ us from making an image of God: because when we define God, we get it wrong every time! The reason we struggle with Jesus’ words (I am the truth, drink my blood, etc.) and behaviors (cleanse the temple, ride on a donkey, curse the fig tree, etc.) is because he is not conforming to our expectations! But that is the whole point of his coming! He wants to ____________________ the truth about who he really is.

D. When we confuse ____________________.

Most of us think that ____________________ is believing. We think if we just had enough evidence then we would step out in faith. No! The truth is just the opposite. Standing at the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus told Martha, “Did I not tell you that if you ____________________ you would ____________________ the glory of God?” (Jn 11:40). Jesus teaches us that believing is seeing. We don’t reason our way into faith.
Rather we believe our way into rationality! “I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand” (Anselm of Canterbury).

E. When our goal in life is ________________.

No one comes to believe in Jesus until they are “willing to do God’s will” (Jn 7:17). Self-centered obsession with the goal of getting my way will blind me to the presence of God forever! We will never come to a knowledge of the truth until, in ________________, we begin to ________________ more than our own.

F. When we read the Bible ________________.

“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me…” (Jn 5:39). Ironically, Bible study sometimes is a means of missing our Messiah! The goal of Bible study is not to know the Bible, but to ________________!

G. When we don’t feel we need what ________________.

Though Jesus has the ability to heal the sick and feed the hungry, this does not express the reason he came. “Behold, the lamb of God, who takes away the ________” (Jn 1:29). If my interest in God is only that he will make me healthy, wealthy, and happy then chances are good I will not recognize my Messiah when he comes.

IV. Point of No Return

I’m told there is a place on the Niagara River, above the falls, which is designated “The Point of No Return.” Regardless of the craft you are in, once this point is passed, you will go over the falls. The current is just too strong to resist. Similarly, there is a point of no return in our spiritual lives. Refusing the Messiah who comes for us is serious business. At first we may choose not to believe but if we continue in such ________________, the day will come when we cannot believe. We reach the point of no return when God himself blinds our eyes and hardens our heart—in a permanent manner (Jn 12:40). Therefore:

1. Today, if you ________________ his voice, respond now.
2. Today, if you ________________ the light, embrace it now.
3. John 12 is not only when Jesus says, “the hour has come” (vv. 23, 27). It is also the moment when each of us must also say, “the hour has come.” A ________________ must be made. To believe, or not to believe, that is question.
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Though Isaiah prophesied that Israel would reject her Messiah, the Gospel of John holds the Jews fully responsible for their unbelief. How do you reconcile these two realities?

2. Describe how a bright light can help us to see clearly and at the same time it can blind us by its brightness. What spiritual lesson does John’s Gospel want us to draw from this reality?

3. Look again the seven reasons people miss their Messiah. Which one of these reasons describes something you may personally struggle with:
   a. They love the wrong things.
   b. They don’t listen to his voice.
   c. They refuse to let God define himself.
   d. They confuse cause and effect.
   e. Their goal in life is to get their own way.
   f. They read the Bible the wrong way.
   g. They don’t feel they need what Jesus came to offer.

4. Do you know someone who you fear may have reached the “point of no return”; whose heart is so hardened against God’s truth, it is impenetrable? Is the situation really hopeless? What should you be doing about this?
A Topical Study of the Gospel of John
A Bible Study with Stan Key

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

John 7:37–39

I. A Biblical History of Water

From the second verse of the Bible (Gn 1:2) to the final paragraph (Rv 22:17), the Bible talks a lot about ____________ (and related subjects such as rivers, springs, rain, thirst, etc.). Beyond physical descriptions, water in the Bible also has symbolic meaning. Water is a ____________________, pointing beyond itself to truths of deep and eternal significance.

A. Some famous water stories in the Bible:

1. Genesis 1 tells us that before God begins his creative acts, his ______________ hovers over “the ______________ of the waters” (v 2). On the second day of creation, God separates the upper waters from the lower waters by an “expanse” called Heaven (vv 6–8). On the third day, God works with the lower waters so that the dry land appears (vv 9–10).

2. Genesis 6–9 tells the story of ______________. God destroys the earth and at the same time saves Noah and his family—by water. Peter sees in the flood a picture of ______________ (I Pt 3:20–21).

3. Forced out of Abraham’s home, Hagar and Ishmael wander into the desert where they have no water. Hagar cries out to God as she realizes death is near. “Then God ______________ and she saw a well of water” (Gn 21:14–19).

4. The first plague on Egypt is when Moses turns the water of the Nile to ______________ (Ex 7:14–25). Jesus’ first miracle is changing water into ______________ (Jn 2:1–11).

5. Redemption occurs when God leads the Hebrews ______________ of the Red Sea (Ex 14). Paul sees this as a type of baptism (I Cor 10:1–2).

6. On two separate occasions, God provides water ______________ for his people as they journey through the desert (Ex 17:1–7; Nm 20:10–13).

7. Elijah’s ministry is defined the absence and presence of ______________ (I Kgs 17–18).

B. The Psalms and the prophets often speak symbolically of water.

- “__________________ thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! ...Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Ps 51:2, 7).
- “O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul ______________; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water” (Ps 63:1).
- “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has ______________, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which ______________? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food” (Isa 55:1–2).

The title is taken from Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s famous poem The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (1798), which contains the couplet: “Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink.” It tells of a ship becalmed in unchartered waters near the equator where the sailors are tormented by thirst, although surrounded by (undrinkable) water.
• “Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the ___________ of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold ___________” (Jer 2:12–13).

• “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be ___________ from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you...” (Ez 36:25–26).

C. What we can learn from ___________.

1. Almost all the major capital cities in history have been built on a river. But ___________ has no river! In fact, Canaan has no river, except for the smallish Jordan River which mainly serves as a boundary. So how could the Land of Promise be fruitful and a place of blessing without a river? Answer: by ___________ and by ___________.

2. Two bodies of water define Canaan and serve as a huge object lesson:
   a. The Sea of Galilee. Beautiful and full of life, it ___________ water from the snows of the mountains and ___________ water through the outlet of the Jordan River.
   b. The ___________ Sea. The lowest spot on earth, this salinized, smelly bog has no outlet. It only receives. Thus, it is a sea of death.

D. Conclusion: Our survey of the Bible shows that water symbolizes:

1. The ___________ of God
2. The possibility of ___________.
3. ___________ from all that defiles.
4. Quenching ___________.

II. Water in John’s Gospel.

A. Water is a recurring theme in John’s Gospel. Its rich symbolism flows throughout the narrative.

1. ___________. Whether water was poured on the believer’s head or whether he was immersed, water symbolized cleansing and a new beginning. (Jn 1:25–26; 3:22–26). Water was also used in washing feet. “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me” (Jn 13:5,8).

2. The miracle at Cana. The water used was “for the Jewish rites of ___________” (Jn 2:6–10). In this miracle, quenching thirst and being washed clean are tied together.

3. Association with ___________. “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (Jn 3:5).

4. Living water to ___________. “Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again” (Jn 4:7–14; 6:35).

5. Association with ___________. At the Pool of Bethesda, people believed that an angel stirred the waters and thus caused miracles of healing (Jn 5:1–9). The blind man washed the mud off that Jesus had put on his eyes at the Pool of Siloam (Jn 9:7).
6. The thirst-quencher dies _________________. “I thirst.” “When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘It is finished,’ and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (Jn 19:28–30).

7. At Jesus’ death, he is pierced with a spear and “blood and ________________” flow from his side (Jn 19:34).

B. Similar to what we learned in looking at the Bible as a whole, John emphasizes how water is a sign that points us to:

1. ________________.
2. ________________.
3. ________________.

III. Examination of John 7:37–39

A. The Feast of Tabernacles

The ________________ of this passage is the Jewish Feast of ________________ (Jn 7:2), one of the three annual pilgrimage-festivals that Jews were commanded to keep. It lasted seven days and marked the time when fruit was harvested and gathered in. It was a joyous occasion and people “camped” in booths made of branches. Central to this festival was a water-pouring ceremony when priests would take water from the Pool of Siloam and pour it out at the base of the altar. This was an acted prayer for ________________. At the climactic moment of the feast, Jesus stands in the precincts of the Temple and ________________ these words as the people are praying for the rains to come:

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone ________________, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as ________________, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” Now this he said about the ________________, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37–39)

B. As the Scripture has said:

1. To which Scripture does Jesus refer? There are numerous Scriptures that speak of the Holy Spirit being poured out—like water:
   a. “There is ________________ whose streams make glad the city of God…. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved…” (Ps 46:4–5).
   b. “For I will ________________ on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants” (Isa 44:3).
   c. “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will ________________ my Spirit on all flesh…. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit” (Joel 2:28–29).
   d. “In that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth ________________ of the Lord and water the Valley of Shittim” (Joel 3:18).
   e. “On that day ________________ shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea…. And if any of the
f. “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing ___________________ of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city...” (Rv 22:1–2).

2. But the primary Scripture that Jesus seems to be thinking of is _______________. Ezekiel prophesied at a time when the Temple was __________________ and God’s people were exiled in Babylon. God gives him a vision of a __________________, one that will fulfill all the promises of God. This temple was never built because Jesus is the fulfilment of what Ezekiel saw. “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’...He was speaking about the temple of his body” (Jn 2:19–21).

Notice three things about this river of water flowing from the temple:

a. Its ___________________ (Ez 47:1–2). Flowing eastward, the waters flow downhill from Jerusalem (2,600 feet above sea level) into the desolate wilderness of the Arabah and finally into the Dead Sea (1,300 feet below sea level).

   NOTE IT WELL: God intends for his richest blessings to flow to the _______________ and “god-forsaken” areas of our world. “Where sin abounds, grace abounds even more” (Rom 5:20).

b. It’s miraculous ___________________, (Ez 47:3–6). What begins as a ___________________ becomes a mighty river so great it could not be crossed! Ankle-deep, then knee-deep, then waist-deep—Only a miracle can explain how a trickling stream, fed by no other tributaries, can keep increasing like this!

   NOTE IT WELL: Today, you may be only ankle-deep in God’s river of grace, but don’t be fooled. The day is coming when you will be ___________________ in an ever-increasing ocean of divine love and blessing. “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Hb 2:14). Water, water, everywhere!

c. It’s healing ___________________ (Ez 47:7–12). These waters ___________________ the smelly, salty Dead Sea into a beautiful, vibrant, and lush fresh water lake surrounded by fruit trees and teeming with fish. Every month the trees will bear a fresh crop of fruit and the leaves of the trees have curative powers.

   NOTE IT WELL: This river is a life-giving stream that has the capacity to transform situations that are _____________ and _________________. “Where the river flows, everything will live!” (Ez 47:9).

QUESTION: “Son of man, have you seen this?” (Ez 47:6). Can you see the river? Like Hagar, may God _______________ to see what is there (Gn 21:19).

C. Are you thirsty? Dirty? Dead? Well, I’ve got good news for you: there is a river whose streams make glad the city of God!

_The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price._ (Revelation 22:17)
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Think of a time when you were really thirsty. Describe the symptoms of thirst.
2. Which “water story” from the Bible speaks most strongly to you? Why?
3. The Bible tells us that water does three primary things in the life of the believer: it cleanses, it quenches thirst, and it gives life. Discuss this.
4. Can you see the river of life? Why or why not?

Satisfied
Clara T. Williams (1858–1937)

All my life long I had panted
For a draught from some cool spring,
That I hoped would quench the burning
Of the thirst I felt within.

(Refrain)
Hallelujah! I have found Him
Whom my soul so long has craved!
Jesus satisfies my longings;
Through His life I now am saved.

Feeding on the husks around me,
Till my strength was almost gone,
Longed my soul for something better,
Only still to hunger on.

Poor I was, and sought for riches,
Something that would satisfy,
But the dust I gathered round me
Only mocked my soul’s sad cry.

Well of water, ever springing,
Bread of life, so rich and free,
Untold wealth that never faileth,
My Redeemer is to me.
THE MOST IMPORTANT WORD IN THE GOSPEL

*John 1:14*

I. The Gospel in a Word

A. To boil the message of the Bible down to a single word sounds presumptuous, but let’s try anyway! If asked to name the most important book in the Bible, many Christians would name _________________. The most important chapter? Many would suggest _________________. The most important verse? Some would zero in on _________________.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

My question is this: what is the most important __________ in the most important verse in the most important chapter in the most important book in the Bible?

B. There are a number of good candidates.

1. *Word.* The Word is both with God and is God. This introduces us to the ________________ and the reality that God speaks (the doctrine of ________________).

2. *Flesh.* Jesus fully entered into the human condition. This introduces us to the ________________ and leads on to the doctrine of the ________________.

3. *Became.* The Word is God but the Word became flesh. Can God change? This introduces us to the doctrine of divine ________________.

4. *Dwelt.* “Pitched his tent.” Jesus is the tabernacle of God in our midst; ______, God with us.

5. *Glory.* The ____________ was the visible manifestation of God’s presence. Though Jesus had neither halo nor obvious divine traits, his coming was glorious.

6. *Son.* Contrary to what the Koran says, God has a Son! Jesus has always been the ________________ Son of God and now has also become the son of Mary.

7. *Grace.* Loving kindness and covenant faithfulness. God is good.


C. In spite of all these good options, I want to suggest that the most important word is a little contraction: “full of grace ________________ truth.” We see this pregnant contraction again in John 1:17: “For the law was given through Moses; grace ________________ truth came through Jesus Christ.” I want to humbly suggest that the entirety of the gospel message and indeed the epic story of the Bible is embedded in this humble, three-letter conjunction.

D. The power of “and.”

1. Apart from the Bible, others have been captured by the power of this little word “and.” For example, leadership guru Jim Collins (author of *Built to Last* and *Good to Great*) speaks about the ________________ of “and” and the

---

1 William Barclay calls John 1:14 “the greatest single verse in the whole New Testament” (Commentary on John, 46).

2 The word “and” appears four times in this verse, but I’m referring only to the final occurrence.
of “or.” His point is that many leaders make the mistake of thinking they have to do this or that when they should be thinking and.

2. Almost no one likes a peanut butter sandwich. Or a jelly sandwich. But one enters the realm of culinary delight when introduced to a peanut butter jelly sandwich!

3. In the incarnation, Jesus did not come as the grace-Jesus nor as truth-Jesus. He is the _______________ Jesus. The “and” explains everything.

4. Note it well: Jesus is not 50% grace and 50% truth. He is “_____________” both grace and truth—at the same time, in the same body.

5. Though every illustration has limitations, this may be helpful. In basic chemistry class, we learned the difference between a mixture and a solution:
   - A mixture—for example, putting gravel in water; the two ingredients remain ________________, they co-exist.
   - A solution—for example, putting powdered Kool-Aid in water. When stirred, both elements are changed. The powder dissolves into the water and a _______________ emerges from the combination.

In Jesus, grace and truth are still recognizable and distinguishable one from the other. And yet neither is ever quite the same again. They have embraced and intermingled in a way so that a new reality comes out of the combination.

II. The grace-and-truth Jesus.

A. Defining terms.

At first glance, grace and truth seem _______________. Putting them together seems like an effort to reconcile elements that are irreconcilable.

1. Grace. Rooted in the Hebrew concept of hesed (______________, kindness, mercy, lovingkindness), this beautiful word speaks of goodness, kindness, and a passionate commitment to keeping a _______________ together. It is full of goodwill and readiness to forgive, to heal, to restore, and to bless. In the New Testament, the Greek word agape gives a similar idea. Jesus is full of this!

2. Truth. Rooted in the Hebrew concept of emet (______________, righteousness, fidelity) this word speaks to that which _______________: God’s law, his truthfulness, his standards. Like the law of gravity, God’s truth is never changing. Jesus did not come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to tighten them up! In the New Testament, the Greek word aletheia gives a similar idea. Jesus is full of this!

B. Either/or.

We tend to orient ourselves toward one of these realities or the other. The ___________ between the two seem so great and irreconcilable that we simply cannot embrace them both at the same time. We opt for either/or rather than both/and.

1. Grace people.

These people believe that ___________ and desires everyone to have a nice day. He is quick to forgive and welcomes anyone and everyone. God loves us just as we are. Such people tend to be ___________ and seldom ruffle anyone’s feathers. They have a horror of coming across as “judgmental.” They love to affirm all kinds of people and believe ___________ is a virtue. Relationships are supreme.
2. Truth people.
These people believe that ____________ and in him is no darkness at all. He is just and righteous. His Word is truth and is unchanging and eternal. He separates light from darkness, good from evil, and sheep from goats. Such people have strong convictions rooted in God’s Word and are quick to speak out about injustice and sin. They have a horror of ___________. Truth is supreme.

3. Summary:
- Grace without truth is _______________ (theological liberalism).
- Truth without grace is _______________ _______________ (Javert, in Les Misérables).
- Without grace, there is no _______________ of salvation; without truth, there is no _______________.

C. Both/and.
1. Using the Hebrew terms hesed (steadfast love, mercy) and emet (truth, loyalty), the Old Testament describes who God is:
   - “The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love [hesed] and faithfulness [emet]’” (Ex 34:6).
   - “All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love [hesed] and faithfulness [emet], for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies” (Ps 25:10).
   - “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love [hesed] and faithfulness [emet] go before you” (Ps 89:14).
   - “You will show faithfulness [emet] to Jacob and steadfast love [hesed] to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old” (Mi 7:20).

2. Jesus is obviously in _______________ his Father! He too is full of grace and truth. But with Jesus we have a _______________!
   - All grace. He _______________, prostitutes, and tax collectors. He had compassion on the marginalized and oppressed (lepers, lame, blind, hungry, widows, foreigners, children, etc.).
   - All truth. He was uncompromising in his preaching. He condemned religious hypocrisy. He often warned of _______________, coming judgment, and hell. He never hid the cost of what was involved in discipleship.

3. This is not easy! This is hard. This _______________!
Life is much simpler when we choose either/or. We then have a _______________ for how to think and how to respond. Either we will be gracious or we will be truthful. But in Jesus, we have a picture of someone who is both, simultaneously, in every situation, in a perfect manner. Jesus lived _______________. He embraced the _______________.

4. This is _______________!
In Jesus, we realize that being full of grace and truth is _______________ to redemption. To transform a bad situation or to save a person from sin or

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3 A paradox is a statement that seems self-contradictory; when two concepts are put side by side that are, at least on the surface, incompatible and mutually exclusive.
some other destructive circumstance requires more than applying grace—or applying truth. Salvation comes only when someone incarnates the “and.”

5. How it works!

Follow Jesus through the Gospel of John and you begin to see the redemptive power unleashed when an incarnation of 100% grace _________________ 100% truth walks into the room:

a. The wedding at Cana (Jn 2:1–11).
   - Full of truth—My hour has not yet come.
   - Full of grace—But I don’t want this new bride to suffer from the social embarrassment of a malfunctioning beverage service at her reception.

b. The cleansing of the temple (Jn 2:12–22).
   - Full of grace—I love my father’s house and want others to love it, too.
   - Full of truth—But you have ruined worship! Zeal consumes me.

   - Full of grace—I want you to be part of God’s family.
   - Full of truth—You are a spiritually dead and ignorant Pharisee!

d. The woman at the well (Jn 4:1–42).
   - Full of grace—I have living water for you.
   - Full of truth—You have had five husbands and are currently living in sin.

e. The paralytic (Jn 5:1–17).
   - Full of grace—Get up, take up your bed, and walk.
   - Full of truth—Sin no more that nothing worse may happen to you.

f. The feeding of the 5,000 (Jn 6:1–59).
   - Full of grace—He miraculously feeds a multitude (with 12 baskets of food left over).
   - Full of truth—You are seeking me because you want a bread-king. Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you.

g. The woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1–11).
   - Full of grace—He does not condemn but protects and delivers her.
   - Full of truth—Go, and from now on, sin no more.

h. We could continue. Jesus’ life illustrates what it looks like when one is full of grace and full of truth. He makes it look easy. But think again.

Consider how each situation above demanded:

- _________________. There are no formulas or recipes. Each situation is different and demands a unique response.
- _________________. It takes boldness to speak truth to your mother—or to a Pharisee. It takes boldness to show love to an adulteress.
- _________________. Jesus was fully committed to pleasing his Father and to building relationships with sinners. He would never, ever compromise the truth, and he would never, ever mistreat a
human being. Rather than taking the easy road of choosing grace ______________ truth, he embraced the tension and stepped forward, trusting for divine guidance as he went.

- ______________. There is no way around it. To be full of grace and full of truth means feeling pain all the time.

6. Where it ends.

Anyone who incarnates the fullness of grace and the fullness of truth will, of necessity and by definition, live a life that is ______________. The cross will define such a life. John 1:14 prepares us for what happens on Calvary where we witness a ______________ of absolute grace and absolute truth.

_ Steadfast love [hesed] and faithfulness [emet] meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. (Psalm 85:10)_

Two realities are manifest:

- No ______________ is greater than this.

  The Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, where the warm waters of Indian Ocean meet the cold waters of the Atlantic, is a very ______________ place!

- The ______________ of the world is now possible.

  The drama of Calvary has a ______________! When grace and truth embrace, broken lives can be redeemed.

III. So what?

OK. In Christ, on Calvary especially, the fullness of cosmic mercy and the fullness of cosmic truth have collided and intermingled. That sounds a bit theoretical. Are there any ______________ ramifications? I am so glad you asked! There are two huge implications that flow from this:

A. Your ______________ and mine are now possible.

  There is no salvation without perfect grace and perfect truth coming together. ______________ is not enough. ______________ is not enough. It is the combination that makes possible:
  
  - A right standing with God (justification).
  - Victory over sin (sanctification).
  - Restoration of the image of God (filling with the Holy Spirit).

B. We are called to be ______________ of Christ. “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (Jn 20: 21). Just as Jesus was full of grace and truth, so you and I are called to incarnate the same reality (though on a human level). When we do this, two things happen:
  
  - We reflect the ______________ and walk as Jesus walked.
  - We feel some of ______________ that Jesus feels. We participate (at a human level) in the redemptive work of God in the world today. This is how salvation comes to the world:

  _Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ. (Ephesians 4:15) _
Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. (Colossians 1:24)

Let not steadfast love [hesed] and faithfulness [emet] forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. (Proverbs 3:3)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the primary lesson you learned from this lesson?
2. Describe someone you know (or perhaps a church community) who could be called a “grace without truth” person. What lessons can be learned from this negative example?
3. Describe someone you know (or perhaps a church community) who could be called a “truth without grace” person. What lessons can be learned from this negative example?
4. Describe someone you know who is full of grace and full of truth. What lessons can be learned from this positive example?
5. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? What would it take for you to begin to live a life that is both full of grace and full of truth?
6. After completing this study, how do you feel about the author’s claim that “and” is the most important word in the gospel?

Joy to the World
By Isaac Watts (1719)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n, and heav’n, and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


**Who’s Your Daddy?**

I.  
(A) God, damaged; (B) Adam; his image; all; depraved; bent; incapacity; inability; every; only; continually; deceitful; heart; (C) Satan; worse; (C1) liar; first; reliability; accuracy; consequences; character; (C2) murderer; death; kill, steal, destroy; (D) harder

III.  
sin; true nature; cure; (A1) attitudes; Pride; Lustful thoughts; Lack of love; Partiality (where is the man?); (A2) don’t know; self-deception; (A3) death; cancer; (A4) slavery; (A4a) Repetition; (A4b) self-reproach; (A4c) Vows; (A4e) denial; (A4f) obsessions; (A4g) Compulsivity; (A5) genetic; real father; murderer; liar; (B1a) Deny; (B1d) Blame; (B1f) behavior modification; (B1g) messenger; (B2a) the light; cleanses; truth encounter; don’t know; very good liar; (B2b) Believe; takes away; (B2c) born of God; nature; (B2d) Abide

**Here’s Mud in Your Eye**

I.  
(A) eyes; (A1) Light; (A2) Sight; (B) epistemology; eyes; (C) simple; profound; (D) no; no; sign; (E1) telling the story; (E2) surprising; sees clearly; completely blind; (E3) blinds; shadows; judgment; did not; could not

II.  
(A) knowledge; (A1) ignorance; (A2) confidence; (B) progress; man; prophet; from God; worships; (C) sin; caused; spiritual; judgment

III.  
(A) hope; humble; (A1) honestly; (A2) willfully; running out; (B1) God who sees me; we are seen; (B2) opened her eyes; already provided; (B3) dangers; opened the eyes; unaware; (B4) open his eyes; resources; (B5) absence; at your table; (B6) not seen; he exists; rewards; seen them; looking; seeing; every situation; (C) Ask; gift of faith; humbly; blinded; darkness; shine on you

**Finding the Door**

I.  
(A) symbolic power; literature; (A1) glimpse; (A2) passage; (A3) shut in; shut out; (A4) begin; end; (A5) narrow; (A6) choice; (A7) sermon

II.  
(A) Garden of Eden; wall of separation; door was shut; homesick; (B) the ark; shut in; shut out; only; (C) Tower of Babel; heaven’s gate; futility; judgment; confusion; (D) Jacob’s Ladder; by God; gate of heaven; blindness; on the Son of Man; (E) Tabernacle; illustrate; (E1) gate; (E2) door; (E3) veil; cherubim; top to bottom; new and living way; (F) Ezekiel’s Temple; shut; under the door; door; water; (G) Revelation; worship service; disappeared; tree of life; shut in; hell; (H) Jesus; is; only; abundant

III.  
(A) a door; (B) open; (C) only one; narrow; small enough; (D) shut; horrible; (E) receive; believe; (F) witnessing; keys
Predestined to Choose!

I. (B) the surface; (B1) sheep; (B2) good shepherd; (C) below the surface; the Order of Salvation; sequence; mind of God; responsibility of man; (D: Note 1) Ezekiel 34:1–24; God himself; (D: Note 2) recognizes the voice; lays down his life

II. believe; works; among my sheep; hear; I know them; never perish; has given them; (A) undecided; evidence; (B) lack of evidence; Jesus is on trial; willful blindness; (C) Believing is seeing; (D) irrational; jump; (E1) Predestination; (E2) Election; (E3) Calling; (E4) Faith; (E5) Perseverance; (G) foreknew; predestined; called; glorified

III. (A) before you were born; robot; (B) Prevenient; enlightens every man; (C) their name; a choice; (D) merit; the gift of God; (E) inner transformation; (F) his hold on me; apostasy; (G) we shall be like him

IV. (A) their own destiny; self is sovereign; (B) grace; evidence; (C) relationship; Today; hear his voice

The Emotional Jesus

I. do not know me; (A) their own image; (A1) mystical; (A2) hippie; (A3) trendy; (A4) social action; (A5) political; (A6) nice; (A7) therapeutic; (A8) American dream; (B) another Jesus; (C) emotions; dispassionate; (C1) salvation; (C2) our own emotions

II. (Note 1) his name; (Note 2) faith; unbelief; who Jesus is; seeing; (Note 3) good sermon; for the people; all; (Note 4) differences; (Note 4a) get out; get in; (Note 4b) others helped him; collapsed; neatly folded; Note 4c) resuscitation; reanimation; physical; spiritual body

III. emphasizes; deeply moved; greatly troubled; wept; deeply moved; (A1) Anger; grief; others weeping; results of sin; His own death; triggers; grief; (A1a) hypocrisy; consume; (A1b) willful; grieved; (A1c) children; indignant; (A1d) mediocrity; nauseated; Lamb; righteous indignation; right reasons; right way; grief; (A2) turmoil/agitation; churning in turmoil; (A3) Grief/sorrow; contrast; wailing; sobbing; unique; external; (B) perfectly; fully human; sanctify

The Hour Has Come

I. (A) electric chair; (B) cruciform; the key; (C) centrality; must suffer; give his life; lays down his life; crucified; the cross

II. (A) timing; (A1) not yet; (A2) has come; (B) the mission/purpose; Lamb of God; take away sin; giving his life; cross; Passover; incarnation; atonement; revolutionary; (C) three events; [First Event column] burial; [Second Event column] donkey; [Third Event column] Greeks; (D1) gets it; theologian; (D2) secretive; donkey; (D3) signal; world; (D4) inner turmoil

III. experience; (A) the reason; taken; freely gave; from; through; strange; (B) upside-down; glorified; exalted; lifted up; throne; reversal; Power; Success; Glory; Wisdom; Wealth; Life; (C) welcomes; exclude; other sheep; chosen people; the world; inward; outward;
Blinded by Light

I. (B1) public; crystal clear; plain sight; (B2) didn’t recognize; highlights

II. (A) so many signs; did not believe; the arm of the Lord; could not believe;
    (A1) public; verifiable; How much evidence; (A2) choose; free; not free;
    (A3) surprised; (B) see; light; believes; (B1) to see; love the light; (B2) the truth; love
    the darkness; blinding; decision; blinded by light

III. (A) the wrong things; the truth; public opinion; image; the darkness; Jesus; exposes;
    reveals; guides; (B) hear his voice; listening; (C) define himself; forbids; reveual; (D) cause
    and effect; seeing; believed; see; (E) to get our own way; humility; want his will; (F) the
    wrong way; know him; (G) he came to offer; sin of the world

IV. willful unbelief; (1) hear; (2) see; (3) decision

Water, Water, Everywhere

I. water; sign; (A1) Spirit; face; (A2) the flood; baptism; (A3) opened her eyes; (A4) blood;
    wine; (A5) through the water; (A6) from a rock; (A7) rain; (B) Wash me; thirsts for you; no
    money; does not satisfy; fountain; no water; clean; (C) geography; (C1) Jerusalem; springs;
    rain; (C2a) receives; gives; (C2b) Dead; (D1) blessing; (D2) life; (D3) Cleansing; (D4) thirst

II. (A1) Baptism; (A2) purification; (A3) birth; (A4) quench thirst; (A5) healing; (A6) thirsty;
    (A7) water; (B1) Cleansing; (B2) Satisfying our thirst; (C) Life

III. (A) context; Tabernacles; rain; shouts; thirsts; the Scripture has said; Spirit; (B1a) a river;
    (B1b) pour water; (B1c) pour out; (B1d) from the house; (B1e) living waters; no rain;
    (B1f) from the throne; (B2) Ezekiel 47:1–12; in ruins; new temple; (B2a) direction; most
desolate; (B2b) increase; trickle; engulfed; (B2c) power; transform; hopeless; dead; open
    our eyes

The Most Important Word in the Gospel

I. (A) John; Chapter 1; verse 14; word; (B1) Trinity; revelation; (B2) incarnation; atonement;
    (B3) immutability; (B4) Emmanuel; (B5) shekinah; (B6) only begotten; (C) and; and;
    (D1) genius; tyranny; (D2) and; (D3) grace-and-truth; (D4) full of; (D5) unchanged; new
    reality

II. (A) incompatible; (A1) steadfast love; relationship; (A2) justice; never changes;
    (B) polarities; (B1) God is love; nice; tolerance; (B2) God is light; compromise;
    (B3) sentimentalism, sloppy-agape; a sledge hammer; (C2) the image of; human person;
    welcomed sinners; God’s wrath; (C3) hurts; formula; in the tension; paradox;
    (C4) redemptive; the key; (C5) and; (C5h) Discernment; Courage; Living in the tension; or;
    Suffering; (C6) cruciform; cosmic collision; pain; turbulent; redemption; purpose

III. practical; (A) salvation; Grace alone; Truth alone; (B) imitators; image of God; the same
    pain
Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin
By Charles Wesley

Where shall my wondering soul begin?  
How shall I all to heaven aspire?  
A slave redeemed from death and sin,  
A brand plucked from eternal fire,  
How shall I equal triumphs raise,  
And sing my great deliverer’s praise?

O how shall I the goodness tell,  
Father, which thou to me hast showed?  
That I, a child of wrath and hell,  
I should be called a child of God!  
Should know, should feel my sins forgiven,  
Blest with this antepast of heaven!

Outcasts of men, to you I call,  
Harlots and publicans and thieves;  
He spreads his arms to embrace you all,  
Sinners alone his grace receive.  
No need of him the righteous have;  
He came the lost to seek and save.

Come, O my guilty brethren, come,  
Groaning beneath your load of sin;  
His bleeding heart shall make you room,  
His open side shall take you in.  
He calls you now, invites you home:  
Come, O my guilty brethren, come.

For you the purple current flowed  
In pardon from his wounded side,  
Languished for you the eternal God,  
For you the Prince of Glory died.  
Believe, and all your guilt’s forgiven,  
Only believe—and yours is heaven.