SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 1

The Word Became Flesh — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus is the eternal Word who made everything, and He became flesh and pitched His tent among us so that men like me could see God and become His children. He is the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, and He still says, "Come, and you will see."

00 The Text

JOHN 1 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.

8 He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'"

16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

19 This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

20 And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

21 They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said, "I am A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,' as Isaiah the prophet said."

24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

25 They asked him, and said to him, "Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 John answered them saying, "I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know.

27 "It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

28 These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

30 "This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'

31 "I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water."

32 John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.

33 "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

34 "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

35 Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples,

36 and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?"

39 He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

43 The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

46 Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!"

48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

49 Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

51 And He said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and ☆ the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Marked in the text

- **v1** “the Word was God” — God — His character & actions
- **v3** “All things came into being through Him” — God — His character & actions
- **v4** “In Him was life” — Promise / blessing
- **v5** “the darkness did not comprehend it” — Sin / warning
- **v6** “a man sent from God” — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** “those who were His own did not receive Him” — Sin / warning
- **v12** “the right to become children of God” — Promise / blessing
- **v13** “but of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v14** “the Word became flesh” — God — His character & actions
- **v14** “dwelt among us” — God — His character & actions
- **v14** “full of grace and truth” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “grace upon grace” — Promise / blessing
- **v17** “the Law was given through Moses” — Time / place / contrast
- **v18** “He has explained Him” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “I am not the Christ” — Time / place / contrast
- **v23** “MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD” — Command / instruction
- **v27** “I am not worthy to untie” — Time / place / contrast
- **v29** “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v32** “the Spirit descending as a dove” — God — His character & actions
- **v33** “the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit” — Promise / blessing
- **v39** “Come, and you will see” — Command / instruction
- **v41** “We have found the Messiah” — Promise / blessing
- **v42** “you shall be called Cephas” — Promise / blessing
- **v43** “Follow Me” — Command / instruction
- **v46** “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” — Sin / warning
- **v47** “in whom there is no deceit” — Promise / blessing
- **v49** “You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel” — God — His character & actions
- **v51** “the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” — Promise / blessing
- **v4** “Light” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v7** “testify” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v15** “testified” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v19** “testimony” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v7** “witness” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v29** “The next day” — Time / place / contrast (every occurrence)

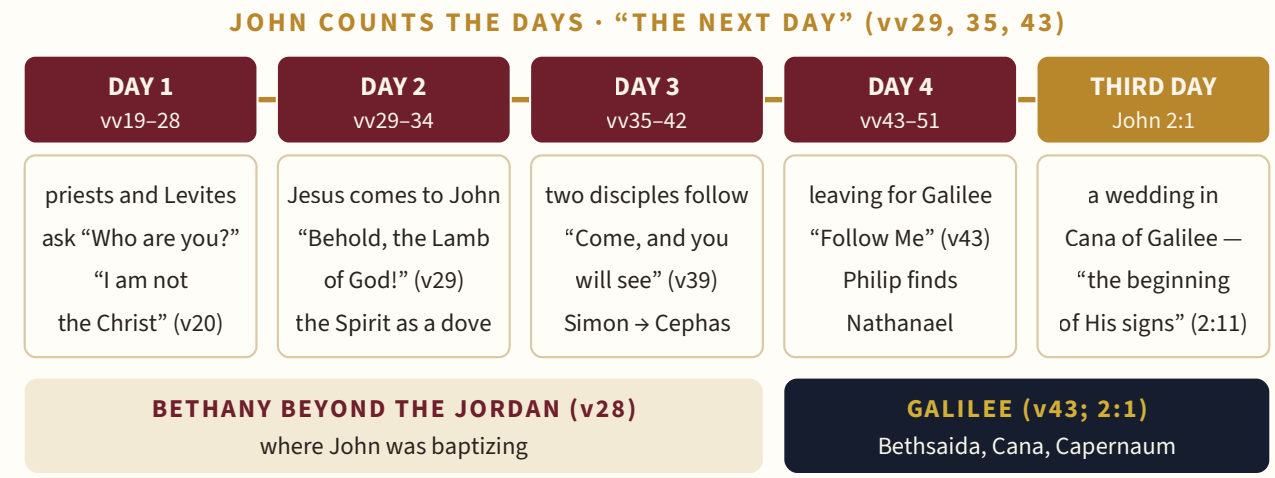
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 1:18

"No one has seen God at any time; △the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, △He has explained Him."

FIGURE · JOHN COUNTS THE DAYS



From the delegation's question to the wedding at Cana, John dates each scene; the witness of one day becomes the following of the next.

Setting. John writes last of the four Gospels and starts earliest — "In the beginning" (v1), before creation. Verses 1–18 are the prologue; verses 19–51 move to the Jordan, at "Bethany beyond the Jordan" where John was baptizing (v28), and then toward Galilee (v43). John tells us his purpose at 20:31: that we may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name.

Structure:

- vv1–5 — **the eternal Word:** with God and was God (v1); all things came into being through Him (v3); in Him was life, the Light of men; the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (vv4–5).
- vv6–13 — **witness and response:** a man sent from God, John, to testify about the Light (vv6–8). The true Light came into the world; the world did not know Him; His own did not receive Him (vv9–11). But as many as received Him received the right to become children of God — born of God (vv12–13).
- vv14–18 — **the Word became flesh:** He dwelt among us; we saw His glory, full of grace and truth (v14). John's testimony (v15); grace upon grace (v16); Law through Moses, grace and truth through Jesus Christ (v17); the only begotten God has explained the Father (v18).
- vv19–28 — **day 1, the voice:** priests and Levites ask, "Who are you?" Not the Christ, not Elijah, not the Prophet (vv19–21); "a voice of one crying in the wilderness" (v23, Isaiah 40:3); not worthy to untie His sandal (v27).

- vv29–34 — **day 2, the Lamb:** "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (v29). The Spirit descended as a dove and remained on Him (v32); He baptizes in the Holy Spirit (v33); "this is the Son of God" (v34).
- vv35–42 — **day 3, the first followers:** two disciples follow; "What do you seek?" — "Come, and you will see" (vv38–39). Andrew finds Simon: "We have found the Messiah"; Simon is named Cephas (vv40–42).
- vv43–51 — **day 4, Philip and Nathanael:** "Follow Me" (v43); "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" — "Come and see" (v46); "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit" (v47); the fig tree; "You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel" (v49); the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man (v51).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "God" ×13 — vv1 (×2), 2, 6, 12, 13, 18 (×2), 29, 34, 36, 49, 51.
- "Jesus" ×12 — vv17, 29, 36, 37, 38, 42 (×2), 43, 45, 47, 48, 50.
- "see / saw / seen" ×15 — see vv33, 39, 46, 50, 51; saw vv14, 29, 38, 39, 47, 48, 50; seen vv18, 32, 34.
- "John" ×9 — vv6, 15, 19, 26, 28, 32, 35, 40 (the Baptist) and v42 (Simon's father).
- "testify / testified / testimony / witness" ×7 — vv7 (×2), 8, 15, 19, 32, 34.
- "Light" ×6 — vv4, 5, 7, 8 (×2), 9; "darkness" ×2 — v5.
- "baptize / baptizing / baptizes" ×6 — vv25, 26, 28, 31, 33 (×2).
- "world" ×5 — vv9, 10 (×3), 29.
- "found" ×5 — vv41 (×2), 43, 45 (×2).
- "Word" ×4 — vv1 (×3), 14; "grace" ×4 — vv14, 16 (×2), 17; "Christ" ×4 — vv17, 20, 25, 41.
- "follow / followed / following" ×4 — vv37, 38, 40, 43.
- "Behold" ×3 — vv29, 36, 47; "Lamb of God" ×2 — vv29, 36.
- "The next day" ×3 — vv29, 35, 43.
- "believe" ×3 — vv7, 12, 50; "Spirit" ×3 — vv32, 33 (×2).
- "Son of God" ×2 — vv34, 49; "Son of Man" ×1 — v51; "He existed before me" ×2 — vv15, 30.

Contrasts: Light ⟷ darkness (v5). The world made through Him ⟷ the world did not know Him (v10). Did not receive Him ⟷ as many as received Him (vv11–12). Born of blood, flesh, the will of man ⟷ born of God (v13). Law through Moses ⟷ grace and truth through Jesus Christ (v17). No one has seen God ⟷ the only begotten God has explained Him (v18). "I am not" (vv20–21) ⟷ "This is the Son of God" (v34). Water baptism ⟷ baptism in the Holy Spirit (v33). "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" ⟷ "You will see greater things than these" (vv46, 50).

Shape of the chapter: an overture in eternity (1–18), then four dated days on earth (19–51). The prologue says who He is; the days show men finding it out — by testimony, by following, by being found.

Chapter theme (my words): The eternal Word, who is God and made all things, became flesh to show us the Father and to take away the sin of the world as God's Lamb. Some refuse Him, but everyone who receives Him becomes God's child — and every man who comes to see Him goes and brings someone else.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 1:29

"The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, △the Lamb of God who ☆takes away the sin of the world!"

FIGURE · WHO IS HE? TEN NAMES IN ONE CHAPTER

TEN NAMES IN ONE CHAPTER · JOHN 1

- **THE WORD** — vv1, 14 · John the writer
- **THE LIGHT** — vv4–9 · John the writer
- **THE ONLY BEGOTTEN GOD** — v18 · John the writer
- **JESUS CHRIST** — v17 · grace and truth
- **HIM OF WHOM MOSES WROTE** — v45 · Philip
- **THE LAMB OF GOD** — vv29, 36 · the Baptist
- **THE SON OF GOD** — v34 the Baptist · v49 Nathanael
- **RABBI — TEACHER** — v38 two disciples · v49 Nathanael
- **THE MESSIAH** — v41 · Andrew to Simon
- **THE KING OF ISRAEL** — v49 · Nathanael

AND THE NAME HE GIVES HIMSELF: "THE SON OF MAN" (v51)
the ladder between heaven and earth (Genesis 28:12; Daniel 7:13)

Read the names in order and notice who speaks them — the writer, the Baptist, the new disciples — and that Jesus' own name for Himself comes last.

Who is "the Word"? John uses a word both Jews and Greeks already had. Guzik: for Jews, God's self-expression; for Greeks, the reason behind the universe — and John fills it with a Person. Sproul: "In Hebrew thought, the Logos is personal." Henry pictures a man's thought becoming speech: Christ is the mind of God made known.

"The Word was God" — or "a god"? In Greek the word order is *theos ēn ho logos*; *theos* without the article tells us what the Word is (God in nature) without saying He is the Father. Guzik calls the Jehovah's Witness rendering "a wrong and misleading translation." Verse 1 gives the whole doctrine of the Trinity in seed: the Word is distinct from God ("with God") and is God. Sproul: "That sentence alone was enough to keep the theologians busy for three hundred years."

"Comprehend" or "overcome" (v5)? *Katelaben* can mean either. The darkness did not understand the Light, and it could not put it out. Guzik: "The light cannot lose against the darkness; the darkness will never overcome it." Spurgeon: "How should darkness understand light?"

Which comes first — receiving or new birth (vv12–13)? Verse 12 says those who receive and believe get the right to become God's children; verse 13 says they were born "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." Spurgeon reads the new birth as first: "no man lets Christ into his heart until first God has made him to be born again." Guzik stresses the same source — "born of God, but not of human effort or achievement" — while describing faith simply as receiving. Christians differ on the order; all four teachers agree the birth is God's work, and the invitation to receive Him is real.

"Dwelt" — the tabernacle (v14). *Eskēnōsen*: He pitched His tent. The glory that filled the tabernacle (Exod 40:34) now lives in flesh. Spurgeon: the tabernacle "was full of law rather than full of grace"; Christ "is not the shadow, but the substance." Henry: "He dwelt here as in a tent, not as at home."

"Only begotten God" or "only begotten Son" (v18)? The oldest manuscripts (and the NASB, SBLGNT) read *monogenēs theos*; the KJV follows later manuscripts. Either way the Son who is God has *explained* the Father — Jesus is God's exegesis. Guzik: "Jesus, the Word, is the perfect declaration of the unseen God."

Was John Elijah (v21)? John says "I am not." Jesus later says John came in Elijah's spirit and power (Luke 1:17; Matt 11:14). Sproul holds both: not Elijah in person, but the Elijah-like forerunner. I hold, with my futurist reading, that Malachi 4:5 still has a fuller fulfillment before the day of the LORD.

The Lamb of God (v29). Sproul answers critics who call the title John's invention: Isaiah 53, the ram God provided in Abraham's son's place (Gen 22), and the Passover. Guzik lists the lamb from Eden to Isaiah. Henry: Christ takes away both the guilt and the power of sin. "The sin of the world" does not mean every person is automatically forgiven; it means the Lamb's sacrifice is big enough for every sinner who comes (Guzik: it "has all the capacity to forgive every sin and cleanse every sinner").

Jacob, Nathanael and the ladder (vv47–51). "No deceit" contrasts Nathanael with Jacob the deceiver; Jesus then gives him Jacob's vision (Gen 28:12) with Himself as the ladder. Guzik suggests Nathanael may have been meditating on that very passage under the fig tree. "Son of Man" is from Daniel 7:13 — Sproul: a title of heavenly glory and authority, "by far Jesus' favorite self-designation."

Word study (Greek):

- **Word — *logos* (G3056):** God's speech and reason, now a Person (vv1, 14).
- **comprehend — *katalambanō* (G2638):** grasp, seize; "comprehend" or "overcome" (v5; 12:35).
- **testify — *martyreō* (G3140):** bear witness of what one has seen; seven times in the chapter.
- **right — *exousia* (G1849):** granted authority, legal standing (v12).
- **received — *lambanō* (G2983):** take hold of, welcome (v12).
- **children — *teknon* (G5043):** born ones; ties to verse 13's birth.
- **dwelt — *skēnoō* (G4637):** pitched a tent, tabernacled (v14; Rev 21:3).
- **only begotten — *monogenēs* (G3439):** unique, one of a kind (vv14, 18; 3:16).
- **grace — *charis* (G5485):** "grace upon grace" (v16); four times in vv14–17.
- **explained — *exēgeomai* (G1834):** led out, made known; our "exegesis."
- **voice — *phōnē* (G5456):** the carrier, not the message (v23).
- **make straight — *euthynō* (G2116):** level the road (v23).
- **lamb — *amnos* (G286):** sacrificial lamb; John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19.
- **takes away — *airō* (G142):** lifts and carries off; present tense.

- **remained — *menō* (G3306):** stayed, abode (vv32, 33, 38, 39).
- **Messiah — *Messias* (G3323):** Anointed One; only John 1:41; 4:25.
- **deceit — *dolos* (G1388):** cunning, guile (v47).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **John starts before Genesis** — the Word already *was* when the beginning began.
2. **"The Word was God," not "a god"** — distinct from the Father, equal in nature.
3. **The darkness neither grasped nor quenched the Light** (v5).
4. **Rejection is not the end of the story** — "but as many as received Him" (v12).
5. **The glory moved into a tent of flesh** (v14; Exod 40:34).
6. **Jesus is God's exegesis** — no one has seen God, but the Son has explained Him (v18).
7. **The greatest man born of women called himself a voice** (vv20–23).
8. **God provides His own lamb** (v29; Gen 22:8).
9. **Every disciple in this chapter came through someone** — John, Andrew, Philip.
10. **Jesus saw him first** — under the fig tree (v48).

Cross-references: Gen 1:1–3; 22:8; 27:35; 28:12; Exod 12:13; 33:20; 40:34; Deut 18:15; Ps 33:6; Isa 9:2; 40:3; 53:7; Dan 7:13; Mal 4:5; Matt 11:14; Luke 1:17; John 3:16–19; 12:35; 20:31; Acts 8:32; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2–3; 11:17; 1 Pet 1:19; 1 John 1:1; 4:9; Rev 21:3.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 1:12

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,"

Truth to believe — the Word was God and became flesh. Jesus isn't a good teacher I add to my life; He is the One through whom my life came into being (v3). And He didn't stay far off. He pitched His tent in the middle of us (v14). For the men I walk with who think God is up there and they are down here — in a cell, in a relapse, in a mess — this verse says He came down here.

Promise to trust — "as many as received Him." I know men whose own families did not receive them. Verse 11 says Jesus knows that pain: His own did not receive Him. Verse 12 is the promise: everyone who receives Him gets the right to become a child of God — not by bloodline, not by willpower, not by somebody else's decision, but of God (v13).

Sin to confess — making myself the center. John the Baptist could have had a following of his own. He kept saying "I am not." I confess the ways I want to be the light in my family, my group, my ministry, my recovery story. I am at best a voice. My job is to point and say, "Behold, the Lamb of God."

Command to obey — "Come, and you will see" / "Follow Me." Jesus didn't hand those two men a doctrine sheet; He invited them to spend the day with Him (v39). This week I will give Him unhurried time — not to get through a reading plan, but to stay where He is staying.

Example to follow — Andrew. The first thing Andrew did was find his own brother (v41). Spurgeon: "Let thy religion begin at home." Andrew had two talents and found Peter. I will name one man — a brother, a son, a cellmate, a coworker — and say "Come and see."

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. If Jesus is the eternal Word through whom all things came into being, what part of my life am I still treating as outside His authority? (1:1–4; Col 1:16) *Outside of Him there is no life (Sproul); He made all things, and He is not a lesser god.*
2. Verse 12 says the right to become children of God is given to those who receive Him. What does receiving Him look like for a man who has been rejected by his own family? (1:11–13) *Born not of blood or the will of man, but of God — a new family and a new name.*
3. "The Word became flesh" — He came all the way down. Where do I need to believe that God has come close to me, not just to good people? (1:14–17) *He dwelt as in a tent among us; grace upon grace, not law upon law.*
4. John the Baptist kept saying "I am not." Where am I tempted to make myself the center of a ministry, a family or a recovery story? (1:19–27) *A voice, not the Word; John hides himself behind his Master.*
5. What changes when I stop trying to take away my own sin and look at "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"? (1:29; Gen 22:8; Isa 53:7) *God provides His own lamb; the Lamb is taking it away — present tense.*

6. Who is the one person I could say “Come and see” to this week, the way Andrew went for his brother? (1:39–46)
   Found Christ, finds others — and religion begins at home.

Worship. Before there was a sunrise, there was the Word. He made the light, then walked into the dark as a Man. He is the Lamb God provided, the Son of God, the King of Israel, the ladder between heaven and earth — and He saw Nathanael under a fig tree before anybody called him. He sees me too.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, eternal Word, You were with God and You are God, and You became flesh for me. Thank You for coming close. I receive You — make me Your child, not by my effort but by Your birth. Behold, the Lamb of God: take away my sin, the sin I’ve carried and the sin I keep picking back up. Let me be a voice that points to You, not a light that competes with You. Give me Andrew’s heart for my own brother, and let me say to the men around me, “Come and see.” Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 2

The Good Wine and the True Temple — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus came to give what the old ways could not — the best wine of joy in place of water for washing, and His own risen body in place of a temple of stone. He knows exactly what is in me, and He still calls me to do whatever He says.

00 The Text

JOHN 2 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there;

2 and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants,
"Whatever He says to you, do it."

6 Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.

7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

8 And He said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him.

9 When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

10 and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

11 This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

12 After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there a few days.

13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14 And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.

15 And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables;

16 and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business."

17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "△ ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."

18 The Jews then said to Him, "⚠ What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?"

19 Jesus answered them, "△ Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

20 The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this ⟲ temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

21 But He was speaking of △ the temple of His body.

22 So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and ☆ they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many ⟲ believed in His name, observing His ⟲ signs which He was doing.

24 But Jesus, on His part, ⚠ was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,

25 and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for △ He Himself knew what was in man.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "On the third day" — Time / place / contrast
- **v1** "the third day" — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** "They have no wine" — Sin / warning
- **v4** "My hour has not yet come" — Time / place / contrast
- **v5** "Whatever He says to you, do it" — Command / instruction
- **v6** "for the Jewish custom of purification" — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** "Fill the waterpots with water" — Command / instruction
- **v7** "they filled them up to the brim" — Command / instruction
- **v10** "you have kept the good wine until now" — Promise / blessing
- **v11** "This beginning of His signs" — God — His character & actions
- **v11** "manifested His glory" — God — His character & actions
- **v11** "His disciples believed in Him" — Promise / blessing
- **v14** "the money changers seated at their tables" — Sin / warning
- **v15** "He made a scourge of cords" — God — His character & actions
- **v16** "stop making My Father's house a place of business" — Command / instruction
- **v17** "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME" — God — His character & actions
- **v18** "What sign do You show us" — Sin / warning
- **v19** "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" — God — His character & actions
- **v21** "the temple of His body" — God — His character & actions
- **v22** "they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken" — Promise / blessing
- **v24** "was not entrusting Himself to them" — Sin / warning
- **v25** "He Himself knew what was in man" — God — His character & actions
- **v3** "wine" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v14** "temple" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v11** "believed" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v11** "signs" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v18** "sign" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 2:10

"and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but ☆ you have kept the good wine until now.""

FIGURE · WHERE JOHN 2 HAPPENS



From the hill village of Cana Jesus goes down to Capernaum on the lake, then up to Jerusalem for Passover — the whole chapter in three short journeys.

Setting. "On the third day" (v1) after Jesus set out for Galilee (1:43) — a wedding in Cana of Galilee, with Jesus, His mother and His disciples as guests. Then a few days at Capernaum (v12), and up to Jerusalem for "the Passover of the Jews" (v13), where the rest of the chapter takes place in and around the temple.

Structure:

- vv1–5 — **the need:** the wine runs out; Mary: "They have no wine"; Jesus: "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come"; Mary to the servants: "Whatever He says to you, do it."

- vv6–10 — **the sign:** six stone waterpots for purification, twenty or thirty gallons each; "Fill the waterpots with water" — filled to the brim; drawn out and taken to the headwaiter, who calls the bridegroom: "you have kept the good wine until now."
- vv11–12 — **the result:** "This beginning of His signs … manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him"; down to Capernaum for a few days.
- vv13–17 — **the cleansing:** sellers of oxen, sheep and doves and money changers in the temple; a scourge of cords; all driven out, coins poured out, tables overturned; "stop making My Father's house a place of business"; the disciples remember "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME" (Ps 69:9).
- vv18–22 — **the sign demanded:** "What sign do You show us?" — "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "It took forty-six years to build this temple." He spoke of the temple of His body; after He was raised, the disciples remembered and believed.
- vv23–25 — **the hearts:** many believed, observing His signs; but Jesus was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men and knew what was in man.

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Jesus" ×10 — vv1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 13, 19, 22, 24.
- "wine" ×6 — vv3 (×2), 9, 10 (×3); "water" ×3 — vv7, 9 (×2); "waterpots" ×2 — vv6, 7.
- "temple" ×5 — vv14, 15, 19, 20, 21.
- "disciples" ×5 — vv2, 11, 12, 17, 22.
- "mother" ×4 — vv1, 3, 5, 12.
- "believed" ×3 — vv11, 22, 23; "sign / signs" ×3 — vv11, 18, 23.
- "headwaiter" ×3 — vv8, 9 (×2).
- "Jews" ×3 — vv13, 18, 20.
- "knew" ×3 — vv9, 24, 25; "man" ×3 — vv10, 25 (×2).
- "raise / raised" ×3 — vv19, 20, 22; "three days" ×2 — vv19, 20.
- "remembered" ×2 — vv17, 22; "house" ×2 — vv16, 17; "Passover" ×2 — vv13, 23; "wedding" ×2 — vv1, 2.

Contrasts: water for purification ⟷ the good wine (vv6, 10). Every man serves the good wine first ⟷ you have kept the good wine until now (v10). My Father's house ⟷ a place of business (v16). A temple forty-six years in building ⟷ raised up in three days (vv19–20). The temple of stone ⟷ the temple of His body (v21). They believed in His name ⟷ He was not entrusting Himself to them (vv23–24).

Shape of the chapter: joy in Galilee (1–12), zeal in Jerusalem (13–22), discernment at the feast (23–25). Two scenes, one direction: the old vessels — the jars and the temple — are filled and replaced by Jesus Himself.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus' first sign turns the water of ritual washing into the best wine, and His first public act in Jerusalem clears His Father's house and points to His body as the true temple. Signs are meant to lead to faith in Him, and He knows the difference between real faith and a crowd's excitement.

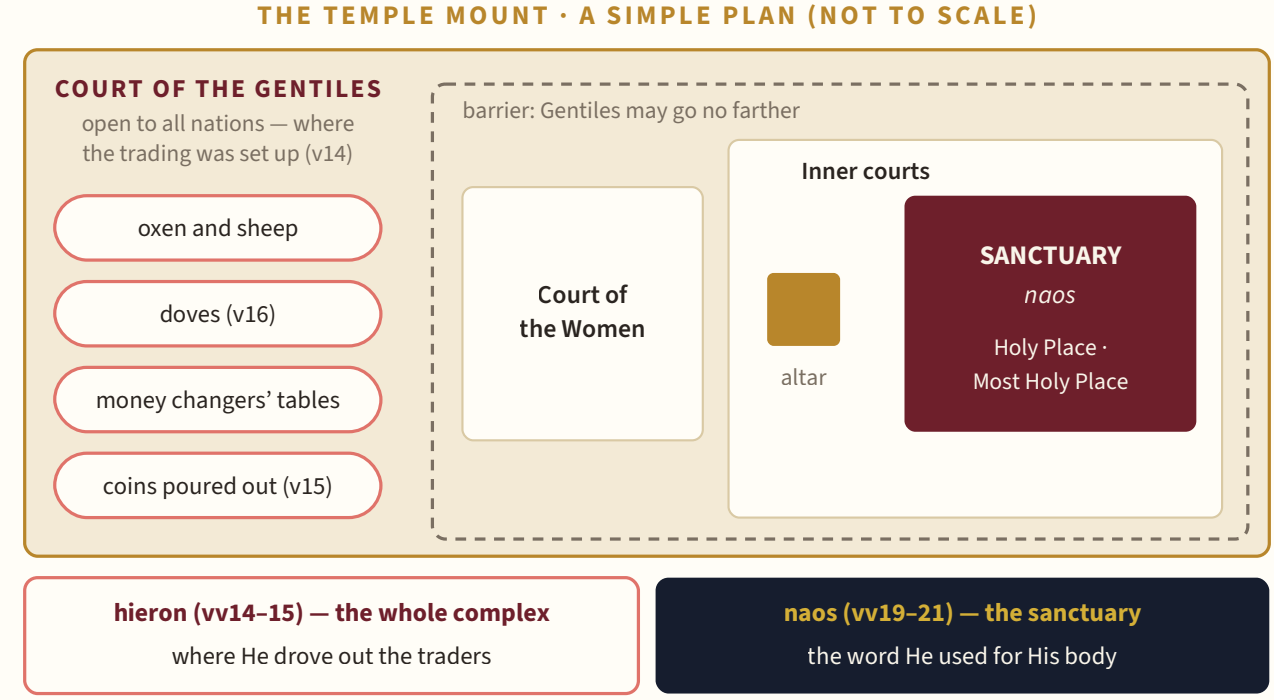
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 2:21

"But He was speaking of △the temple of His body."

FIGURE · HIERON AND NAOS



The trading filled the outer Court of the Gentiles (the hieron); when Jesus said "destroy this temple," He used naos, the sanctuary itself — and meant His body.

FIGURE · THE OLD ORDER AND THE NEW

JOHN 2	WHAT WAS THERE	WHAT JESUS GIVES
WASHING	six stone waterpots for Jewish purification (v6)	the good wine kept until now (v10)
THE HOUSE	a temple forty-six years in building (v20)	the temple of His body, raised in three days (vv19, 21)
THE SIGN	"What sign do You show us?" (v18)	"when He was raised from the dead" (v22)
BELIEVING	believed, observing His signs; He did not entrust Himself (vv23–24)	believed the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken (v22)

Read across each row: what Jesus found in place, and what He gives instead — Himself, in every case.

"Woman" — rude or respectful (v4)? Guzik and Sproul hear respect: Sproul, "this was a title of respect"; Guzik, Jesus used a term of respect "but He did not call her "mother"" — the relationship was changing as His public ministry began. Henry reads it as a check on Mary's presumption and a warning against later devotion to her. The same word comes from the cross (19:26), with obvious love. I take it as respectful but firm: from now on Jesus acts on His Father's timing, not even His mother's.

What is "My hour" (v4)? Not merely the moment for a miracle. Through John the hour is "not yet" (7:30; 8:20) until it comes at the cross (12:23; 13:1; 17:1). Sproul: "It's not yet time for Me to enter into My glory." Cana gives an early taste of that glory (v11).

Was it really wine? Sproul says plainly that it was real, fermented wine, that the Bible condemns drunkenness rather than wine, and that each believer must follow his conscience. Guzik: well-made wine, not a statement about strength. Spurgeon sets the argument aside to look at the grace and the command. For the men I serve in recovery, the point of Cana is not permission but provision: Jesus saves a family from shame and gives joy without hangover. For a man whose drinking destroyed him, sobriety is the wise and loving way to honor this Lord.

Why the purification jars? Six stone jars "for the Jewish custom of purification" (v6). Guzik: they belong to the system of Law; Moses turned water to blood (Exod 7:20), Jesus turned water to wine — "The wine was better than the water; and the New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant." Sproul: the water of washing gives way to the new wine of the kingdom. Henry: where the law brought bitterness, the gospel brings blessing.

One cleansing or two? John puts a cleansing at the first Passover; Matthew, Mark and Luke put one in the last week. Sproul and Guzik both conclude Jesus did it twice — Sproul argues the traders would have been back quickly. Some scholars think John moved the event to the front for theological reasons; I find two cleansings the most natural reading of two different settings.

Was Jesus out of control? No. Guzik: "He did not do it in a flash of anger. He carefully took the time to make a whip of cords." Sproul: the whip was for the animals. Henry: "Discretion must always guide and govern our zeal."

Righteous anger is real — but it is deliberate, aimed at what dishonors God, and it protected the one court where Gentiles could pray.

"Destroy this temple" (v19). The listeners took it literally (v20) and later twisted it at His trial (Matt 26:61). John explains: He spoke of His body (v21). Guzik: "the religious leaders themselves would be the means by which the prophecy was fulfilled." Sproul: "the supreme sign is the resurrection," and "Christ is the temple." Henry: "The body of Christ is the true temple, of which that at Jerusalem was a type." I also hold that Scripture speaks of a future temple in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40–48; 2 Thess 2:4), but its meaning will always be Christ, who is the presence of God among His people — and the city to come needs no temple at all because "the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" (Rev 21:22).

Why didn't Jesus trust believers (vv23–25)? Their faith rested on spectacle. Guzik: "thin, superficial belief." Henry: some insincere, some weak, some wanting a political Messiah. John's wordplay: they *believed*; He did not *entrust* Himself — same verb. Sproul links this to chapter 3: "He knew what was in Nicodemus." Not all faith is saving faith; faith that stops at the sign has not yet reached the Person.

Word study (Greek):

- **sign — *sēmeion* (G4592):** a pointer to who Jesus is (vv11, 18, 23).
- **beginning — *archē* (G746):** the first and pattern of the signs (v11).
- **manifested — *phaneroō* (G5319):** made visible (v11).
- **glory — *doxa* (G1391):** the glory of 1:14 seen at Cana (v11).
- **woman — *gynē* (G1135):** respectful address; again at 19:26.
- **hour — *hōra* (G5610):** the appointed hour of His death and glory.
- **whip — *phragellion* (G5416):** Latin loanword; only here.
- **money changers — *kollybistēs* (G2855); coins — *kerma* (G2772).**
- **temple (courts) — *hieron* (G2411):** the whole complex (vv14–15).
- **zeal — *zēlos* (G2205):** burning devotion; **consume — *katesthiō* (G2719):** eat up.
- **temple (sanctuary) — *naos* (G3485):** the dwelling of God; His body (vv19–21).
- **destroy — *lyō* (G3089):** loose, break up.
- **raise — *egeirō* (G1453):** raise up, resurrect (vv19, 20, 22).
- **believe / entrust — *pisteuō* (G4100):** they believed; He did not entrust Himself (vv23–24).
- **know — *ginōskō* (G1097):** He knew all men (vv24–25).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **A sign is a signpost** — sign → glory → faith (v11; 20:31).
2. **Moses turned water to blood; Jesus turned water to wine** (Exod 7:20).
3. **The jars were for washing** — the old system's vessels filled with new joy.
4. **"Whatever He says to you, do it"** — Mary's greatest sermon (Sproul).
5. **We fill; He turns** (Spurgeon).
6. **The best is kept for last** — the world reverses it; Christ doesn't.
7. **Zeal with a whip He took time to make** — deliberate, not a tantrum.
8. **The market was in the Gentiles' court** — the nations' place of prayer spoiled.

9. **Hieron and naos** — He cleared the courts; He called His body the sanctuary.
10. **Not every believer is trusted with Him** — He knew what was in man.

Cross-references: Exod 7:20; Ps 16:10; 69:9; Isa 25:6; Amos 9:13; Mal 3:1; Matt 21:12–13; 26:61; Mark 11:15–17; Luke 19:45–46; John 1:14, 43; 3:1; 7:30; 12:23; 19:26; 20:30–31; Rom 8:11; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Gal 1:1; Rev 19:9; 21:22.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 2:5

"His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it.""

Command to obey — "Whatever He says to you, do it." Mary didn't tell Jesus how to fix it; she told the servants to obey Him. The servants didn't understand why He wanted water in washing jars. They filled them anyway, to the brim. This week I will take one thing Jesus has clearly told me — forgive, confess, make the call, go to the meeting, read the Word — and do it all the way, not halfway.

Promise to trust — "you have kept the good wine until now." The world serves its best first: the first drink, the first high, the first thrill, the first lie that works. Then comes the cheap stuff, and then the bill. Jesus reverses it. For the men I walk with who think their best days are behind them, Cana says the Lord keeps the good wine for later. The best is not behind a man in Christ; it is ahead.

Sin to confess — a place of business in the Father's house. My body is a temple of God (1 Cor 3:16). I confess the tables I've set up there — the deals I make with sin, the things I sell my attention to, the religion I use to get something. I ask Him to come with His zeal and turn them over, and I won't fight Him when He does.

Truth to live in — Jesus is the temple. I don't meet God by getting to the right building or the right ritual. I meet Him in Jesus, the One whose body was destroyed and raised in three days. That empty tomb is the sign He gives me when I demand one.

Warning to heed — He knows what is in man. Excitement about Jesus is not the same as trusting Him. I've seen men light up at a revival or in a crisis and drift when the signs stopped. Jesus knows what is in me — and the good news is that He came anyway. I don't have to impress Him; I need to come to Him honestly, like Nicodemus is about to.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Where in my life has "the wine run out" — a marriage, a family, a job, a recovery — and have I simply told Jesus, "They have no wine"? (2:3–5) *Never pray as if we were dictators (Spurgeon); the delays of mercy are not denials (Henry).*
2. What has Jesus told me to do that I am doing halfway? What would filling the waterpots "to the brim" look like this week? (2:5–8) *Christ's commands are never meant to be done in a half-hearted manner.*
3. The world serves its best wine first and its worst last. Where have I tasted that in my own life — and where have I seen Jesus keep the good wine until now? (2:9–10; Isa 25:6) *Christ seeks no disciples dazzled with first appearances; the best is yet to come.*
4. If my body is a temple of God, what tables need overturning — what has turned His house into a place of business? (2:14–17; 1 Cor 3:16) *Zeal guided by discretion; God is particular about how He is approached.*
5. Jesus pointed to His resurrection as the sign. How does the empty tomb answer the question I keep asking God — "What sign do You show us?" (2:18–22; Ps 16:10) *The supreme sign is the resurrection (Sproul).*
6. Jesus "knew what was in man." Does it frighten me or comfort me that He knows exactly what is in me — and still came? (2:23–25; 3:1) *He knows the worst, and still sees the image of God (Guzik).*

Worship. The Lord of the feast came to a village wedding and saved a family from shame. The Lord of the temple came with zeal and cleared His Father's house. The Lord of life let them destroy the temple of His body and raised it up in three days. He knew what was in every man in Jerusalem — and He knows what is in me — and He still keeps the good wine for those who come to Him.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, the wine has run out in places in my life, and I bring them to You — I won't tell You how to fix them. Whatever You say to me, I will do it, to the brim. Turn the water of my religion into the wine of real joy. Come into the temple of my body with Your zeal and overturn every table that doesn't belong there. Thank You that the sign You give is Your empty tomb. You know what is in me; make my faith more than excitement — make it trust in You. Amen.

Scripture: New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © 1960–1995 The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. · Teacher material summarized from David Guzik (Enduring Word), R.C. Sproul (Ligonier), C.H. Spurgeon and Matthew Henry — see John-2-Deep-Dive-Four-Voices.pdf for sources. · Importable: the companion .md carries the berean-study block.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 3

You Must Be Born Again — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

No man gets into God's kingdom on his first birth; he must be born from above by the Spirit, and that new life comes by looking to the Son lifted up on the cross. Once a man has seen Him, the right response is John's: He must increase, and I must decrease.

00 The Text

JOHN 3 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;

2 this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

8 "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?

11 "Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.

12 "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

13 "No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

14 "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;

15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

17 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

18 “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

20 “For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

21 “But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.

23 John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized—

24 for John had not yet been thrown into prison.

25 Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John’s disciples with a Jew about purification.

26 And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him.”

27 John answered and said,
“A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven.

28 “You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent ahead of Him.’

29 “He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. So this joy of mine has been made full.

30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.

31 “He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

32 “What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.

33 “He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true.

34 “For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.

35 “The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.

36 “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Marked in the text

- **v2** “came to Jesus by night” — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** “unless one is born again” — Command / instruction
- **v5** “born of water and the Spirit” — God — His character & actions
- **v6** “That which is born of the flesh is flesh” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “You must be born again” — Command / instruction
- **v8** “The wind blows where it wishes” — God — His character & actions
- **v10** “the teacher of Israel” — Sin / warning
- **v13** “He who descended from heaven” — God — His character & actions
- **v14** “even so must the Son of Man be lifted up” — God — His character & actions
- **v16** “God so loved the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v16** “He gave His only begotten Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v16** “shall not perish, but have eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v17** “that the world might be saved through Him” — Promise / blessing
- **v18** “has been judged already” — Sin / warning
- **v19** “men loved the darkness rather than the Light” — Sin / warning
- **v21** “he who practices the truth comes to the Light” — Command / instruction
- **v23** “Aenon near Salim” — Time / place / contrast
- **v27** “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven” — God — His character & actions
- **v29** “the friend of the bridegroom” — Promise / blessing

- **v30** “He must increase, but I must decrease” — Command / instruction
- **v34** “He gives the Spirit without measure” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “The Father loves the Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v36** “He who believes in the Son has eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v36** “the wrath of God abides on him” — Sin / warning
- **v3** “born” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v12** “believe” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v15** “believes” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v18** “believed” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v19** “Light” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v11** “testimony” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v32** “testifies” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 3:3

"Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you,
unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.""

Setting. Jerusalem at Passover (2:13, 23), right after Jesus cleansed the temple and "knew what was in man" (2:25). Nicodemus — a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, "the teacher of Israel" — comes at night (vv1–2). Then the scene moves to the Judean countryside, where Jesus' disciples are baptizing, and to Aenon near Salim, where John the Baptist is still baptizing before his arrest (vv22–24).

Structure:

- vv1–8 — **born from above:** Nicodemus's compliment (v2); "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (v3); "How can a man be born when he is old?" (v4); born of water and the Spirit (v5); flesh gives birth to flesh, Spirit to spirit (v6); "You must be born again" (v7); the wind (v8).
- vv9–15 — **the Son of Man lifted up:** "How can these things be?" (v9); the teacher of Israel does not understand (v10); earthly things and heavenly things (vv11–12); the only One who descended from heaven (v13); Moses' serpent and the Son lifted up, so that whoever believes has eternal life (vv14–15).
- vv16–21 — **love and light:** God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (v16); sent to save, not to judge (v17); believer not judged, unbeliever judged already (v18); men loved the darkness (vv19–20); the one who practices the truth comes to the Light (v21).
- vv22–30 — **the friend of the bridegroom:** Jesus and John both baptizing (vv22–24); a dispute about purification; "all are coming to Him" (vv25–26); a man receives nothing unless given from heaven (v27); "I am not the Christ" (v28); the bridegroom and his friend, joy made full (v29); "He must increase, but I must decrease" (v30).
- vv31–36 — **the One from above:** He is above all (v31); He testifies to what He has seen, and few receive it (vv32–33); He speaks God's words and has the Spirit without measure (v34); the Father has given all things into His hand (v35); life or wrath (v36).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "born" ×8 — vv3, 4 (×2), 5, 6 (×2), 7, 8 (all in vv3–8).
- "believe / believes / believed" ×8 — vv12 (×2), 15, 16, 18 (×3), 36.
- "Son" ×8 — vv13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 35, 36 (×2); "Son of Man" ×2 — vv13, 14.
- "God" ×12 — vv2 (×2), 3, 5, 16, 17, 18, 21, 33, 34 (×2), 36.
- "testify / testimony / witnesses" ×7 — vv11 (×2), 26, 28, 32 (×2), 33.
- "world" ×5 — vv16, 17 (×3), 19.
- "Light" ×5 — vv19 (×2), 20 (×2), 21; "darkness" ×1 — v19.
- "heaven / heavenly" ×5 — vv12, 13 (×2), 27, 31; "above" ×3 — v31; "earth / earthly" ×4 — vv12, 31 (×3).
- "Spirit" ×4 — vv5, 6, 8, 34 (+ "spirit" v6).
- "judge / judged / judgment" ×4 — vv17, 18 (×2), 19.

- “baptizing / baptized” ×4 — vv22, 23 (×2), 26.
- “must” ×4 — vv7, 14, 30 (×2).
- “eternal life” ×3 — vv15, 16, 36 (“life” ×4 with v36’s “will not see life”).
- “Truly, truly” ×3 — vv3, 5, 11; “kingdom of God” ×2 — vv3, 5.
- “love(s) / loved” ×3 — vv16, 19, 35; “deeds” ×3 — vv19, 20, 21.

Contrasts: night (v2) ⟷ Light (vv19–21). Born of the flesh ⟷ born of the Spirit (v6). Earthly things ⟷ heavenly things (v12). Ascended ⟷ descended (v13). Perish ⟷ eternal life (v16). Saved ⟷ judged (vv17–18). Darkness ⟷ Light; does evil ⟷ practices the truth (vv19–21). Bridegroom ⟷ friend of the bridegroom (v29). Increase ⟷ decrease (v30). From above ⟷ of the earth (v31). Believes ⟷ does not obey; life ⟷ wrath (v36).

Shape of the chapter: a conversation (1–21) and a testimony (22–36). It moves from a man who must be born from above to the Son who came from above, and from a teacher in the dark to a friend who rejoices in the Light.

Chapter theme (my words): The kingdom of God is entered only by a new birth from above, worked by the Spirit and received by looking in faith to the Son lifted up. The one who believes has life now; the one who refuses remains under wrath; and the one who has seen Him gladly gets smaller.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 3:14

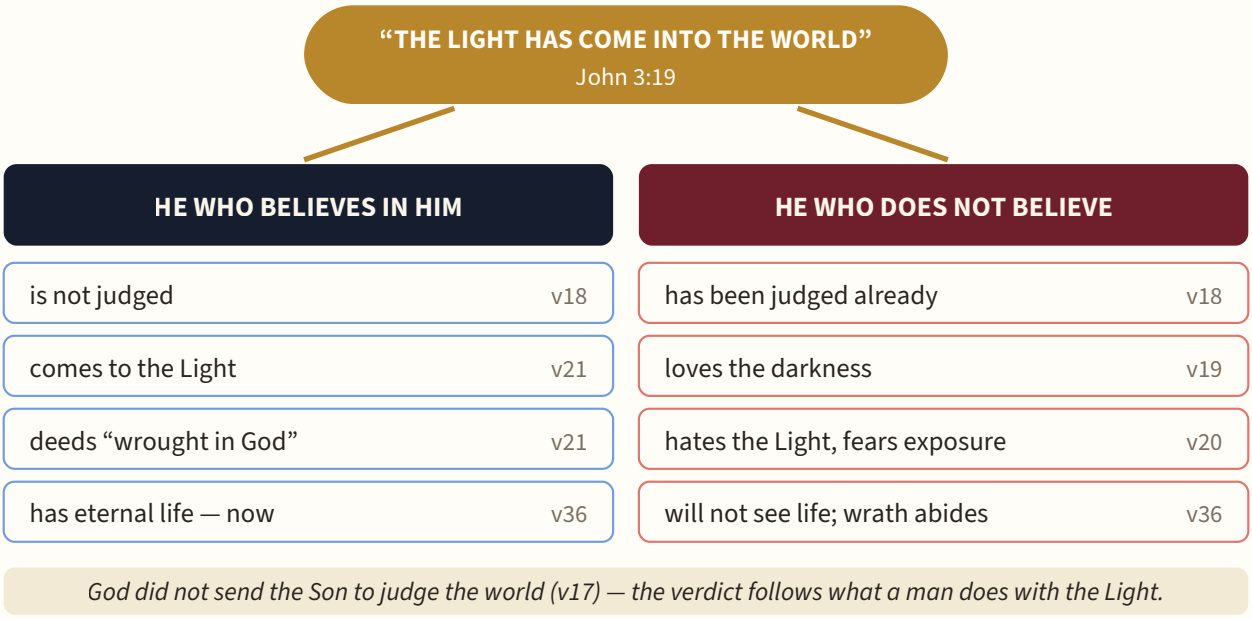
"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, △ even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;"

FIGURE · THE BRONZE SERPENT AND THE SON OF MAN

JOHN 3:14–15	NUMBERS 21:4–9	THE SON OF MAN
THE DANGER	bitten by fiery serpents; many died (Num 21:6)	perishing in sin; "shall not perish" (v16)
THE REMEDY	a bronze serpent, made at God's command (21:8)	the Son of Man, given by God (v16)
LIFTED UP	set on a standard where all could see (21:9)	lifted up on a cross (v14; 12:32–33)
THE RESPONSE	look at it (21:8)	believe in Him (v15)
THE RESULT	"he lived" (21:9)	"eternal life" (v15)

Read across each row: Jesus takes Numbers 21 point by point — the danger, the remedy God provided, the lifting up, the look of faith, and life.

FIGURE · TWO RESPONSES TO THE LIGHT



The Light comes to save, not to judge; the two columns show where a man stands, now and finally, by what he does with the Son.

What does "born again" mean? *Anōthen* means both "again" and "from above" (Guzik, Henry). Nicodemus hears only the first and pictures a second physical birth (v4). Jesus means a birth God gives — "born of the Spirit" (vv5–8). Sproul: "There is no such thing as a non-born-again Christian or an unregenerate Christian." "Born-again Christian" is a redundant phrase.

What is the "water" in verse 5? Honest teachers differ. Guzik lists five readings — baptism, physical birth, the Word (Eph 5:26), the Spirit as living water (7:38–39), and the cleansing water of Ezekiel 36:25–27 — and gives Ezekiel "the most weight (though it is a tough call)." Sproul admits he does not know for sure, reads it through Ezekiel 36–37, and thinks a baptism reading less likely. Henry: "of the Spirit working like water." Spurgeon flatly rejects baptismal regeneration. Ezekiel's promise of clean water *and* a new spirit, given to Israel, is what a "teacher of Israel" should have known (v10).

Which comes first, new birth or faith? Sproul, Spurgeon and Henry read the chapter in the Reformed way: the Spirit must give life before a dead man can believe (Sproul: Lazarus cannot bring himself out of the tomb). Others read verses 14–16 as faith receiving the new life. Both agree on what matters most for my men: you cannot birth yourself (Guzik), and whoever looks to Christ lives (Spurgeon).

Why the bronze serpent? Israel was dying of a judgment they deserved (Num 21:4–9). God's remedy looked like the very thing that was killing them, lifted on a pole, and all they had to do was look. Guzik: "a bronze serpent does speak of sin, but of sin judged." Sproul: "the substitute serpent." "Lifted up" in John always means the cross first (12:32–33), then the glory.

Who is speaking in verse 16? The original Greek has no quotation marks. NASB prints Jesus speaking through v21; Sproul notes that "Usually, commentators see John 3:16 as an editorial comment made by John." Either way it is the Word of God, and the point is the same.

What does "the world" mean in verse 16? Guzik notes that many Jews assumed God loved Israel alone, so "the world" was revolutionary. Sproul warns against reading it as universalism: God loves the world by giving one Son, and refusing Him leaves a man judged already (v18). Spurgeon: "while every unbeliever is excluded, every believer is included."

Why do men stay in the dark? Not lack of evidence but love of darkness (v19). Guzik: "there is a moral compromise at the root of their rejection." Henry: "Christ is hated because sin is loved." The Light exposes (*elenchō*), and that is what we fear.

Who speaks verses 31–36? NASB keeps John the Baptist speaking through v36; Guzik notes others read it as the evangelist's comment. The teaching does not change: the Son is from above, has the Spirit without measure, and holds all things in His hand.

Word study (Greek):

- **again / from above — *anōthen* (G509):** both senses; John 3:3, 7, 31; 19:11, 23.
- **wind / Spirit — *pneuma* (G4151):** the same word in v8; wind, breath, Spirit.
- **must — *dei* (G1163):** divine necessity; 3:7, 14, 30; 4:4, 24.
- **lift up — *hypsoō* (G5312):** in John always the Son of Man — 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34; it means the cross (12:33).
- **only begotten — *monogenēs* (G3439):** one of a kind; John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; Heb 11:17 (Isaac); 1 John 4:9.
- **exposed — *elenchō* (G1651):** brought to light and convicted; 3:20; 8:46; 16:8.
- **bridegroom — *nymphios* (G3566):** John 2:9; 3:29 (×3); the LORD as Israel's bridegroom (Isa 62:5).
- **wrath — *orgē* (G3709):** settled opposition to sin; only here in John's Gospel.
- **does not obey — *apeitheō* (G544):** refuses to be persuaded; only here in John.

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The chapter begins after a warning** — Jesus did not entrust Himself to sign-impressed believers (2:23–25).
2. **"Again" and "from above" are one word** — *anōthen*.
3. **You cannot birth yourself** (Guzik); Lazarus cannot raise himself (Sproul).
4. **The water is probably Ezekiel's water** — none of the four makes it baptismal regeneration.
5. **Saved by a look** — Christ "hung on the cross on purpose to be looked at" (Spurgeon).
6. **The cross is a divine "must"** — the same *dei* in vv7, 14, 30.
7. **Love came before we turned** (Guzik).
8. **Men run from the Light because it exposes** (Sproul, Henry).
9. **Joy in decreasing** — John was happy to lose his congregation to Jesus (Guzik).
10. **Wrath abides — and so does life** — both present tense in v36.

Cross-references: Gen 22:2; Num 21:4–9; Isa 45:22; 54:5; 62:5; Ezek 36:25–27; 37:1–14; Dan 7:13; Hos 2:19–20; John 1:12–13; 2:23–25; 5:24; 7:37–39, 50–51; 8:28; 12:32–33; 19:39; Rom 1:18–21; 5:8; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb 11:17; 1 Pet 1:23; 1 John 1:7; 4:9.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 3:30

"△ He must increase, but I must decrease."

FIGURE · THE FOUR "MUSTS" OF JOHN 3

THE FOUR "MUSTS" OF JOHN 3 · ONE GREEK WORD, DEI

THE SINNER'S MUST John 3:7	THE SAVIOR'S MUST John 3:14	THE SOVEREIGN'S MUST John 3:30	THE SERVANT'S MUST John 3:30
"You must be born again." No one can see the kingdom without it	*"so must the Son of Man be lifted up"* The cross is not an accident	*"He must increase"* Christ's kingdom keeps growing	*"but I must decrease"* The friend steps aside — and rejoices

The same word returns in 4:4 — "He *had to* pass through Samaria" —

Guzik's four labels: the sinner's, the Savior's, the sovereign's and the servant's must.

One small Greek word, dei, carries the whole chapter: what the sinner must undergo, what the Savior must suffer, and what the servant must gladly become.

Command to obey — "You must be born again." This is not a suggestion to try harder. I have sat with men who have been "religious" since childhood, who know the songs and the verses, and who have never been born from above. Nicodemus had everything a man could have on the outside. If that wasn't enough for him, it isn't enough for me. The first question isn't "am I doing better?" but "have I been born of the Spirit?"

Promise to trust — "whoever believes will in Him have eternal life." The bitten Israelite didn't have to understand bronze or theology. He had to look. When a man tells me he is too far gone, I point him to the pole: the remedy was for people dying of the very thing they had done. "Whoever" has no fine print. And the life is present tense — "has eternal life" (v36) — not a reward I earn at the end.

Sin to confess — loving the darkness. Verse 20 is honest about me: I have kept things out of the Light because I didn't want them exposed. The phone, the money, the resentment, the drink. Jesus says that is not a lack of information; it is a love of darkness. I confess it, and I bring it into the Light, because the Light came to save, not to condemn (v17).

Example to follow — John the Baptist. "He must increase, but I must decrease." I want credit. I want the men to say I helped them. John lost his crowd and called it joy. This week I will do one thing for another man's good where I get no credit at all, and I will thank God when someone else gets the attention.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Nicodemus had religion, position and reputation, and still had to be born again. What have I trusted in that cannot give me new birth? (3:1–7; Titus 3:5) *A man's first birth does not assure him of the kingdom (Guzik).*
2. Where have I seen the "wind" of the Spirit at work in a man I know — not the wind itself, but what it moved? (3:8; Ezek 37:9–10) *You hear its sound; you see its effects.*
3. The bitten Israelites only had to look. What am I still trying to do, instead of looking to Christ lifted up? (3:14–15; Num 21:8–9) *All you have to do is to look (Spurgeon).*
4. Is there a part of my life I keep out of the Light "for fear that [my] deeds will be exposed"? What would it take to bring it in? (3:19–21; 1 John 1:7) *The Light comes to save before it judges (v17).*
5. Where am I competing for credit or attention in ministry, at home or at work? What would "I must decrease" look like this week? (3:27–30) *The friend of the bridegroom rejoices at the Groom's voice.*
6. Verse 36 says the believer has eternal life now. How would I live differently today if I believed that is already true of me? (3:36; 5:24) *Present tense: has life; present tense: wrath abides.*

Worship. God so loved the world — not a world that was looking for Him, but a world loving darkness — that He gave His only begotten Son. The Son came down from heaven, was lifted up on a cross like the serpent on the pole, and now holds all things in His hand. The Spirit blows where He wishes, and He blew on me.

Prayer. Father, thank You for loving me before I ever turned to You, and for giving Your only Son. Lord Jesus, I look to You lifted up for me; I cannot birth myself. Holy Spirit, blow where You wish — through me, and through the men I serve. Drag my hidden deeds into the Light, and let them be wrought in God. Make me glad to decrease, so that You increase in my home, my group and my heart. Amen.

Scripture: New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © 1960–1995 The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. · Teacher material summarized from David Guzik (Enduring Word), R.C. Sproul (Ligonier), C.H. Spurgeon and Matthew Henry — see John-3-Deep-Dive-Four-Voices.pdf for sources. · Importable: the companion .md carries the berean-study block.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 4

Living Water for a Thirsty Town — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus goes out of His way to find a thirsty outcast, tells her the truth about her life, and gives her water that ends thirst forever. Then He shows that the same word that saves a sinner at a well can heal a dying boy miles away — and all it asks of me is to believe Him.

00 The Text

JOHN 4 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),

3 He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.

4 And He had to pass through Samaria.

5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph;

6 and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."

8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

9 Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?

12 "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?"

13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw."

16 He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here."

17 The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’;

18 for ⚠ you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.”

19 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

20 “Our fathers 🔁 worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to 🔁 worship.”

21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, 🔁 believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you 🔁 worship the Father.

22 “You 🔁 worship what you do not know; we 🔁 worship what we know, for 🕒 salvation is from the Jews.

23 “But an hour is coming, and now is, when 📄 the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people △ the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

24 “△ God is spirit, and those who 🔁 worship Him must 🔁 worship in spirit and truth.”

25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.”

26 Jesus said to her, “△ I who speak to you am He.”

27 At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why do You speak with her?”

28 So the woman 🕒 left her waterpot, and went into the city and said to the men,

29 “📄 Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?”

30 They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.”

33 So the disciples were saying to one another, “No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?”

34 Jesus said to them, “△ My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

35 “Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, 📄 lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are 🕒 white for harvest.

36 “Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

37 “For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’

38 “I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”

39 From that city many of the Samaritans 🔁 believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all the things that I have done.”

40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

41 Many more 🔁 believed because of His word;

42 and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we 🔁 believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed △ the Savior of the world.”

43 After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee.

44 For Jesus Himself testified that ⚠ a prophet has no honor in his own country.

45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast.

46 Therefore He came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and was imploring Him to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.

48 So Jesus said to him, “⚠ Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.”

49 The royal official said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.”

50 Jesus said to him, “△ Go; your son lives.” The man ⟲ believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off.

51 As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living.

52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him,
“◷ Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

53 So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives”; and ☆ he himself believed and his whole household.

54 This is again ◷ a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Marked in the text

- **v4** “He had to pass through Samaria” — Time / place / contrast
- **v6** “being wearied from His journey” — God — His character & actions
- **v6** “about the sixth hour” — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** “Jews have no dealings with Samaritans” — Sin / warning
- **v10** “If you knew the gift of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v14** “shall never thirst” — Promise / blessing
- **v14** “a well of water springing up to eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “Go, call your husband” — Command / instruction
- **v18** “you have had five husbands” — Sin / warning
- **v22** “salvation is from the Jews” — Time / place / contrast
- **v23** “the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” — Command / instruction
- **v23** “the Father seeks to be His worshipers” — God — His character & actions
- **v24** “God is spirit” — God — His character & actions
- **v26** “I who speak to you am He” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “left her waterpot” — Time / place / contrast
- **v29** “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done” — Command / instruction
- **v34** “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “lift up your eyes and look on the fields” — Command / instruction
- **v35** “white for harvest” — Time / place / contrast
- **v42** “the Savior of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v44** “a prophet has no honor in his own country” — Sin / warning
- **v48** “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe” — Sin / warning
- **v50** “Go; your son lives” — God — His character & actions
- **v52** “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him” — Time / place / contrast
- **v53** “he himself believed and his whole household” — Promise / blessing
- **v54** “a second sign” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “living water” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v20** “worship” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v20** “worshiped” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v23** “worshipers” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v21** “believe” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v39** “believed” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

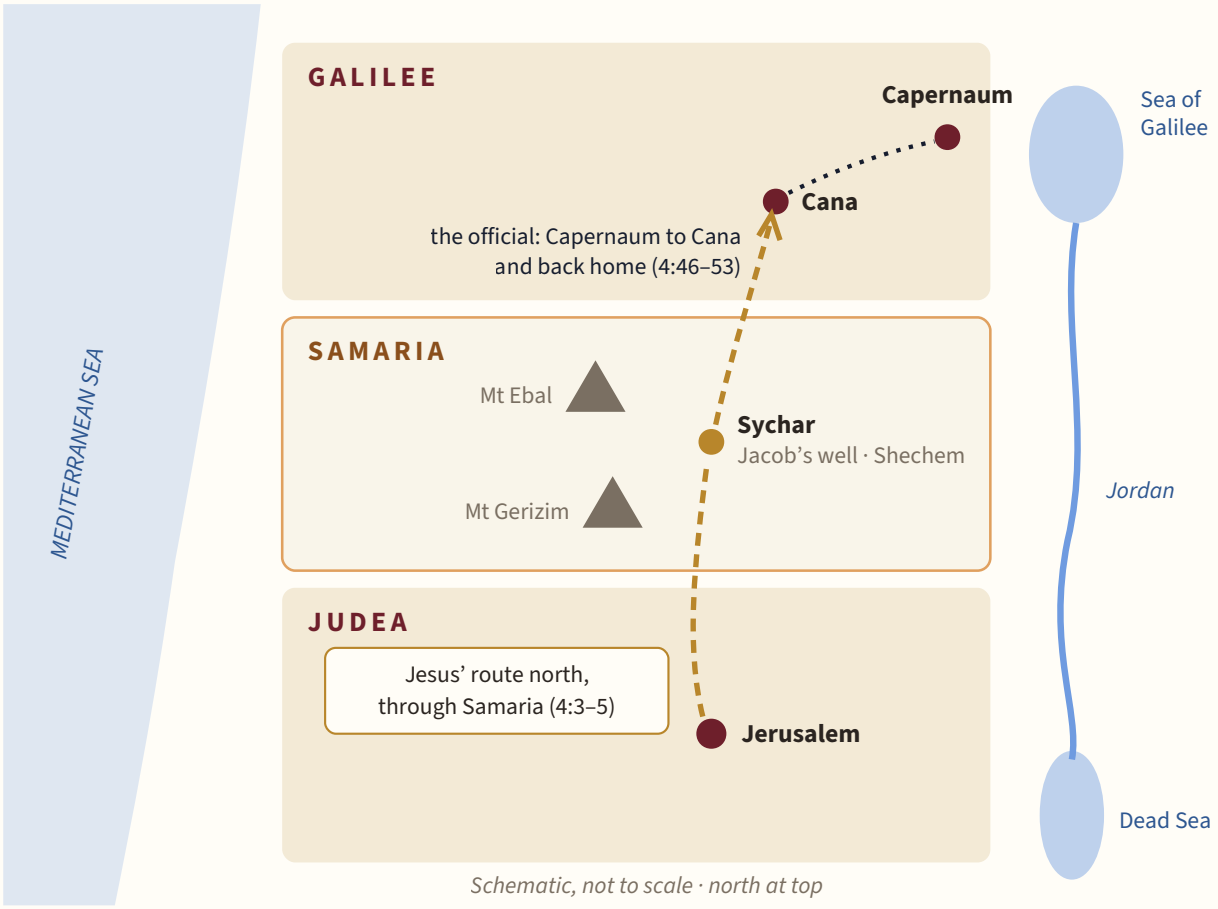
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 4:4

"And He had to pass through Samaria."

FIGURE · JUDEA, SAMARIA, GALILEE



Jesus leaves Judea for Galilee by the road through Samaria, stops at Jacob's well under Mount Gerizim, and later speaks a word in Cana that heals a boy in Capernaum.

Setting. Jesus leaves Judea because the Pharisees have heard He is making more disciples than John (vv1–3). On the road north He stops at Sychar in Samaria, at Jacob's well, about the sixth hour (vv4–6). He stays two days with the Samaritans (v40), then goes on to Galilee and to Cana, where a royal official from Capernaum begs Him to heal his son (vv43–54).

Structure:

- vv1–6 — **the road and the well:** the Pharisees hear; Jesus leaves Judea; "He had to pass through Samaria" (v4); Sychar, Jacob's land and Jacob's well; Jesus, wearied, sits by the well at the sixth hour.

- vv7–15 — **living water:** "Give Me a drink" (v7); "How is it that You, being a Jew …?" (v9); the gift of God and living water (v10); "the well is deep" — greater than Jacob? (vv11–12); this water vs. the water I will give (vv13–14); "Sir, give me this water" (v15).
- vv16–26 — **spirit and truth:** "Go, call your husband" (v16); five husbands (vv17–18); "I perceive that You are a prophet" — this mountain or Jerusalem? (vv19–20); an hour is coming; salvation is from the Jews; the Father seeks true worshipers; God is spirit (vv21–24); "I know that Messiah is coming" — "I who speak to you am He" (vv25–26).
- vv27–42 — **the harvest:** the disciples are amazed (v27); she leaves her waterpot — "Come, see a man" (vv28–30); "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me" (vv31–34); fields white for harvest, sower and reaper (vv35–38); many Samaritans believe because of her word, many more because of His; "the Savior of the world" (vv39–42).
- vv43–54 — **the second sign:** a prophet has no honor in his own country (v44); the Galileans receive Him (v45); Cana, a royal official, a dying son (vv46–47); "Unless you people see signs and wonders" (v48); "Go; your son lives" — he believed the word (vv49–50); the slaves meet him; the seventh hour (vv51–52); he and his whole household believed (v53); the second sign (v54).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "come / comes / coming / came" ×14 — vv5, 7, 15, 16, 25, 27, 35, 40, 45, 46, 47 (×2), 49, 54.
- "harvest / reap / sow / labor" ×11 — vv35 (×2), 36 (×3), 37 (×2), 38 (×4).
- "worship / worshiped / worshipers" ×10 — vv20 (×2), 21, 22 (×2), 23 (×3), 24 (×2).
- "water" ×9 — vv7, 10, 11, 13, 14 (×3), 15, 46; "living water" ×2 — vv10, 11.
- "Samaria / Samaritan(s)" ×8 — vv4, 5, 7, 9 (×3), 39, 40.
- "know / knew" ×8 — vv1, 10, 22 (×2), 25, 32, 42, 53.
- "believe / believed" ×7 — vv21, 39, 41, 42, 48, 50, 53.
- "son(s)" ×7 — vv5, 12, 46, 47, 50, 51, 53; "Galilee / Galileans" ×7 — vv3, 43, 45 (×2), 46, 47, 54.
- "give / gave / gift" ×7 — vv5, 10 (×2), 12, 14 (×2), 15.
- "drink / drank / drinks" ×6 — vv7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14; "thirst / thirsty" ×3 — vv13, 14, 15.
- "hour" ×6 — vv6, 21, 23, 52 (×2), 53.
- "food / eat" ×6 — vv8, 31, 32 (×2), 33, 34.
- "lives / living" ×5 — vv10, 11, 50, 51, 53; "well" ×5 — vv6 (×2), 11, 12, 14.
- "husband(s)" ×5 — vv16, 17 (×2), 18 (×2).
- "Sir" ×4 — vv11, 15, 19, 49; "Father" ×3 — vv21, 23 (×2); "spirit" ×3 — vv23, 24 (×2).
- "told me all the things that I have done" ×2 — vv29, 39.

Contrasts: Judea ⟷ Galilee, with Samaria between (vv3–4). A Jew ⟷ a Samaritan woman (v9). This water ⟷ the water I will give; thirst again ⟷ never thirst (vv13–14). This mountain ⟷ Jerusalem ⟷ spirit and truth (vv20–24). What you do not know ⟷ what we know (v22). Physical food ⟷ the Father's will (vv32–34). Four months ⟷ white for harvest now (v35). Sower ⟷ reaper (vv36–38). Because of what you said ⟷ we have heard for ourselves (v42). Signs and wonders ⟷ the word that Jesus spoke (vv48–50).

Shape of the chapter: a long conversation (7–26), a harvest (27–42) and a short miracle (43–54). It moves outward — one woman, one town, the Savior of the world — and then back to one father and one boy, and in both halves people believe His word.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus crosses every wall to give living water to the thirsty, tells the truth about sin so He can give a new kind of worship, and gathers a harvest from the people nobody expected. His word is enough — enough to save a town and to heal a dying boy at a distance.

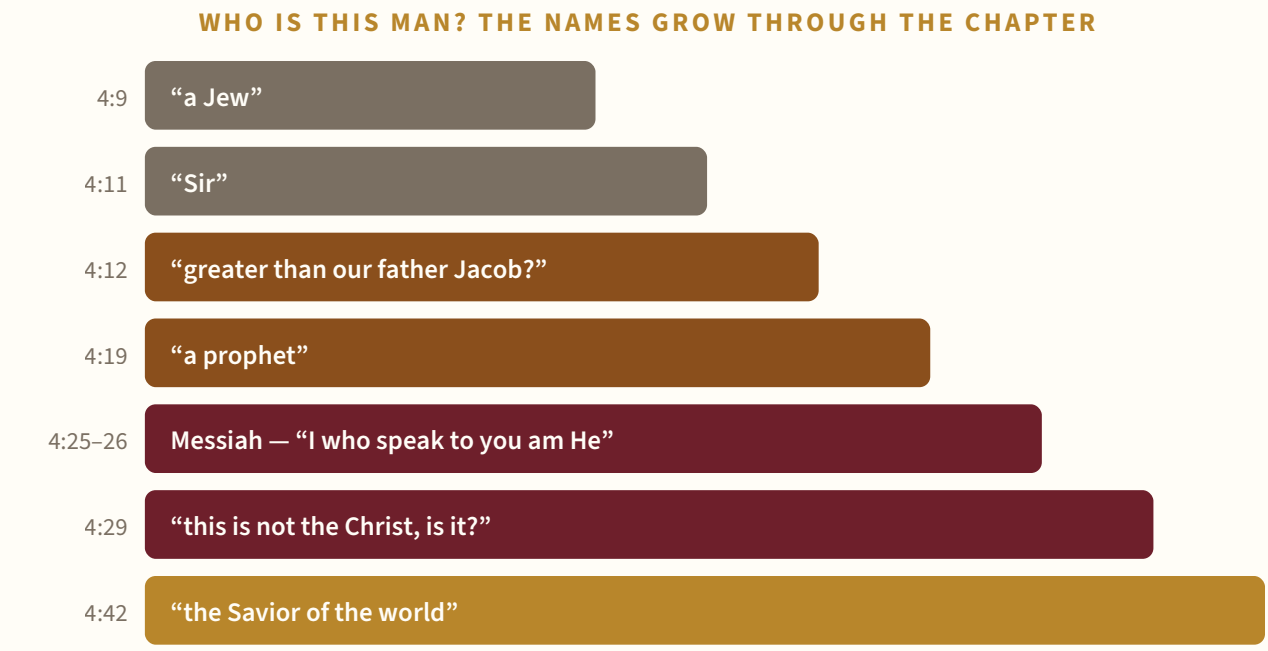
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 4:24

"△ God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

FIGURE · THE NAMES GROW



The woman starts with what she can see; the town ends with what they have heard for themselves (v42).

Follow the bars down the page: each new name for Jesus says more than the last, from "a Jew" at the well to "the Savior of the world" in the town.

Why "had to" go through Samaria? The direct road from Judea to Galilee ran through Samaria, and Sproul reads it simply: "Jesus may have been in a hurry." Guzik and Henry read divine purpose — "there were people there who needed to hear Him" (Guzik). John uses *edei*, the same "must" as 3:7, 14, 30. I land with purpose: a woman and a town were waiting.

What time was "the sixth hour"? Guzik and Sproul both take it as noon, counting from sunrise ("That means it was high noon"). Some commentators argue John used Roman reckoning (6 p.m.). Noon fits the woman coming alone in the heat, likely avoiding the other women (Sproul).

What is "living water"? The woman hears "running water" (v11). Jesus means the life He gives by the Spirit — John explains the phrase in 7:38–39. Guzik: "Jesus made a play on words." The water becomes a spring that "leaps up" (*hallomai*) inside a man (Sproul). Spurgeon: "You must be the emptiness, and he must be the fulness."

Why bring up her husband? Not to shame her but to heal her. Guzik: "her sinful life had to be confronted." Henry: "Reproofs are ordinarily most profitable when they are least provoking." Sproul thinks her "prophet" remark was a deflection — and Jesus let her ask, then answered.

Does the place of worship matter? Henry and Guzik stress that worship is no longer tied to a mountain (v21). Sproul presses the other half: Jesus "answers that question" — "It is the Jewish way that is the correct way, the way God has ordained," because "salvation is of the Jews." Both are true. God's plan of salvation came through Israel's covenants, prophets and Messiah, and I believe God is not finished with Israel (Rom 11:1–2, 26). But the hour has come when true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth, wherever they are.

What is worship "in spirit and truth"? Sproul: "the worship we offer is to come from the depths of our souls," and it must follow God's Word, not felt needs — or it ends at a golden calf. Guzik: "To worship in truth means you worship according to the whole counsel of God's word." Henry: "God is a spirit, for he is an infinite and eternal mind."

"I who speak to you am He" (v26). The plain sense is "I am the Messiah." But it is the first *egō eimi* in John, and it will grow into 8:58 and the name of Exodus 3:14. Sproul: "But here, to a despised Samaritan, a despised woman, Jesus reveals Himself."

What is the harvest? The Samaritans crossing the fields (v30). Jesus' disciples reap what others sowed — the prophets, John the Baptist, the woman (vv37–38). Henry: "gospel time is harvest time." Guzik and Bruce wonder whether this is the town Philip later reached (Acts 8:5).

Is verse 44 a contradiction? Sproul: "it would be surprising to me if John contradicted himself." Whether "his own country" is Judea or Galilee, the Galilean welcome in v45 was for signs, not faith. Henry: pride and envy scorn the hometown prophet.

What kind of faith did the official have? Spurgeon traces four stages — spark, fire, flame, blaze. Sproul: the man believed God, not just in God, and that is saving faith. Guzik: "In fear, the nobleman ran from Capernaum to Cana; in faith he walked from Cana back to Capernaum."

Word study (Greek):

- **had to — *edei* (G1163):** the divine "must" again (3:7, 14, 30; 4:4, 24).
- **well — *pēgē* (G4077):** a spring or fountain; 4:6 (×2), 14.
- **well (dug) — *phrear* (G5421):** a shaft or cistern; 4:11, 12.
- **living — *zaō* (G2198):** living water, running and alive (Jer 2:13; John 7:38–39).
- **springing up — *hallomai* (G242):** leaping; John 4:14; Acts 3:8; 14:10.
- **worship — *proskyneō* (G4352):** to bow down; NASB "worship" words ×10 in vv20–24.
- **I am — *eimi* (G1510):** *egō eimi*, "I am [He]" (4:26; 6:35; 8:58; Exod 3:14).
- **waterpot — *hydria* (G5201):** only John 2:6, 7; 4:28.
- **food — *brōma* (G1033):** "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me" (v34).
- **Savior — *sōtēr* (G4990):** only Luke 1:47; 2:11; John 4:42 in the Gospels; 1 John 4:14.
- **royal official — *basilikos* (G937):** a king's man, probably of Herod Antipas.
- **signs — *sēmeion* (G4592) / wonders — *teras* (G5059):** *teras* only here in John.

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **"Had to" is the same word as the cross** — *edei* (4:4).
2. **God was weary at a well** — and would not work a miracle for His own comfort (Spurgeon).
3. **He asks before He gives** — "Give Me a drink" breaks three walls.
4. **A spring, not a cistern** — *pēgē* that leaps up, not a deep shaft (Jer 2:13).
5. **Jesus exposes in order to heal** — 0 for 5 (Sproul), reproof least provoking (Henry).
6. **Not where, but whom and how** — the Father, in spirit and truth; salvation from the Jews.
7. **The first "I am" goes to an outcast** (v26).
8. **She left her waterpot** — and gave Him drink by believing (Spurgeon).
9. **Testimony leads to His word** — vv39, 41, 42.
10. **Faith takes Jesus at His word** (Guzik, Sproul).

Cross-references: Gen 24; 29:1–12; 33:18–19; 48:22; Exod 2:15–21; 3:14; Deut 18:18; Josh 24:32; 2 Kings 17:24–41; Isa 12:3; 55:1; Jer 2:13; John 2:1–11; 3:16; 6:35; 7:37–39; 8:58; 20:30–31; Acts 1:8; 8:5–25; Rom 11:1–2, 26; Heb 11:1; 1 John 4:14; Rev 22:17.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 4:50

"Jesus said to him, "△ Go; your son lives." ▯ The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off."

FIGURE · A FATHER'S FAITH GROWS

A FATHER'S FAITH GROWS · JOHN 4:46–53 · SPURGEON'S FOUR STAGES

THE SPARK vv46–47	THE FIRE vv48–49	THE FLAME v50	THE BLAZE vv51–53
he hears Jesus has come; he goes and implores Him "come down"	rebuked for wanting signs, he presses: "Sir, come down before …"	"Go; your son lives." He believes the word and starts off	"at that hour" — he himself believed and his whole household

THE HOUR CHECKS OUT

Cana, "the seventh hour" — Jesus speaks (v52) · next day on the road — the slaves meet him (v51)

"So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"" (v53)

Spurgeon traced four stages in the official's faith; read left to right, and notice that the healing word came before the man saw anything.

Example to follow — Jesus at the well. He was tired, and He still had time for one woman everybody else avoided. Some of the men I serve have been that woman — the one the others won't sit with, the one with the record. Jesus "had to" go there. This week I will go where I would rather not, and sit with someone I would rather avoid, and ask him a simple question.

Sin to confess — drinking from broken cisterns. I have gone back to the same wells over and over — approval, pleasure, numbing out, staying busy — and I have been thirsty again every time (v13). Jeremiah called that forsaking the fountain of living waters for broken cisterns. I confess it by name, and I ask Jesus for His water: "Sir, give me this water."

Truth to face — He knows all the things that I have done. When He told her about the five husbands, she did not run home in shame; she ran home with good news: "Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done." The One who knows everything about me still offers me living water. That is the only kind of honesty that doesn't crush a man.

Command to obey — worship in spirit and truth; lift up your eyes. God is not looking for a better building from me; He is seeking worshipers (v23) — from the heart, by His Word. And He tells me to lift up my eyes and look at the fields (v35). The men in my group, the guys at the facility, my own neighbors — the fields are white now, not in four months.

Promise to trust — "Go; your son lives." The official had only a word to walk home on. So do I. Much of what I pray for, I don't get to see answered right away. Saving faith is "trusting that what God says is the truth" (Sproul). I will take Him at His word today, before I see anything.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Jesus "had to pass through Samaria" — the place good Jews avoided. Who is the person or place I avoid that Jesus might be sending me toward? (4:4–9; Acts 1:8) *A divine appointment waited at the well.*
2. What "wells" have I kept going back to that leave me thirsty again — and what would it look like to ask Jesus for living water instead? (4:13–15; Jer 2:13) *Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again.*
3. When Jesus put His finger on her past, the woman changed the subject. What subject do I raise when God gets close to my sin? (4:16–20) *He was more interested in winning a soul than an argument (Guzik).*
4. Is my worship "in spirit" (from the heart) and "in truth" (by God's Word)? Which one am I weaker in? (4:23–24) *The Father seeks such people to be His worshipers.*
5. The woman's whole testimony was "He told me all the things that I have done." What would my honest one-sentence testimony be? (4:28–30, 39) *Those are most likely to do good that can tell what God has done for their souls (Henry).*
6. The official had nothing but a word to walk home on. Where is God asking me to believe His word before I see anything? (4:48–53; Heb 11:1) *Not believing in God but believing God (Sproul).*

Worship. The Lord of glory sat tired on a well in Samaria and asked a sinner for a drink. He is the fountain of living waters, the Messiah who said "I am He" to an outcast, the Savior of the world whom Samaritans named first, and the Lord whose word reached across the miles to a dying boy at the very hour He spoke it.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You know all the things that I have done, and You still offer me living water. Sir, give me this water — I am tired of broken cisterns. Teach me to worship the Father in spirit and truth. Lift up my eyes to the fields, and make me a man who leaves his waterpot to tell others where You are. And when all I have is Your word, help me believe it and start walking. Amen.

Scripture: New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © 1960–1995 The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. · Teacher material summarized from David Guzik (Enduring Word), R.C. Sproul (Ligonier), C.H. Spurgeon and Matthew Henry — see John-4-Deep-Dive-Four-Voices.pdf for sources. · Importable: the companion .md carries the berean-study block.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 5

The Son Who Gives Life — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus made a hopeless man well with a word, and when He was charged for it He claimed everything the Father does — giving life, judging, receiving honor. The evidence is overwhelming; the only question is whether I am willing to come to Him.

00 The Text

JOHN 5 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and
Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool,
which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five
porticoes.

3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind,
lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the
waters;

4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons
into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first,
after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made
well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]

5 A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight
years.

6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had
already been a long time in that condition, He said to
him, "Do you wish to get well?"

7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put
me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I
am coming, another steps down before me."

8 Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and
walk."

9 Immediately the man became well, and picked up his
pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on
that day.

10 So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, "It
is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to
carry your pallet."

11 But he answered them, "He who made me well was the
one who said to me, 'Pick up your pallet and walk.'"

12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you,
'Pick up your pallet and walk'?"

13 But the man who was healed did not know who it was,
for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in
that place.

14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to
him, "Behold, you have become well; do not sin
anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you."

15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus
who had made him well.

16 For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus,
because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

17 But He answered them, "△ My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

18 For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the ⟲ Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, △ making Himself equal with God.

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

20 "For △ the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

21 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so △ the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but △ He has given all judgment to the Son,

23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. ⚠ He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, ☆ has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but ☆ has passed out of death into life.

25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, ◷ an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

26 "For just as the Father has △ life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have △ life in Himself;

27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which ◷ all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to ☆ a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to ⚠ a resurrection of judgment.

30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because △ I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

31 "If I alone testify about Myself, My ⟲ testimony is not true.

32 "There is another who ⟲ testifies of Me, and I know that the ⟲ testimony which He gives about Me is true.

33 "You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

34 "But the ⟲ testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

35 "He was ◷ the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

36 "But the ⟲ testimony which I have is greater than the ⟲ testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

37 "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

38 "You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

39 "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; △ it is these that testify about Me;

40 and ⚠ you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

41 "I do not receive glory from men;

42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

44 "How can you believe, when ⚠ you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?

45 "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.

46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for △ he wrote about Me.

47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Marked in the text

- **v5** “ill for thirty-eight years” — Time / place / contrast
- **v6** “Do you wish to get well?” — Command / instruction
- **v8** “Get up, pick up your pallet and walk” — Command / instruction
- **v9** “Immediately the man became well” — God — His character & actions
- **v9** “Now it was the Sabbath on that day” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet” — Sin / warning
- **v14** “do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you” — Sin / warning
- **v17** “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working” — God — His character & actions
- **v18** “making Himself equal with God” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “the Father loves the Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v21** “the Son also gives life to whom He wishes” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “He has given all judgment to the Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v23** “He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” — Sin / warning
- **v24** “has eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v24** “has passed out of death into life” — Promise / blessing
- **v25** “an hour is coming and now is” — Time / place / contrast
- **v28** “all who are in the tombs will hear His voice” — Time / place / contrast
- **v29** “a resurrection of life” — Promise / blessing
- **v29** “a resurrection of judgment” — Sin / warning
- **v30** “I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “the lamp that was burning and was shining” — Time / place / contrast
- **v39** “it is these that testify about Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v40** “you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life” — Sin / warning
- **v44** “you receive glory from one another” — Sin / warning
- **v46** “he wrote about Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v26** “life in Himself” — God — His character & actions (every occurrence)
- **v26** “life in himself” — God — His character & actions (every occurrence)
- **v9** “Sabbath” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v9** “sabbath” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v31** “testimony” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v32** “testifies” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

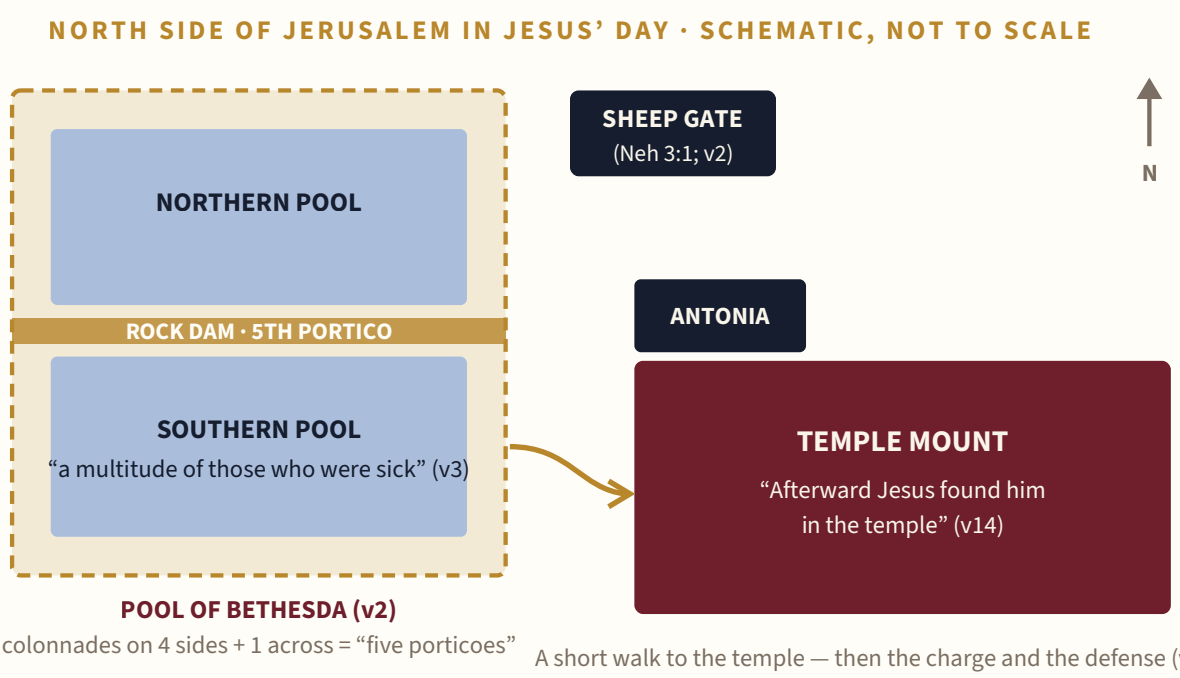
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 5:6

"When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, 'Do you wish to get well?'"

FIGURE · BETHESDA, THE SHEEP GATE AND THE TEMPLE



The twin pools with their five porticoes lay just north of the temple courts — close enough that Jesus could find the healed man there the same day.

Setting. Jerusalem, at an unnamed "feast of the Jews" (v1), between Jesus' ministry in Galilee (4:43–54) and the feeding of the five thousand (6:1). The pool of Bethesda by the Sheep Gate, with five porticoes full of the sick (vv2–3); then the temple (v14). It is the Sabbath (v9) — the day the conflict turns deadly (v18).

Structure:

- vv1–9 — **the healing:** a man ill thirty-eight years; "Do you wish to get well?"; "I have no man to put me into the pool"; "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk"; immediately well. (vv3b–4, the angel, are bracketed in NASB — not in the oldest manuscripts.)
- vv10–18 — **the charge:** "not permissible … to carry your pallet"; the man doesn't know who healed him; Jesus finds him in the temple — "do not sin anymore"; the man tells the Jews; persecution; "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working"; now they seek to kill Him, for "making Himself equal with God."

- vv19–30 — **the defense:** the Son does what the Father does (v19), is loved and shown all (v20), gives life (v21), has all judgment (vv22, 27), receives equal honor (v23). The believer has eternal life and has passed out of death into life (v24). The dead hear now (v25); all in the tombs will hear (vv28–29). "I can do nothing on My own initiative" (v30).
- vv31–47 — **the witnesses:** John (vv33–35), the works (v36), the Father (vv37–38), the Scriptures (v39), Moses (vv45–47). The verdict on the hearers: unwilling to come (v40), no love of God (v42), seeking glory from one another (v44).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Father" ×16 — vv17, 18, 19 (×2), 20 (×2), 21, 22, 23 (×2), 26, 36 (×2), 37, 43 ("My Father's"), 45.
- "testify / testifies / testified / testimony" ×11 — vv31 (×2), 32 (×2), 33, 34, 36 (×3), 37, 39.
- "Son" ×10 — vv19 (×2), 20, 21, 22, 23 (×2), 25 ("Son of God"), 26, 27 ("Son of Man").
- "life" ×9 — vv21 (×2), 24 (×2), 26 (×2), 29, 39, 40.
- "judge / judges / judgment" ×7 — vv22 (×2), 24, 27, 29, 30 (×2).
- "sent" ×7 — of the Father sending the Son ×6 (vv23, 24, 30, 36, 37, 38), and v33 ("You have sent to John").
- "believe(s)" ×7 — vv24, 38, 44, 46 (×2), 47 (×2).
- "well" ×6 — vv4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15 (Greek *hygiēs*).
- "hear(s) / heard" ×6 — vv24, 25 (×2), 28, 30, 37; "voice" ×3 — vv25, 28, 37.
- "pallet" ×5 — vv8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
- "work(s) / working" ×5 — vv17 (×2), 20, 36 (×2).
- "Sabbath" ×4 — vv9, 10, 16, 18; "honor" ×4 — all in v23.
- "Truly, truly" ×3 — vv19, 24, 25; "glory" ×3 — vv41, 44 (×2); "marvel" ×2 — vv20, 28; "Moses" ×2 — vv45, 46.

Contrasts: waiting at the pool (v7) ⟷ "Get up … and walk" (v8). The mat (v10) ⟷ the man made well (v11). Breaking the Sabbath ⟷ the Father working until now (vv16–17). Death ⟷ life (v24). The hour "now is" (v25) ⟷ the hour "coming" (v28). A resurrection of life ⟷ a resurrection of judgment (v29). Testimony from man ⟷ testimony from the Father (vv34, 37). Glory from one another ⟷ glory from the one and only God (v44). Coming in My Father's name ⟷ coming in his own name (v43).

Shape of the chapter: a sign (1–9), a charge (10–18), a defense (19–30), a summons of witnesses (31–47). It begins with one man who could not walk to the water and ends with a nation unwilling to come to the Son.

Chapter theme (my words): The Son does what only God does — He heals with a word, gives life to whom He wishes, and will judge all. Every witness points to Him; the only thing standing between a man and life is his unwillingness to come.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 5:18

"For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was ⚠ breaking the Sabbath, but also was △ calling God His own Father, △ making Himself equal with God."

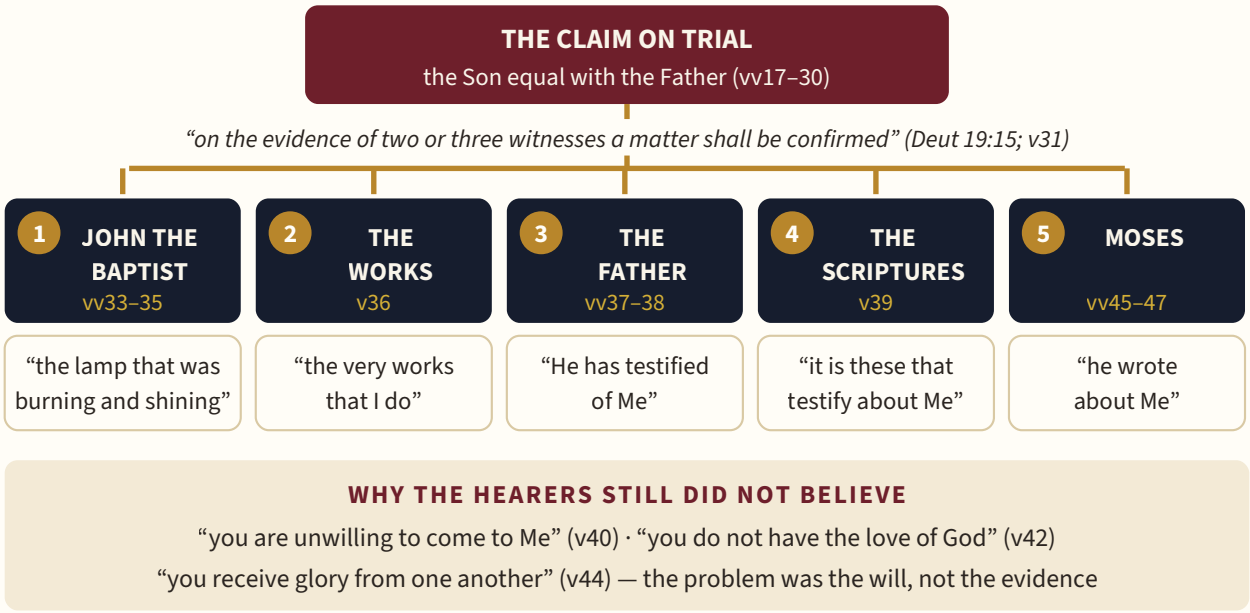
FIGURE · WHAT THE FATHER DOES, THE SON DOES

JOHN 5:17–27	THE FATHER	THE SON
WORKS	"My Father is working until now" v17	"and I Myself am working" v17
LOVES · SHOWS	loves the Son, shows Him all v20	does whatever He sees the Father do v19
GIVES LIFE	raises the dead and gives them life v21	gives life to whom He wishes vv21, 25
LIFE IN HIMSELF	has life in Himself v26	given to have life in Himself v26
JUDGMENT	judges no one — has given it all v22	authority to judge, as Son of Man vv22, 27
HONOR	honored as God v23	honored "even as" the Father v23

"whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner" (v19)

Read across each row: every work Jesus claims for the Father in vv17–27 He also claims for Himself — the very equality His accusers heard in verse 18.

FIGURE · FIVE WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENSE



The Law asked for two or three witnesses; Jesus calls five, and then names the real reason His hearers will not believe.

Verses 3b–4 — was there an angel? The NASB brackets the angel stirring the water because the oldest manuscripts lack it. Guzik and Sproul both think it a very early addition (Sproul: likely reflecting local superstition; the pools were fed by artesian wells). Henry, working from the KJV, takes it as genuine: "Expositors generally agree that the virtue this pool had was supernatural." Either way verse 7 shows what the sick believed — and Jesus bypassed the pool entirely. Spurgeon: "'Wait at the pool,' is man's gospel, and has destroyed its thousands."

"Do you wish to get well?" — a real question. Guzik: "This was a sincere question." After thirty-eight years a man can make peace with his condition. Sproul: healing would bring new responsibilities, and some men prefer the security of confinement. Henry hears the man's answer as the cry of the friendless: "It is not for want of a good will, but of a good friend, that I am unhealed."

What law did the man break? Not God's. Guzik: "It was not a breaking of God's law of the Sabbath, but the human interpretation of God's law." Jeremiah 17:21 forbade carrying loads of trade through the gates; the rabbis widened it to a healed man's mat. Sproul: "Where in the Word of God does it say…?" Spurgeon calls the complaint "a mere pretense, an idle excuse for their enmity."

Is sickness caused by sin (v14)? Jesus says, "do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you." Sproul links it to Luke 13 — calamity can follow sin — while warning against assuming every disaster is a direct punishment (compare John 9:3). The "worse thing" is more than a relapse: Guzik, "Living a life of sin is worse, and will bring a worse result, than being crippled for thirty-eight years."

"Equal with God" (v18). Jesus' accusers understood the claim of verse 17 perfectly, and He did not retreat (Guzik: "Jesus did not try and explain that He had not truly worked on the Sabbath"). Sproul answers how the Son can be equal yet say "the Son can do nothing of Himself": in being, Father and Son are equal; in the work of redemption, the Father sends and the Son obeys. "From all eternity, the Father sends the Son." Guzik: "not one of master and slave."

Life now, resurrection later (vv24–29). Verse 24 is present and perfect tense: the believer *has* eternal life and *has passed* out of death into life (Spurgeon's "Verily, Verily"). Verse 25 ("and now is") is the spiritually dead hearing the gospel; verses 28–29 are the bodily dead hearing His voice (Henry sees both). Jesus echoes Daniel 12:2. In my futurist reading, Revelation 20:4–6 shows that the "resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of judgment" are separated by the thousand years — one "hour" as Daniel's "many … will awake," unfolded in stages.

"Those who did the good deeds" (v29) — saved by works? No. Verse 24 has already said life comes by hearing and believing; and 6:29 will call believing "the work of God." The deeds show which resurrection a man belongs to; they do not buy it. Spurgeon: "good works without faith are childish vanities."

"You search" or "Search" (v39)? The Greek form can be either. NASB reads it as a statement (they did search — and still would not come); KJV as a command, which Henry follows: "not only read them, and hear them, but search them." Both are true; the point is that the Scriptures "testify about Me." Spurgeon: for them "the Scriptures themselves became a sepulcher."

Why didn't they believe? Not for lack of evidence. Guzik: "The religious leaders were not willing, even though they had all the testimony one could have wanted." Sproul calls it moral resistance, not intellectual doubt. Spurgeon (1855) goes further: by nature no man will come to Christ — and yet "It is sin that has brought you into this condition that you will not come." Our teachers are Reformed or near it here; others read verse 40 as proof that the will is free to refuse. All agree the blame lies with the hearers, not with God.

Word study (Greek):

- **well — *hygiēs* (G5199):** sound, whole; seven of twelve NT uses in John 5 (plus 7:23).
- **pallet — *krabattos* (G2895):** the poor man's mat (Mark 2:4–12; John 5:8–11).
- **is working — *ergazomai* (G2038):** present tense; the Father never stopped (v17).
- **equal — *isos* (G2470):** equal in rank or measure (5:18; Phil 2:6).
- **gives life — *zōopoieō* (G2227):** to make alive; God's prerogative claimed by the Son (5:21; 6:63).
- **judgment — *krisis* (G2920):** v24 (no judgment for the believer) and v29 (resurrection of judgment).
- **has passed — *metabainō* (G3327):** to change place; perfect tense (5:24; 1 John 3:14).
- **testimony / testify — *martyria* / *martyreō* (G3141, G3140):** eleven times in vv31–39.
- **search — *eraunaō* (G2045):** examine, track down; statement or command in v39.
- **glory — *doxa* (G1391):** the approval they sought from men (vv41, 44).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Grace chose one man out of a multitude** — who did not ask and did not know His name (vv3, 13).
2. **"Well" is the word of the first half** — *hygiēs* in vv6, 9, 11, 14, 15.
3. **The command came with the power to obey it** (Guzik; Henry: "not … into the waters, but rise and walk").
4. **They saw the mat and missed the man** — no law of God forbade it (Sproul).
5. **A healed body is not a saved soul** — "how not to receive the blessings of Christ" (Sproul).
6. **His accusers understood Him exactly** — equal with God, and He did not correct them (v18).
7. **Eternal life is a present possession** — has, has passed (v24).
8. **Two hours, one voice** — souls now (v25), bodies then (vv28–29).
9. **You can study the Bible and miss its subject** (v39; Spurgeon's "sepulcher").

10. **Unbelief is a matter of the will** — unwilling, loveless, glory-seeking (vv40–44).

Cross-references: Exod 20:8–11; Num 21:8–9; Deut 18:15–19; 19:15; Neh 3:1; Ps 33:6; Isa 35:6; Jer 17:21–22; Dan 7:13–14; 12:2; Matt 12:1–14; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 13:1–5; 24:27, 44; John 1:4; 3:14–18; 7:21–24; 9:3; 10:30; 11:25; Acts 17:30–31; Rom 4:17; Phil 2:6; Heb 1:3; 1 John 3:14; 5:9–12; Rev 20:4–6, 11–15.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 5:14

"Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.'"

Question to answer — "Do you wish to get well?" I've sat at that pool. Thirty-eight years is a long time, and some of the men I walk with have been lying by the water longer than that — addiction, anger, a prison sentence that ended years ago but still runs their lives. The honest answer isn't always yes. Getting well means picking up the mat and walking: a job, a family to face, no more excuses. Jesus asks anyway, and He doesn't ask me to crawl to the water first. This week I want to answer Him out loud: Yes, Lord. Make me well, and I'll carry the mat.

Example to follow — be the man who puts him in the water. "I have no man to put me into the pool" (v7). Henry: "It is not for want of a good will, but of a good friend." Jesus became that man's Friend. I can't heal anybody, but I can be the brother who shows up, sits by the pool, and points him to the One who can.

Sin to confess — caring more about the mat than the man. The leaders looked at a healed man and saw a rules violation (v10). I confess the times I've judged a brother by his slip instead of rejoicing in what God has done in him — and the times I've hidden behind religious form while my heart was cold.

Command to obey — "do not sin anymore." Jesus went looking for this man in the temple to warn him (v14). Mercy received is not a license; it's a reason. Whatever Jesus has lifted me out of, I don't go back to it.

Promise to trust — "has passed out of death into life." If I hear His word and believe the Father who sent Him, I have eternal life now, I will not come into judgment, and I have already moved out of death's house (v24). On the days I feel like a dead man, the verb is still perfect tense.

Warning to heed — Bible without Jesus. I can read my Bible, know my verses, and still not come to Him (vv39–40). And I can live for the approval of the men around me — "glory from one another" (v44) — instead of the approval of God. The test is not how much I know but whether I keep coming to Him.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Jesus asked a man who had been sick thirty-eight years, "Do you wish to get well?" What in my life have I grown used to, and do I really want Him to change it? (5:5–7) *Sproul: healing brings new responsibilities; some prefer the security of their chains.*
2. The man said, "I have no man to put me into the pool." Who in my life is lying by the pool with no one to help — and what would it look like to be that man for him? (5:7; Gal 6:2) *Henry: not a good will he lacked, but a good friend.*
3. The leaders cared more about the mat than the man. Where do I care more about rules and appearances than about people being made whole? (5:10–16) *Guzik: human interpretation of God's law, not God's law.*
4. Jesus found the man in the temple and warned him, "do not sin anymore." What sin is He warning me about after He has already shown me mercy? (5:14; Rom 6:1–2) *A worse thing than thirty-eight years of paralysis is a life of sin.*

5. Verse 24 says the one who believes "has passed out of death into life." Do I live like a man who has already moved out of the house of death? (5:24; 1 John 3:14) *Perfect tense: the move is made and the result stands.*
6. I can know the Bible and still not come to Jesus. Whose approval am I living for — men's or God's? (5:39–44) *"How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another…?"*

Worship. The Son who stood by a pool in Jerusalem has life in Himself. He gives life to whom He wishes. All judgment is His. One day every grave will hear His voice. The Father has testified, the works have testified, John and Moses and all the Scriptures have testified — and they all point to Him. He deserves the same honor as the Father.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You found me lying by the pool with no one to help me in. Thank You for asking if I wanted to be well, and for making me well with a word. Keep me from going back to the sin You lifted me out of. Make me the friend who carries a brother to You. Let me search the Scriptures to find You, not to impress anyone, and let me seek the glory that comes from God alone. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 6

The Bread of Life — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus will not be the bread-king the crowd wants; He is the Bread Himself, given for the life of the world, and whoever comes to Him is never cast out. When His words get hard and others leave, there is still nowhere else to go.

00 The Text

JOHN 6 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias).

2 A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.

3 Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples.

4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.

5 Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?"

6 This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.

7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little."

8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him,

9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?"

10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted.

12 When they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost."

13 So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

14 Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

15 So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea,

17 and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.

18 The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.

19 Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.

20 But He said to them, "△ It is I; do not be afraid."

21 So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

22 The next day the crowd that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples had gone away alone.

23 There came other small boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate the ⟲ bread after the Lord had given thanks.

24 So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus.

25 When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You get here?"

26 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but ⚠ because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

27 "▯ Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."

28 Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?"

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "▯ This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

30 So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?

31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM ⟲ BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.'"

32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the ⟲ bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you △ the true bread out of heaven.

33 "For the ⟲ bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world."

34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this ⟲ bread."

35 Jesus said to them, "△ I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me ☆ will not hunger, and he who believes in Me ☆ will never thirst.

36 "But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.

37 "△ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me ☆ I will certainly not cast out.

38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me ☆ I lose nothing, but raise it up on the ◷ last day.

40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the ◷ last day."

41 Therefore the Jews were ⟲ grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the ⟲ bread that came down out of heaven."

42 They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"

43 Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not ⟲ grumble among yourselves.

44 "△ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the ◷ last day.

45 "It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.

46 "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.

47 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

48 “I am the bread of life.

49 “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

50 “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

51 “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

52 Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”

53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves.

54 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

55 “For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.

56 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

57 “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me.

58 “This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.”

59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, “This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?”

61 But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, “Does this cause you to stumble?

62 “What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?

63 “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

64 “But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.

65 And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

66 As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.

67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?”

68 Simon Peter answered Him,
“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.

69 “We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”

70 Jesus answered them, “Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?”

71 Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.

Marked in the text

- **v6** “to test him” — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** “five barley loaves and two fish” — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** “having given thanks” — God — His character & actions
- **v12** “so that nothing will be lost” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “filled twelve baskets” — Promise / blessing
- **v15** “take Him by force to make Him king” — Sin / warning
- **v20** “It is I; do not be afraid” — God — His character & actions
- **v26** “because you ate of the loaves and were filled” — Sin / warning
- **v27** “Do not work for the food which perishes” — Command / instruction
- **v29** “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent” — Command / instruction
- **v32** “the true bread out of heaven” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “I am the bread of life” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “will not hunger” — Promise / blessing
- **v35** “will never thirst” — Promise / blessing
- **v37** “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v37** “I will certainly not cast out” — Promise / blessing
- **v39** “I lose nothing” — Promise / blessing

- **v44** “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him” — God — His character & actions
- **v51** “I am the living bread” — God — His character & actions
- **v51** “for the life of the world is My flesh” — God — His character & actions
- **v51** “which I will give for the life of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v53** “you have no life in yourselves” — Sin / warning
- **v56** “abides in Me, and I in him” — Promise / blessing
- **v60** “This is a difficult statement” — Sin / warning
- **v63** “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing” — God — His character & actions
- **v66** “withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore” — Sin / warning
- **v68** “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v69** “the Holy One of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v70** “one of you is a devil” — Sin / warning
- **v5** “bread” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v39** “last day” — Time / place / contrast (every occurrence)
- **v41** “grumbling” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v43** “grumble” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v61** “grumbled” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

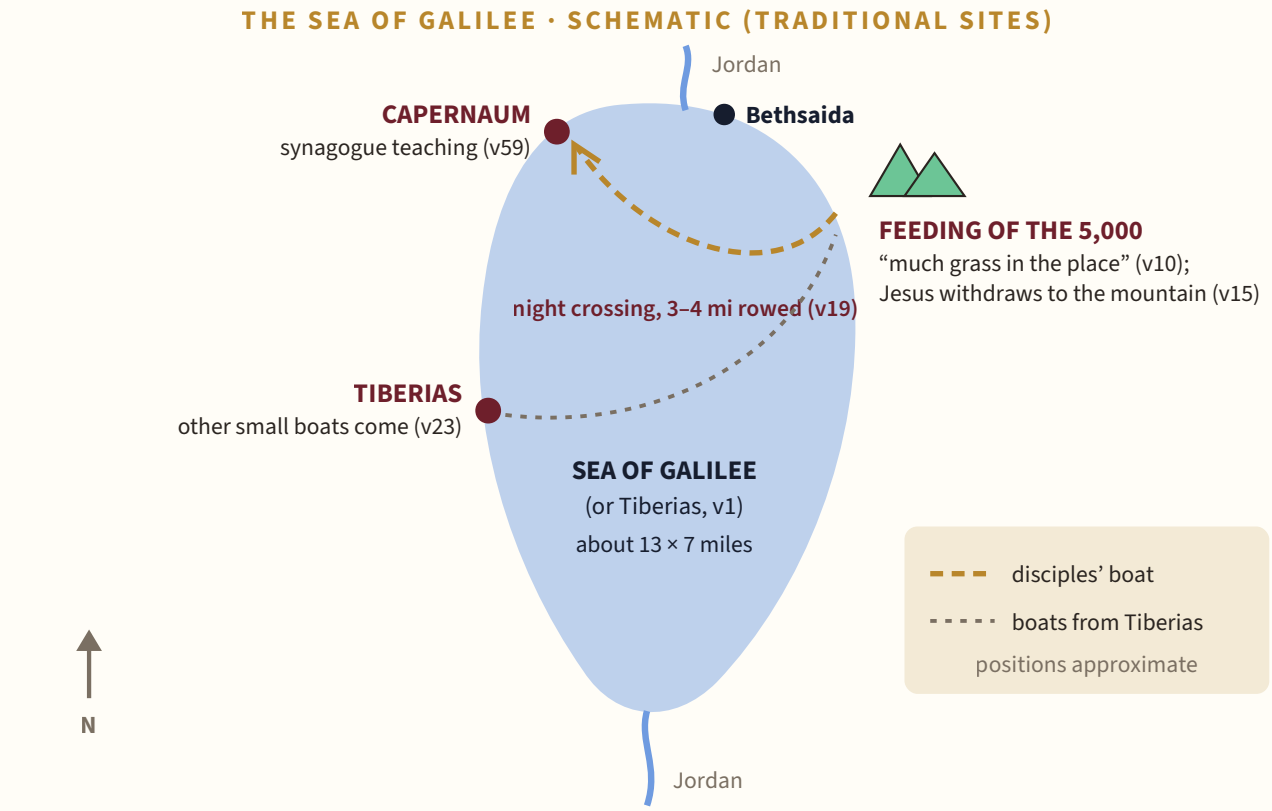
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 6:9

“There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?”

FIGURE · AROUND THE LAKE IN JOHN 6



Follow the dashed lines: the feeding on the far shore, the disciples’ night crossing toward Capernaum, and the crowd’s boats from Tiberias the next day.

Setting. Galilee, “after these things” (v1) — around the Sea of Galilee (Tiberias), with the Passover near (v4), a year before the cross. A grassy hillside on the far shore (vv3, 10); the lake at night (vv16–21); Capernaum and its synagogue (vv24, 59).

Structure:

- vv1–15 — **the feeding:** a large crowd following the signs; Jesus tests Philip (“Where are we to buy bread…?”); Philip counts 200 denarii; Andrew finds a lad with five barley loaves and two fish; the men sit on the grass, about five thousand; Jesus gives thanks and distributes; “Gather up the leftover fragments”; twelve baskets; “This is truly the Prophet”; they would take Him by force to make Him king; He withdraws alone.

- vv16–21 — **the storm:** dark, a strong wind, three or four miles rowed; Jesus walking on the sea; fear; "It is I; do not be afraid"; immediately at land.
- vv22–40 — **the bread from heaven:** the crowd finds Him at Capernaum; "you seek Me … because you ate of the loaves"; "Do not work for the food which perishes"; "This is the work of God, that you believe"; they demand a sign and cite the manna; "My Father … gives you the true bread out of heaven"; "I am the bread of life" (v35); all the Father gives will come, none cast out, none lost, raised on the last day (vv37–40).
- vv41–59 — **drawn and fed:** grumbling — "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph?"; "No one can come to Me unless the Father … draws him" (v44); "taught of God" (Isa 54:13); "he who believes has eternal life" (v47); the fathers ate manna and died; "I am the living bread"; "My flesh"; the Jews argue; eat My flesh, drink My blood (vv53–58).
- vv60–71 — **the sifting:** "This is a difficult statement"; the Son of Man ascending; "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing"; "no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him"; many withdraw; "You do not want to go away also, do you?"; Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go?"; "one of you is a devil" — Judas.

Repeated words, with counts:

- "bread" ×17 — vv5, 7, 23, 31, 32 (×2), 33, 34, 35, 41, 48, 50, 51 (×3), 58 (×2).
- "eat / eats / ate / eaten" ×16 — vv5, 13, 23, 26, 31 (×2), 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58 (×2).
- "life" ×12 — vv27, 33, 35, 40, 47, 48, 51, 53, 54, 63 (×2), 68; "eternal life" ×5 — vv27, 40, 47, 54, 68.
- "Father" (God) ×11 — vv27, 32, 37, 40, 44, 45, 46 (×2), 57 (×2), 65; plus "father and mother" (Joseph's family) v42; "fathers" (Israel's) ×3 — vv31, 49, 58.
- "heaven" ×10 — vv31, 32 (×2), 33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51, 58; "came / comes down out of (from) heaven" ×7 — vv33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51, 58.
- "give / gives / gave / given" ×13 — vv11, 23 ("given thanks"), 27, 31, 32 (×2), 33, 34, 37, 39, 51, 52, 63.
- "disciples" ×10 — vv3, 8, 12, 16, 22 (×2), 24, 60, 61, 66.
- "believe(s)" ×9 — vv29, 30, 35, 36, 40, 47, 64 (×2), 69.
- "flesh" ×7 — vv51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 63; "blood" ×4 — vv53–56; "drink(s)" ×4 — vv53–56.
- "come to Me / comes to Me" ×6 — vv35, 37 (×2), 44, 45, 65.
- "live / living" ×6 — vv51 (×2), 57 (×3), 58.
- "raise … on the last day" ×4 — vv39, 40, 44, 54.
- "sign(s)" ×4 — vv2, 14, 26, 30; "loaves" ×4 — vv9, 11, 13, 26; "twelve" ×4 — vv13, 67, 70, 71.
- "Truly, truly" ×4 — vv26, 32, 47, 53; "I am" (with predicate) ×4 — vv35, 41 (quoted), 48, 51 — and "It is I" (*egō eimi*) v20.
- "work(s)" ×5 — vv27, 28 (×2), 29, 30; "grumble" ×3 — vv41, 43, 61; "manna" ×2 — vv31, 49.

Contrasts: 200 denarii not enough (v7) ⟷ twelve baskets left over (v13). A king by force (v15) ⟷ withdrawn alone (v15). Food which perishes ⟷ food which endures to eternal life (v27). Moses ⟷ My Father (v32). Manna — ate and died ⟷ this bread — live forever (vv49–51, 58). The son of Joseph (v42) ⟷ the bread that came down out of heaven (v41). The Spirit gives life ⟷ the flesh profits nothing (v63). Many withdrew (v66) ⟷ "to whom shall we go?" (v68). "I Myself … choose you, the twelve" ⟷ "one of you is a devil" (v70).

Shape of the chapter: two signs (1–21), a sermon (22–59), a sifting (60–71). It starts with five thousand eager to crown Him and ends with twelve — and a betrayer among them. The bread in their hands becomes the Bread in front of them.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus gives bread to show that He is the Bread. Everything depends on coming to Him and feeding on Him by faith — and no one comes unless the Father draws him, and no one who comes is ever cast out.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 6:44

"⚠ No one can come to Me unless △ the Father who sent Me draws him; and ☆ I will raise him up on the last day."

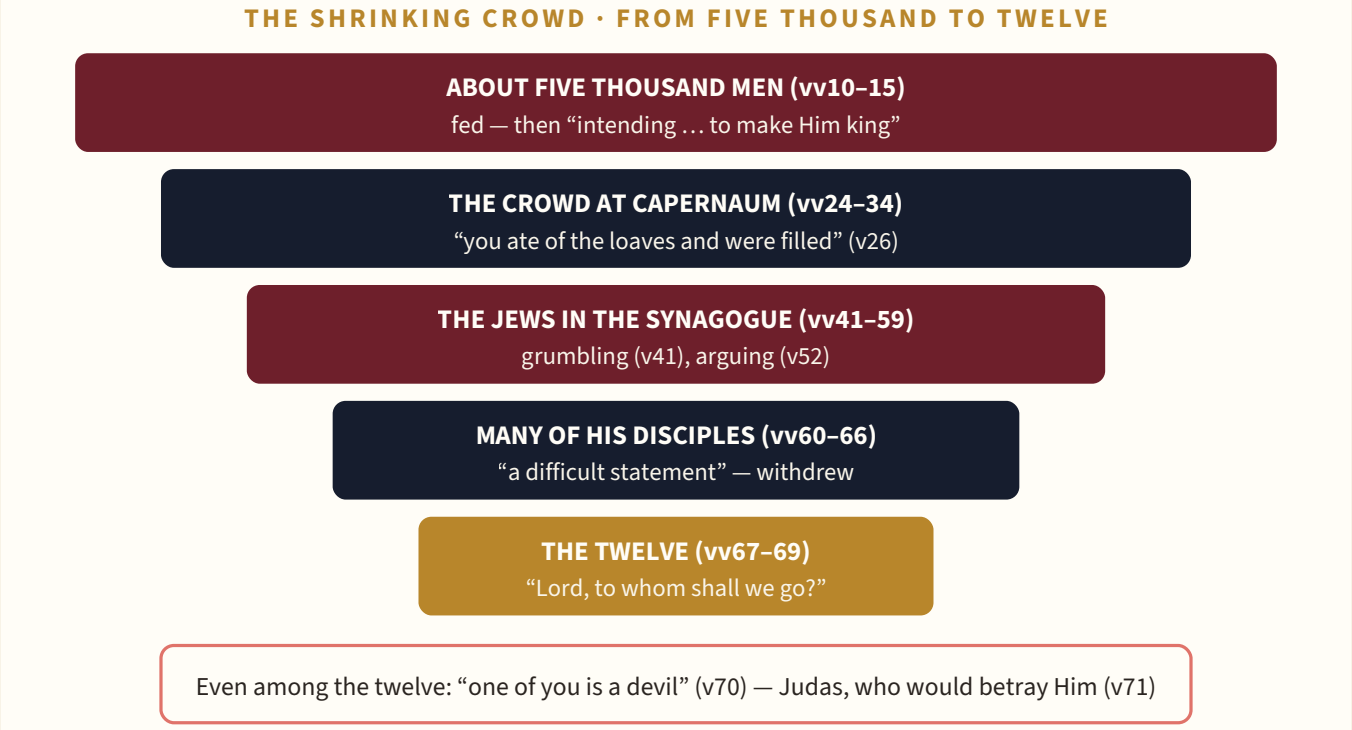
FIGURE · THE MANNA AND THE TRUE BREAD

JOHN 6:27–58	THE MANNA	THE TRUE BREAD
GIVEN BY	"it is not Moses who has given you" v32	"My Father who gives you" v32
COMES FROM	"bread out of heaven" — the sky v31; Exod 16:4	"comes down out of heaven" vv33, 38
GIVEN TO	Israel in the wilderness v31	"gives life to the world" vv33, 51
LASTS	a day's portion, then spoiled Exod 16:4, 20	"endures to eternal life" v27
THE END	"they ate … and they died" vv49, 58	"he who eats … will live forever" vv50–51, 58
WHAT IT IS	food for the body v31	"I am the bread of life" — a Person vv35, 48

"This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died" (v58)

Read across each row: Jesus answers the crowd's appeal to Moses' manna point by point — the true bread has a better Giver, a wider reach, a longer life and a different end.

FIGURE · THE SHRINKING CROWD



Each band is smaller than the one before: the chapter that begins with five thousand fed ends with twelve — and even there, a betrayer.

Was the miracle real? Sproul ridicules the old liberal reading that the real wonder was people sharing their lunches — "That was the most prodigious magical act in the history of the world if that is actually what happened." John calls it a sign (v14), and the crowd's reaction (v15) makes no sense if nothing happened. Guzik: the multiplying happened in Jesus' hands, and the disciples carried it out — "He could have created bread and fish in the pocket or bag of every person, but He didn't."

Why did Jesus refuse to be king (v15)? Not because He is not King, but because they wanted the wrong kind. Sproul: "They were looking for the kingdom of man, and He came to bring the kingdom of God." Henry calls their zeal misguided. In my reading His kingdom is real and will come visibly on earth at His return (Acts 1:6–7; Rev 11:15; 20:4) — but on His terms and in His time, and through a cross first.

"It is I" — an "I am" saying? Sproul hears the divine name in *egō eimi* (Exod 3:14) and says scholars often leave verse 20 off the list: "I am who I am is here." Only God walks on the waves (Job 9:8) and stills the storm (Ps 107:29). Spurgeon and Henry make it comfort — "When trouble is nigh Christ is nigh."

What is "the work of God" (v29)? The crowd asks what to do; Jesus answers with one work, to believe. Guzik: "not to do, but to trust." Henry: "The work of faith is the work of God." Sproul would add that faith is itself God's gift (vv37, 44, 65); Guzik that faith is the foundation of obedience, not a replacement for it.

All that the Father gives (vv37–40). Sproul calls verse 37 the key verse on election: the Father gives people to the Son, so their coming is certain and none are lost — "It is the perseverance of the saints with a vengeance." Spurgeon holds the "high doctrine" and the "broad doctrine" together: the gift guarantees that some will come, and the invitation shuts out no one who comes — "The King's highway is for all." Whatever my men believe about election, the promise in the second half of verse 37 is for every one of them.

What does "draws" mean (v44)? — where Christians differ. The verb *helkō* can mean drag (Acts 16:19) or draw (John 12:32). Sproul, citing Kittel, argues for "compel" and against the Arminian view that we choose first. Guzik, with Clarke, reads "alluring, not dragging," and cites Alford against irresistible grace. Spurgeon is as Reformed as Sproul on inability, yet says "Do not imagine that any man will go to heaven kicking and struggling all the way against the hand that draws him"; Henry: "a cheerful compliance." Arminian readers add that 12:32 says Christ draws "all men." Common ground: no one comes on his own, God takes the initiative, and verse 45 shows He draws by teaching — the Father's voice in His Word.

Eating His flesh, drinking His blood (vv53–58) — the Lord's Supper? All four of our teachers say the passage speaks first of faith-union with Christ, not of the sacrament. Henry: "It is a spiritual eating and drinking that is here spoken of, not a sacramental," and he rejects transubstantiation; Spurgeon notes the Supper had not yet been given; Guzik quotes Bruce, "not indeed speaking directly of the Lord's Supper"; Sproul agrees but "with less than dogmatic certainty." Roman Catholic and Lutheran readers take the passage sacramentally; fair to say so. My anchor: verse 47 and verse 54 promise the same eternal life — one to the believer, the other to the eater. To eat is to believe. The Supper (1 Cor 11:26) pictures and proclaims that feeding.

"The flesh profits nothing" (v63). Not Jesus' flesh — which He has just given for the world — but human nature on its own. Sproul: "The flesh cannot produce spiritual reality." "Church attendance will not do it." Life comes by the Spirit through the words of Jesus, which "are spirit and are life."

Why did Jesus choose Judas (v70)? Jesus "knew from the beginning" (v64). Judas was chosen to the apostleship, not to salvation; he "was going to betray Him" (v71). Henry: "Judas not only had a devil, but he was a devil"; "The star that falls never was a star." Guzik quotes Boice: "There are Judases among the apparent followers of the Lord in our day."

Word study (Greek):

- **sign — *sēmeion* (G4592):** a miracle that points beyond itself (vv2, 14, 26, 30).
- **fragments — *klasma* (G2801):** broken pieces; "so that nothing will be lost" (v12; compare v39).
- **baskets — *kophinos* (G2894):** small wicker food baskets; twelve.
- **It is I — *egō eimi* (G1473, G1510):** "I am" — the divine name (v20; Exod 3:14).
- **set His seal — *sphragizō* (G4972):** to certify, authenticate (v27; 3:33; Eph 1:13).
- **work — *ergazomai* (G2038):** "Do not work … what shall we do, so that we may work…?" (vv27–30).
- **bread — *artos* (G740):** loaf bread; seventeen times.
- **cast out — *ekballō* (G1544):** with *ou mē* — "never, by no means" (v37).
- **grumble — *gongyzō* (G1111):** Israel's murmuring word (vv41, 43, 61).
- **draws — *helkō* (G1670):** pull, haul, draw (6:44; 12:32; 18:10; 21:6, 11; Acts 16:19).
- **eats — *trōgō* (G5176):** to chew, eat; vv54–58.
- **difficult — *sklēros* (G4642):** hard, harsh — hard to accept (v60).
- **Holy One — *hagios* (G40):** "the Holy One of God" (v69; Mark 1:24).
- **devil — *diabolos* (G1228):** slanderer, adversary (6:70; 8:44; 13:2).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The miracle was a sign, and they missed it** — they wanted more bread (vv2, 14, 26, 30).
2. **Little is much in His hands** — five barley loaves, twelve baskets left.

3. **He walked across the storm with God's name** — *egō eimi*.
4. **The work God wants is faith** (v29).
5. **Moses gave bread; the Father gives the Bread** — a Person, not a portion (vv32–35).
6. **Verse 37 has two halves, and both are true** — the Father's gift and the open door.
7. **"Drawn" — the teachers differ** — compel, allure, cheerful compliance; but no one comes without it.
8. **Eating is believing** — compare vv47 and 54.
9. **Hard to accept, not hard to understand** (v60).
10. **There is nowhere else to go** (v68).

Cross-references: Exod 3:14; 16:4, 15; Num 11:1–9; Deut 8:3; 18:15; 2 Kgs 4:42–44; Job 9:8; Neh 9:15; Ps 78:24; 107:23–30; Isa 54:13; 55:1–3; Matt 14:13–33; 16:16; Mark 1:24; 6:30–52; Luke 9:10–17; John 1:14; 3:33; 4:34; 8:44; 10:27–29; 12:32; 13:2, 18; Acts 16:19; 1 Cor 10:3–4; 11:23–26; Eph 1:13; Rev 7:16–17.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 6:37

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."

Example to avoid — Philip's calculator. Jesus asked Philip where to buy bread "to test him" (v6), and Philip ran the numbers. I do that. A man gets out with nothing, a family is behind on rent, a ministry needs what we don't have — and I count denarii instead of looking at the One who "knew what He was intending to do." Sproul: "Philip flunks the test." This week, before I calculate, I'll pray.

Command to obey — give Him the loaves. The boy didn't have much, but he gave it, and Andrew brought it (vv8–9). Spurgeon: "Christ's additions mean subtraction—and Christ's subtractions mean additions." My story, my time, my small gifts — I put them in His hands and let Him break and distribute them. And I gather the fragments: nothing God gives is meant to be wasted, including the years I thought were lost.

Promise to trust — "It is I; do not be afraid." The disciples were in the storm because they obeyed (vv16–19). Obedience doesn't mean calm water. Some of the men I serve are rowing in the dark right now — court dates, cravings, a marriage on the edge. He walks across exactly that, and He doesn't force His way into the boat. I welcome Him in.

Sin to confess — seeking Him for loaves. "You seek Me … because you ate of the loaves and were filled" (v26). I confess the times I've wanted Jesus for what He gives — relief, a job, a way out — more than for who He is. I want the Bread, not just the bread.

Promise to trust — "I will certainly not cast out." Men in recovery and men behind walls often believe they are the exception — too far gone, too many relapses. Verse 37 has no exception clause. *Ou mē*: never. If he comes, he is received; if he is received, he is kept, and Jesus will raise him up on the last day (vv39–40).

Choice to make — "To whom shall we go?" When the teaching got hard, many walked (v66). Peter didn't say he understood it all. He said there was no one else (v68). I've tried the other places — the bottle, the bed, the money, my own strength — and none of them had words of eternal life.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Jesus asked Philip a question He already knew the answer to, "to test him." What need in my life looks as impossible as feeding five thousand — and am I counting my money or looking to Him? (6:5–9) *Sproul: "Philip flunks the test." Little is much in His hands.*
2. What "five loaves" — time, talent, story, money — am I holding back because it seems too small to matter? (6:9–13; 2 Kgs 4:43) *Spurgeon: "Christ's additions mean subtraction—and Christ's subtractions mean additions."*
3. Where am I rowing hard in the dark right now, and what would it mean to hear Him say, "It is I; do not be afraid"? (6:16–21; Ps 107:29–30) *Obedience doesn't guarantee calm water, but He comes across the storm.*
4. Do I follow Jesus for what He gives or for who He is? What "loaves" keep bringing me back? (6:26–27) *"You seek Me … because you ate of the loaves and were filled."*

5. Jesus says He will “certainly not cast out” anyone who comes. What do I think would make Him turn me away — and what does verse 37 say about that? (6:37–40; John 10:28) *Ou mē — the strongest “never” in Greek.*
6. When a teaching of Jesus is hard to accept, what do I do — walk away quietly, or say with Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go?” (6:60–69) *Hard to accept, not hard to understand.*

Worship. He fed five thousand with a boy’s lunch and had twelve baskets left. He walked on the sea and said, “I am.” He came down from heaven as the true bread, gave His flesh for the life of the world, and promised to lose none whom the Father gave Him. He is the Holy One of God. He alone has the words of eternal life.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, Bread of life, I come to You. Forgive me for chasing loaves instead of You. Take the little I have and make it enough for the men around me. When I’m rowing in the dark, come to me across the water and say, “It is I.” Draw the men I love, Father, the way You drew me. And when Your words are hard, keep me from walking away — to whom else would I go? You have words of eternal life. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 7

Rivers of Living Water — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Everyone at the feast had an opinion about Jesus, but opinions don't quench thirst. He keeps His Father's time, speaks His Father's words, and on the great day calls me to come and drink — and the Spirit He gives flows out of me to others.

00 The Text

JOHN 7 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.

2 Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near.

3 Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing.

4 "For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."

5 For not even His brothers were believing in Him.

6 So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune.

7 "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.

8 "Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."

9 Having said these things to them, He stayed in Galilee.

10 But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret.

11 So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, "Where is He?"

12 There was much grumbling among the crowds concerning Him; some were saying, "He is a good man"; others were saying, "No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray."

13 Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

14 But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and began to teach.

15 The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?"

16 So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

17 "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.

18 “He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

19 “Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?”

20 The crowd answered, “You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?”

21 Jesus answered them, “I did one deed, and you all marvel.

22 “For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man.

23 “If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?

24 “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”

25 So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, “Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?

26 “Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?

27 “However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.”

28 Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, “You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.

29 “I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me.”

30 So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

31 But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?”

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him.

33 Therefore Jesus said, “For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.

34 “You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come.”

35 The Jews then said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He?

36 “What is this statement that He said, ‘You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come’?”

37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.

38 “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’”

39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

40 Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.”

41 Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?

42 “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”

43 So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him.

44 Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?”

46 The officers answered, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.”

47 The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you?

48 “No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?

49 “But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.”

50 Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) said to them,

51 “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?”

52 They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

53 [Everyone went to his home.

Marked in the text

- **v1** “the Jews were seeking to kill Him” — Sin / warning
- **v2** “the Feast of Booths” — Time / place / contrast
- **v5** “not even His brothers were believing in Him” — Sin / warning
- **v6** “My time is not yet here” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil” — Sin / warning
- **v16** “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v17** “If anyone is willing to do His will” — Command / instruction
- **v24** “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment” — Command / instruction
- **v28** “He who sent Me is true” — God — His character & actions
- **v30** “because His hour had not yet come” — Time / place / contrast
- **v31** “many of the crowd believed in Him” — Promise / blessing
- **v34** “where I am, you cannot come” — Sin / warning
- **v37** “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink” — Command / instruction
- **v37** “the last day, the great day of the feast” — Time / place / contrast
- **v38** “rivers of living water” — Promise / blessing
- **v39** “this He spoke of the Spirit” — God — His character & actions
- **v42** “from Bethlehem, the village where David was” — Time / place / contrast
- **v43** “a division occurred in the crowd because of Him” — Time / place / contrast
- **v46** “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks” — God — His character & actions
- **v49** “this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed” — Sin / warning
- **v51** “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him” — Command / instruction
- **v16** “sent” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v26** “Christ” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v25** “kill” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 7:24

"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

FIGURE · GALILEE, JUDEA AND THE QUESTION OF ORIGINS



7:1, 9 · GALILEE

He stays north: in Judea "the Jews were seeking to kill Him."

7:10, 14 · UP TO JERUSALEM

"not publicly, but as if, in secret" — then teaching in the temple mid-feast.

7:41–42 · BETHLEHEM

"the Christ comes … from Bethlehem, the village where David was" (Micah 5:2).

7:52 · "NO PROPHET … OUT OF GALILEE"

yet Jonah "was of Gath-hepher," a few miles from Nazareth (2 Kings 14:25).

The crowd argued that Jesus came from the wrong place; the map shows Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jonah's Galilean hometown a few miles away.

Setting. Some months after the Bread of Life discourse (John 6). Jesus stays in Galilee because the Jews in Judea are seeking to kill Him (v1; cf. 5:18). The Feast of Booths (Tabernacles) — seven days in the seventh month, plus a holy eighth day (Lev 23:34–36) — brings the pilgrims to Jerusalem. Jesus goes up "not publicly" (v10), teaches in the temple "in the midst of the feast" (v14), and cries out "on the last day, the great day of the feast" (v37).

Structure:

- vv1–13 — **the brothers and the time:** His brothers taunt Him to go public; "not even His brothers were believing in Him" (v5). "My time is not yet here" (vv6, 8). He goes up in secret; the crowds grumble — "He is a good man" / "He leads the people astray" (v12).

- vv14–24 — **whose teaching:** "How has this man become learned?" (v15). "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me" (v16). The test: "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know" (v17). Circumcision on the Sabbath vs. making "an entire man well" (vv22–23). "Do not judge according to appearance" (v24).
- vv25–36 — **where is He from:** the people of Jerusalem think they know His origin (v27); Jesus cries out that He is from the One who sent Him (vv28–29). They seek to seize Him, but "His hour had not yet come" (v30). Many believe (v31). The Pharisees send officers (v32). "A little while longer … I go to Him who sent Me" (vv33–36).
- vv37–39 — **the cry:** "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink" — rivers of living water from within — "this He spoke of the Spirit" (v39).
- vv40–53 — **division:** the Prophet? the Christ? not from Galilee? (vv40–42). "A division occurred in the crowd because of Him" (v43). The officers return: "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks" (v46). The Pharisees scorn the crowd (vv47–49); Nicodemus asks for a fair hearing (vv50–51) and is mocked (v52). Verse 53 opens the bracketed passage (7:53–8:11).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "seek / seeking / seeks" ×11 — vv1, 4, 11, 18 (×2), 19, 20, 25, 30, 34, 36; "kill" ×4 — vv1, 19, 20, 25.
- "know / knows / known" ×11 — vv4, 17, 26, 27 (×2), 28 (×3), 29, 49, 51.
- "from" ×13 — vv17, 18, 22 (×2), 27 (×2), 28, 29, 41, 42 (×2), 51, 52 — the chapter's question of origins; "where" ×6 — vv27 (×2), 28, 34, 36, 42.
- "feast" ×7 — vv2, 8 (×2), 10, 11, 14, 37.
- "sent / send" ×6 — vv16, 18, 28, 29, 32, 33 (five times of the Father sending the Son; v32, the rulers sending officers).
- "Christ" ×6 — vv26, 27, 31, 41 (×2), 42.
- "the Jews" ×6 — vv1, 2, 11, 13, 15, 35; "crowd(s)" ×6 — vv12, 20, 31, 32, 43, 49.
- "Law" ×5 — vv19 (×2), 23, 49, 51; "Moses" ×4 — vv19, 22 (×2), 23.
- "believe / believing / believed" ×5 — vv5, 31, 38, 39, 48.
- "Galilee" ×5 — vv1, 9, 41, 52 (×2); "Pharisees" ×5 — vv32 (×2), 45, 47, 48.
- "teach / teaching" ×5 — vv14, 16, 17, 28, 35.
- "publicly / openly" ×4 — vv4, 10, 13, 26; "in secret" ×2 — vv4, 10.
- "judge / judgment" ×4 — v24 (×3), v51.
- "time" ×3 — vv6 (×2), 8; "hour" ×1 — v30; "seize" ×3 — vv30, 32, 44.
- "glory / glorified" ×3 — vv18 (×2), 39; "Spirit" ×2 — v39.

Contrasts: His time ⟷ your time (v6). Publicly ⟷ in secret (vv4, 10). From Himself ⟷ from the One who sent Him (vv16–18). Appearance ⟷ righteous judgment (v24). We know where He is from ⟷ you do not know Him (vv27–28). The water poured at the altar ⟷ rivers of living water from within (vv37–38). The officers sent to seize ⟷ the officers who come back amazed (vv32, 46). The rulers who have not believed ⟷ the crowd that does not know the Law (vv48–49).

Shape of the chapter: a slow approach to Jerusalem (1–13), three rounds of argument in the temple (14–36), one great cry (37–39), and a city split down the middle (40–52). Everyone is asking "Who is this man, and where is He from?"

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus lives on His Father's schedule and speaks His Father's words, so no one can hurry Him, catch Him or explain Him away. To every thirsty man He offers Himself, and the Spirit He gives turns a dry life into a river.

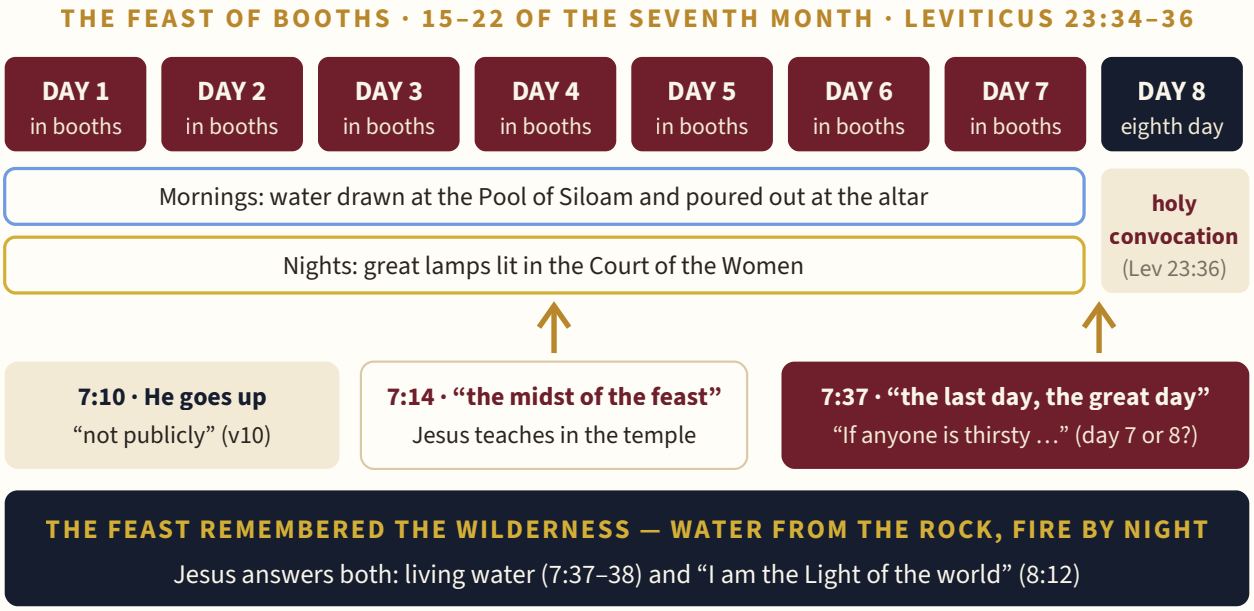
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 7:39

"But △this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for ◷the Spirit was not yet given, because ◷Jesus was not yet glorified."

FIGURE · JESUS AT THE FEAST OF BOOTHS



The feast's two temple ceremonies — water in the morning, light at night — are the backdrop for His cry in 7:37 and His claim in 8:12.

Why didn't His brothers believe (vv3–5)? They had grown up in the same house and seen the same works, yet their advice — go public, show Yourself to the world — reveals that they wanted a celebrity, not a Savior. Sproul hears in it a hope for worldly power, not saving faith; Spurgeon calls it "a very painful truth, that those who were the near relations of the Saviour" did not believe; Henry: "Many that have the same external privileges and advantages do not make the same use of them." The good news is that unbelief in John 7 was not the end: after the resurrection Jesus appeared to James (1 Cor 15:7), and His brothers were praying with the church (Acts 1:14).

Did Jesus deceive His brothers (vv8–10)? He says "I do not go up to this feast," then goes up. Some manuscripts read "not yet" (the KJV follows them: "I go not up yet"). Either way the point is timing, not travel: He would not go up *their* way — publicly, as a pilgrim show — or on *their* schedule. He went later, quietly, when His Father's time had come. Guzik: "God's timing is an important expression of His will."

Whose teaching (vv15–18)? The scholars' question — "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" — is half admiration, half dismissal. Jesus' answer is that His teaching is not self-made: Guzik, "He was

not self taught; Jesus was God taught." Sproul paraphrases, "I brought it with Me from heaven." He also guards the two natures: as man Jesus learned and grew (Luke 2:52), but what He taught was the Father's word, without error.

The test of verse 17. "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching." This is the most practical apologetic in the Gospels. The problem with unbelief is usually not information but willingness. Sproul: "If you wanted to do the will of God, you would hear My voice, and you would listen to Me." Henry: "Those who resemble God are most likely to understand him." Spurgeon: godly living makes "a far better critic as to what truth is" than learning.

Circumcision and the Sabbath (vv21–24). The "one deed" is the healing at Bethesda (5:1–9), still causing a stir. Jesus argues from the lesser to the greater: the Law requires circumcision on the eighth day even when it is a Sabbath; if one part of a man may be put right on the Sabbath, how much more "an entire man" (v23)? Hence the command: do not judge by appearance (*kat' opsin*), but with righteous judgment.

Where is He from (vv27–29, 41–42, 52)? The crowd holds two contradictory traditions — no one will know where the Christ is from (v27), and the Christ comes from Bethlehem (v42). They "know" Jesus is from Nazareth, so He can't be either. John lets the irony stand: his readers know Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matt 2:1; Luke 2:4–7), and His true origin is the Father (v29). As for "no prophet arises out of Galilee" (v52), Guzik notes the obvious exception — Jonah, of Gath-hepher in Galilee (2 Kgs 14:25).

What is "the last day, the great day of the feast" (v37)? Either the seventh day, the climax of the water ceremony, or the eighth day, the holy convocation (Lev 23:36). Guzik understands the water was poured on the earlier days and apparently not on the eighth; Sproul sets Jesus' cry "while the Jews are pouring the water out, remembering the water that came from the rock." I don't need to settle it to see the point: in the middle of the feast's remembering, Jesus stands up and says the water is Him.

Whose "innermost being" (v38)? NASB and most readers take it of the believer: the one who drinks becomes a channel. Some early writers took it of Christ: the rivers flow from Him (cf. 19:34; Rev 22:1). John's comment settles what the water is — the Spirit (v39) — and when it flows: after Jesus is glorified. Henry holds both together: "Believers drink of a rock in them, Christ in them."

"The Spirit was not yet given" (v39). Not that the Spirit did not exist — He moved over the waters in Genesis 1 and filled the prophets — but that the promised outpouring of the new covenant waited for the cross, resurrection and ascension (John 16:7; Acts 2:33). Sproul: "Today, that is the chief ministry of the Holy Ghost: to take the work of the Son and bring it to fruition in us."

The Feast of Booths and the future. Zechariah 14 sees living waters flowing out of Jerusalem (14:8) and the nations going up year by year to keep the Feast of Booths before the King (14:16). I read that as a real future for Jerusalem and Israel in the Messiah's kingdom. What Jesus offered at the feast in John 7 to "anyone" He will one day display before the whole world from the same city.

Nicodemus (vv50–52). The man who came by night (3:2) now asks a legal question in the open — "Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him … does it?" Sproul: "Excuse me. Is this the way we operate with our law?" Henry: "Facts, and not faces, must be known in judgment." It's a small step, and he is mocked for it; by 19:39 he is carrying spices to Jesus' tomb.

Verse 53 and the bracket. NASB opens a bracket at 7:53 — "[Everyone went to his home." — because 7:53–8:11 is not found in the earliest manuscripts of John. I deal with that honestly in the John 8 study; here I just note that 7:52 reads straight on to 8:12.

Word study (Greek):

- **time — *kairos* (G2540):** the fit, appointed moment (vv6, 8).
- **hour — *hōra* (G5610):** John's word for the cross and glory (v30; 2:4; 12:23; 17:1).
- **Feast of Booths — *skēnopēgia* (G4634):** "tent-pitching"; only here in the NT (cf. *eskēnōsen*, 1:14).
- **learned — *grammata* (G1121):** "letters," formal learning (v15; Acts 26:24).
- **appearance — *opsis* (G3799):** outward look; only John 7:24; 11:44; Rev 1:16.
- **seize — *piazō* (G4084):** to grip, arrest; eight of twelve NT uses in John (vv30, 32, 44).
- **innermost being — *koilia* (G2836):** belly, womb; figuratively the inner self (v38).
- **glorified — *doxazō* (G1392):** John's word for the cross and exaltation (v39).
- **division — *schisma* (G4978):** a tear; John uses it three times of people split over Jesus (7:43; 9:16; 10:19).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Nearness is not faith** — His brothers saw everything and did not believe (v5); later they did (Acts 1:14).
2. **Two words for time** — *kairos* (vv6, 8) and *hōra* (v30); Jesus waits for the Father's hour.
3. **Jesus kept the Father's clock** — Spurgeon: "Our Lord Jesus Christ did everything, as it were, by the clock."
4. **Obedience opens understanding** (v17) — Henry: "Those who resemble God are most likely to understand him."
5. **Judge rightly, not by the surface** (v24) — "No righteous judgment can be come to if appearances decide" (Dods, in Guzik).
6. **Jesus is the fulfillment of the feast** — the water poured for the rock points to Him (vv37–38).
7. **Thirst is the only qualification** — bring nothing but your thirst (Spurgeon).
8. **The river waited for the glory** — Spirit after the cross and ascension (v39; Acts 2:33).
9. **The arresting officers were arrested** — "they could not take him, for he had fairly taken them" (Spurgeon).
10. **Nicodemus is moving** — by night (3:2), in council (7:50), at the tomb (19:39).

Cross-references: Exod 17:6; Lev 23:34–43; Deut 16:16; 18:15; 1 Sam 16:7; 2 Kgs 14:25; Isa 12:3; 55:1; 58:11; Ezek 47:1–12; Mic 5:2; Zech 14:8, 16; Matt 2:1; Luke 2:52; 12:51; John 1:14; 3:2; 4:10–14; 5:1–18; 6:66–68; 10:18; 16:7; 19:39; Acts 1:14; 2:33; 1 Cor 15:7; Rev 22:1, 17.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 7:17

"If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself."

FIGURE · TWELVE OPINIONS, ONE DIVISION

"A DIVISION OCCURRED IN THE CROWD BECAUSE OF HIM" · JOHN 7:43

DOUBT AND OPPOSITION	OPENNESS AND FAITH
HIS BROTHERS · V4 "show Yourself to the world"	**OTHERS IN THE CROWDS · V12** "He is a good man"
SOME IN THE CROWDS · V12 "He leads the people astray"	**MANY OF THE CROWD · V31** they "believed in Him"
THE CROWD · V20 "You have a demon!"	**SOME OF THE PEOPLE · V40** "This certainly is the Prophet"
PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM · V27 "we know where this man is from"	**OTHERS · V41** "This is the Christ"
OTHERS · V41 "Surely the Christ is not … from Galilee"	**THE OFFICERS · V46** "Never has a man spoken …"
THE PHARISEES · V47 "You have not also been led astray"	**NICODEMUS · V51** the Law "first hears from him"

Henry: "a good opinion of Christ is far short of a lively faith in Christ."

Read down both columns: everyone in John 7 has an opinion about Jesus, and the chapter will not let any of them stay neutral.

Command to obey — "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." I know what thirst does to a man. Most of the men I walk with have tried to drink their way out of it — the bottle, the pipe, the screen, the woman who isn't their wife, the next deal. Jesus didn't shout at the feast to condemn thirsty people; He shouted to invite them. Spurgeon is right: I bring nothing but my thirst, and coming is believing. This week, when the thirst hits, I will say it out loud — "Lord, I'm thirsty" — and come to Him first, before I reach for anything else.

Sin to confess — judging by appearance. I size men up fast: the tattoos, the record, the way he talks, the suit he wears. Verse 24 stops me. The crowd judged Jesus by His hometown and His lack of a diploma and missed the Son of God. I confess the times I have written a man off — or trusted one — because of how things looked. Facts, not faces.

Example to follow — Jesus on His Father's clock. His brothers wanted Him to make a move. He waited. I am not good at waiting; I want God to show Himself now, on my terms. Jesus' "My time is not yet here" teaches me that God's delays are not God's denials, and that a man walking in the Father's will cannot be hurried by his friends or stopped by his enemies.

Truth to live in — obedience before understanding. "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know" (v17). Some of my questions are honest; some are excuses. Where I already know what God wants and I'm stalling, the next light will come when I obey the light I have.

Promise to trust — rivers, not a trickle. The Spirit Jesus gives doesn't just quench my thirst; He flows out of me to the next man. The thing God is healing in me is the thing He wants to pour through me into someone else's dry life.

Example to follow — Nicodemus' small step. He didn't preach a sermon in the council; he asked one fair question and got mocked for it. Sometimes faithfulness is one sentence in a hostile room.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Who in my own family has watched my life and still doesn't believe? What does Jesus' patience with His brothers teach me about waiting for them? (7:3–5; Acts 1:14) *His brothers didn't believe in John 7 — and were praying with the church in Acts 1:14.*
2. Where am I pushing God to act on my timetable — "show Yourself" — instead of trusting His time? (7:6–8, 30) *Kairos, the fit moment, belongs to the Father.*
3. Is there a truth in Scripture I keep arguing with because I'm not yet willing to obey it? (7:17) *Verse 17: the will comes before the knowing.*
4. Where have I judged a man — or been judged — by appearance? What would "righteous judgment" look like there? (7:24; 1 Sam 16:7) *Facts, not faces (Henry).*
5. What am I thirsty for right now, and where have I been trying to drink instead of coming to Jesus? (7:37–38; Isa 55:1) *Bring nothing but your thirst (Spurgeon).*
6. Like Nicodemus, where do I need to speak up for Jesus in a room that is against Him? (7:50–51; 19:39) *Small steps of courage in the open.*

Worship. The feast remembered water from a rock and a pillar of fire in the night; Jesus stood in the middle of it and said, in effect, "That was Me." Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks. He keeps the Father's time, He speaks the Father's words, and He gives the Father's Spirit — rivers of living water.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, I'm thirsty. I have tried to drink from wells that left me drier than before. I come to You with nothing but my thirst — let me drink. Give me a willing heart to do Your will, so that I will know Your truth. Keep me from judging by appearance. Teach me to wait on Your time and not push for mine. Pour Your Spirit through me like rivers into the lives of the men around me, and give me the courage of Nicodemus to speak up for You when it costs me. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 8

Before Abraham Was Born, I Am — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus is who He says He is — the Light of the world, the Son who makes slaves free, the I AM who was before Abraham. The question John 8 asks me is not whether I have an opinion about Him, but whether I follow Him, stay in His word, and live like a son of the Father.

00 The Text

JOHN 8 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and began to teach them.

3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court,

4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act.

5 "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"

6 They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.

7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."

8 Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

9 When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court.

10 Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."]

12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

13 So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.

15 "You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.

16 "But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.

17 "Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true.

18 "I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

19 So they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.”

20 These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

21 Then He said again to them, “I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come.”

22 So the Jews were saying, “Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’?”

23 And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.

24 “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

25 So they were saying to Him, “Who are You?” Jesus said to them, “What have I been saying to you from the beginning?

26 “I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.”

27 They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father.

28 So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

29 “And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free’?”

34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

35 “The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

36 “So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

37 “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

38 “I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.”

39 They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham.

40 “But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.

41 “You are doing the deeds of your father.” They said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God.”

42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

43 “Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.

44 “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

45 “But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 “Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

47 “He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

49 Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

50 “But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

51 “Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death.”

52 The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.’

53 “Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?”

54 Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God’;

55 and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.

56 “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”

57 So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?”

58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”

59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

Marked in the text

- **v3** “a woman caught in adultery” — Sin / warning
- **v5** “in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her” — Command / instruction
- **v9** “they began to go out one by one” — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** “I do not condemn you, either” — Promise / blessing
- **v11** “From now on sin no more” — Command / instruction
- **v12** “I am the Light of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v12** “will have the Light of life” — Promise / blessing
- **v17** “the testimony of two men is true” — Time / place / contrast
- **v20** “because His hour had not yet come” — Time / place / contrast
- **v21** “will die in your sin” — Sin / warning
- **v24** “unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” — Sin / warning
- **v28** “When you lift up the Son of Man” — Time / place / contrast
- **v29** “I always do the things that are pleasing to Him” — God — His character & actions
- **v31** “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine” — Command / instruction
- **v32** “the truth will make you free” — Promise / blessing
- **v34** “everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin” — Sin / warning
- **v36** “if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” — Promise / blessing
- **v44** “You are of your father the devil” — Sin / warning
- **v44** “he is a liar and the father of lies” — Sin / warning
- **v47** “He who is of God hears the words of God” — Command / instruction
- **v51** “if anyone keeps My word he will never see death” — Promise / blessing
- **v56** “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day” — Time / place / contrast
- **v58** “before Abraham was born, I am” — God — His character & actions
- **v59** “they picked up stones to throw at Him” — Sin / warning
- **v16** “Father” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v32** “truth” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v33** “Abraham” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

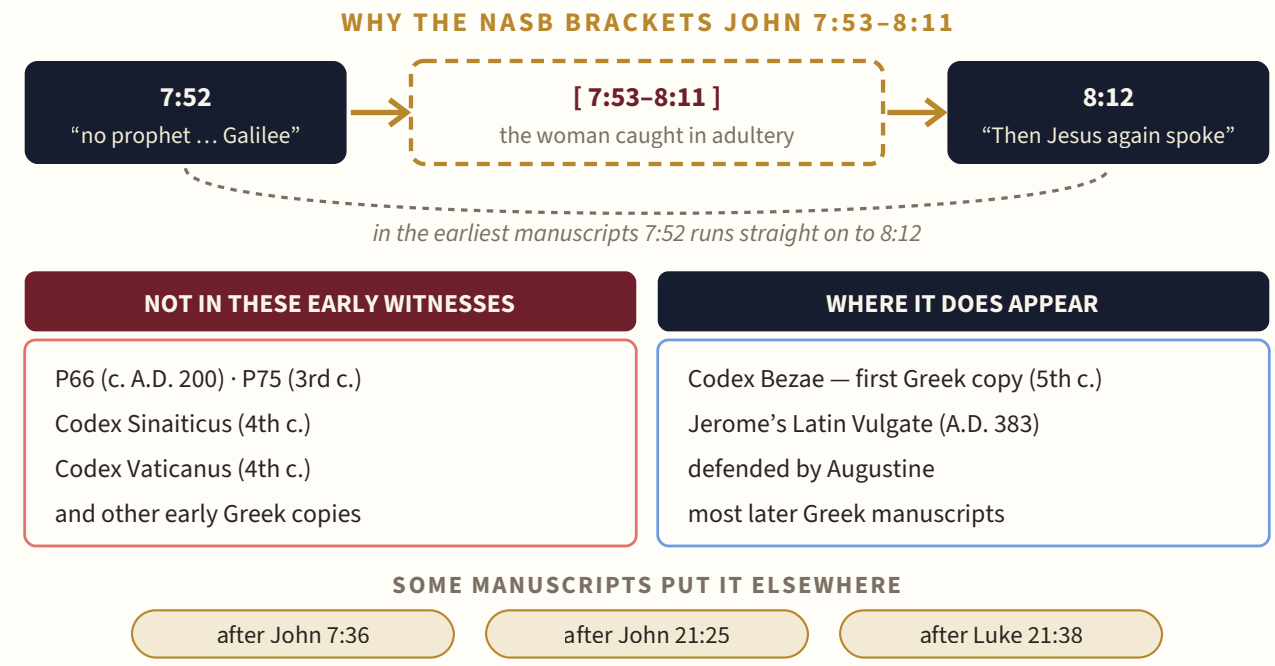
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 8:24

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for ⚠unless you believe that I am He, ⚠you will die in your sins."

FIGURE · THE BRACKETED PASSAGE



The earliest copies of John go from 7:52 straight to 8:12; the story of the woman is found in later manuscripts, not always in the same place.

Setting. Still in the temple in Jerusalem, at or just after the Feast of Booths (John 7). The NASB brackets 7:53–8:11 — the woman caught in adultery — because the earliest manuscripts of John do not contain it; the bracket closes at the end of verse 11. From verse 12, "Jesus again spoke to them"; verse 20 places the words "in the treasury, as He taught in the temple." The chapter ends with Jesus going out of the temple (v59).

Structure:

- [7:53]–8:11 — **the woman and her accusers (bracketed):** Mount of Olives, then the temple at dawn (vv1–2). Scribes and Pharisees bring a woman "caught in adultery, in the very act" to test Him (vv3–6). He writes on the ground; "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her" (v7). They leave one by one, oldest first (v9). "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more" (v11).

- vv12–20 — **the Light of the world:** the claim (v12); "Your testimony is not true" (v13); Jesus and the Father as two witnesses (vv14–18); "Where is Your Father?" (v19); in the treasury, and no one seized Him (v20).
- vv21–30 — **die in your sins:** "where I am going, you cannot come" (vv21–22); from below / from above (v23); "unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (v24); "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He" (v28); "many came to believe in Him" (v30).
- vv31–36 — **truth and freedom:** "If you continue in My word … the truth will make you free" (vv31–32); "never yet been enslaved" (v33); the slave of sin; the son remains; "free indeed" (vv34–36).
- vv37–47 — **whose children:** Abraham's descendants who seek to kill Him (vv37–40); "we have one Father: God" (v41); "If God were your Father, you would love Me" (v42); "You are of your father the devil" (v44); "He who is of God hears the words of God" (v47).
- vv48–59 — **I AM:** "a Samaritan and have a demon" (v48); "if anyone keeps My word he will never see death" (v51); "Abraham died" (vv52–53); "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day" (v56); "before Abraham was born, I am" (v58); stones, and He goes out of the temple (v59).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Father" (capital F, God) ×12 — vv16, 18, 19 (×3), 27, 28, 38, 41, 42, 49, 54; "father" (lowercase) ×8 — vv38, 39, 41, 44 (×3), 53, 56 — twenty in all, the chapter's great question.
- "Abraham / Abraham's" ×11 — vv33, 37, 39 (×3), 40, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58.
- "know / knew / known" ×13 — vv14 (×2), 19 (×3), 28, 32, 37, 52, 55 (×4).
- "speak / spoke" ×12 — vv12, 20, 26 (×2), 27, 28, 30, 38, 44 (×2), 45, 46.
- "true / truly" ×9 — vv13, 14, 16, 17, 26, 31, 34, 51, 58 ("Truly, truly" ×3 — vv34, 51, 58).
- "sin / sins" ×8 — vv7, 11, 21, 24 (×2), 34 (×2), 46.
- "die / died / death" ×8 — vv21, 24 (×2), 51, 52 (×2), 53 (×2).
- "testify / testifies / testimony" ×7 — vv13 (×2), 14 (×2), 17, 18 (×2).
- "truth" ×7 — vv32 (×2), 40, 44 (×2), 45, 46.
- "where" ×7 — vv9, 10, 14 (×4), 21; "hear / heard" ×7 — vv9, 26, 38, 40, 43, 47 (×2).
- "judge / judging / judgment / judges" ×6 — vv15 (×2), 16 (×2), 26, 50; "condemn" ×2 — vv10, 11.
- "word" ×6 — vv31, 37, 43, 51, 52, 55.
- "believe / believed" ×5 — vv24, 30, 31, 45, 46; "sent" ×5 — vv16, 18, 26, 29, 42; "seek(s)" ×5 — vv21, 37, 40, 50 (×2).
- "free" ×4 — vv32, 33, 36 (×2); "slave(s) / enslaved" ×3 — vv33, 34, 35.
- "glory / glorify / glorifies" ×4 — vv50, 54 (×3); "demon" ×3 — vv48, 49, 52; "kill" ×3 — vv22, 37, 40.
- "I am He" ×2 — vv24, 28; and the bare "I am" of v58; "Light" ×2 — v12.

Contrasts: condemnation ⟷ "I do not condemn you" (vv10–11). Darkness ⟷ the Light of life (v12). From below ⟷ from above; of this world ⟷ not of this world (v23). Slave ⟷ son; the house for a time ⟷ forever (v35). Abraham's descendants ⟷ Abraham's children (vv37–39). God as Father ⟷ the devil as father (vv42–44). Truth ⟷ lies (vv44–45). Honor ⟷ dishonor (v49). Never see death ⟷ Abraham died (vv51–53). Abraham came to be ⟷ "I am" (v58).

Shape of the chapter: a bracketed scene of mercy (1–11), then five rounds of claim and objection (12–20, 21–30, 31–36, 37–47, 48–59), each one sharper, until "I am" meets the stones. Those who "believed" in verse 31 are the ones holding rocks in verse 59.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus tells the truth about who He is and who we are. He is the Light, the Son, the I AM; we are slaves of sin who need Him to set us free. Only those who stay in His word find out how free they really are.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 8:58

"Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.'"

FIGURE · I AM HE — I AM



Read down the steps: each "I am" goes further, until verse 58 uses the bare name of God — and the crowd answers with stones.

Is John 7:53–8:11 Scripture? — said plainly. The NASB prints it in brackets with a note that later manuscripts add it. The facts: it is absent from the earliest Greek copies of John (P66, P75, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus); the first Greek manuscript that has it is Codex Bezae; Jerome kept it in the Vulgate and Augustine defended it; some manuscripts put it after John 7:36, after John 21:25 or after Luke 21:38. Guzik: "it seems unlikely that this portion was part of the original text of John's gospel." Sproul: "Frankly, the best gospel of John manuscripts from antiquity do not include this story" — yet he reports that scholars also broadly judge it authentic and apostolic, and he preached it: "Whether it belongs here in John's gospel, at the end of Luke 21, or somewhere else, I leave for the ages." Spurgeon and Henry expound it as it stood in their Bibles (Henry even notes a phrase in v6 that "most copies have it not"). My position for the men I teach: we read it, we learn from it, we tell the truth about its history, and we don't build any doctrine on it alone. Nothing in it contradicts the rest of Scripture — Jesus says the same thing to the man at Bethesda: "do not sin anymore" (5:14).

What was the trap (vv3–6)? The Law required death for both the adulterer and the adulteress (Lev 20:10), and the witnesses' hands first (Deut 17:7). The man is missing. Sproul sees a vise between Rome and Moses: if Jesus says "stone her," He defies Rome, which reserved capital punishment; "If He says, 'Don't stone her,' He is in trouble with the Jewish authorities."

What did He write? No one knows. Guzik: "an endless source of speculation." Henry: "It is impossible to tell, and therefore needless to ask, what he wrote." Sproul quotes Calvin: "When God closes His holy mouth, let us desist from inquiry." I won't guess either.

"I do not condemn you, either" — is that soft on sin? No. Henry is careful that Christ would not take the office of a civil judge, "no judge nor divider"; Spurgeon, that "He condemned the sin, his own pure and holy life was the best condemnation of that." The order is the gospel: no condemnation, then "From now on sin no more." Pardon is not the reward for changing; it is the power to change.

The Light of the world (v12) and the two witnesses (vv13–18). Beside the great lamps of the feast (Guzik: lit "in the court of the women"), Jesus claims to be what the pillar of fire was to Israel (Exod 13:21) — light for the way. The Pharisees object that self-testimony proves nothing; Jesus answers with their own Law of two witnesses: Himself and the Father. Guzik: "those two witnesses exist; they are Jesus and His Father." Sproul: Jesus is not only a witness to the truth but truth incarnate; the problem is that they do not know the Father.

"I am He" (vv24, 28). The NASB italicizes "He" because the Greek has only *egō eimi*. Guzik: "The 'He' is rightly in italics and added by the translators" — the bare "I am" is "a claim to deity." Sproul: words that "call back to a title of God in the Old Testament." The background is Isaiah 43:10 — "that I am He." The stakes: "unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Sproul: "The only other way you can die is to die in your sins."

"When you lift up the Son of Man" (v28). "Lifted up" in John always means the cross (3:14; 12:32–34). Guzik: it "had nothing to do with 'exalting' Jesus in ways we normally think." Yet the cross is where He is most clearly seen. Henry: "When the Son of man was crucified, the Son of man was glorified."

Believers who pick up stones (vv30–59). Verse 30 says "many came to believe in Him," and verse 31 addresses "those Jews who had believed Him." By verse 59 they are reaching for rocks. Spurgeon: "There is such a thing as a temporary faith; beware of it." Sproul: "We must possess what we profess." Real disciples continue (*menō*) in His word.

What kind of freedom (vv32–36)? They claimed never to have been slaves — with Egypt, Babylon and Rome in their history. Jesus means a deeper bondage: "everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." Guzik: "Slavery to sin is the worst kind of slavery, because there is no escape from our self." Sproul: "By nature you're slaves, you're slaves to your own wicked desires." Spurgeon: "we are not only free from, but we are free to." Henry: "Those whom Christ makes free are free indeed." The truth that frees is a Person — the Son (v36; 14:6).

"Your father the devil" (v44) — is Jesus being harsh? He is telling the truth that sonship is shown by likeness. Sproul: "You are the children of the one you obey," and "We are volunteers in the kingdom of darkness." Guzik cites Alford: "one of the most decisive testimonies for the objective personality of the devil." This is not a word against the Jewish people — Jesus, His disciples and the first church were Jews, and God's promises to Israel stand (Rom 11:1–2, 25–29). It is a word to every religious man, in any nation, who claims God and acts like the murderer and liar.

"Before Abraham was born, I am" (v58). Abraham *came to be*; Jesus *is*. Henry: "he does not say, I was, but I am." Spurgeon: "he claimed the Godhead, he declared that he was certainly God, self-existent from all eternity." Sproul calls it the most dramatic of all the I AM sayings. Guzik: the voice of the covenant God at the burning bush (Exod

3:14). The stones in verse 59 settle the question of what they heard: blasphemy carried the death penalty (Lev 24:16). And Abraham "rejoiced to see My day" (v56) — he saw the promise from a distance (Heb 11:13) and was glad.

Word study (Greek):

- **without sin — *anamartētos* (G361):** sinless; only John 8:7.
- **condemn — *katakrinō* (G2632):** pass the sentence against (vv10–11; Rom 8:34).
- **light — *phōs* (G5457):** light; God's self-revelation (v12; 1:4–9).
- **treasury — *gazophylakion* (G1049):** the offering chests, Court of the Women (v20; Mark 12:41).
- **I am — *eimi* (G1510):** *egō eimi* with no predicate (vv24, 28, 58).
- **lift up — *hypsoō* (G5312):** raise high; in John always the cross (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34).
- **continue — *menō* (G3306):** remain, abide (vv31, 35).
- **make free — *eleutheroō* (G1659):** set free; John 8:32, 36; Rom 6:18, 22; 8:2, 21; Gal 5:1.
- **indeed — *ontōs* (G3689):** really, actually (v36).
- **murderer — *anthrōpoktonos* (G443):** man-killer; only John 8:44 and 1 John 3:15.
- **rejoiced — *agalliaō* (G21):** leaped for joy (v56).
- **was born — *ginomai* (G1096):** came into being — set against "I am" (v58).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Honesty about the text honors the text** — the bracket is there for a reason, and we can say so.
2. **No condemnation, then "sin no more"** — pardon first, then holiness (8:11).
3. **Only the sinless could throw the first stone** — and He didn't (Guzik).
4. **The Light was spoken beside the lamps** — in the treasury, at the feast (8:12, 20).
5. **"I am He" — the "He" is not in the Greek** (vv24, 28; Isa 43:10).
6. **The cross is where He is known** (v28) — crucified and glorified (Henry).
7. **Believing is not the same as continuing** (vv30–31, 59) — beware a temporary faith (Spurgeon).
8. **The worst slavery is to self** (Guzik); the Son makes free *ontōs*, really (v36).
9. **You are the child of the one you obey** (Sproul; vv39–47).
10. **Not "I was" but "I am"** (v58) — and the stones prove they understood.

Cross-references: Gen 3:4; 22:8, 18; Exod 3:14; 13:21; Lev 20:10; 24:16; Deut 17:6–7; 19:15; Ps 27:1; Isa 9:2; 42:6; 43:10; 49:6; Matt 7:3–5; Mark 12:41–43; Luke 1:47; 21:38; John 1:4–9; 3:14; 5:14; 7:37–38; 12:32–34; 14:6; 15:4–10; Rom 5:12; 6:17–18; 8:1, 34; 11:1–2, 25–29; Gal 5:1; Heb 11:13; 1 John 1:7; 3:8, 12, 15.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 8:36

"So △ if the Son makes you free, ☆ you will be free indeed."

FIGURE · WHOSE CHILDREN ARE YOU?

JOHN 8:37–47	WHAT A TRUE CHILD DOES	WHAT THEY WERE DOING
ABRAHAM	"do the deeds of Abraham" (v39)	"seeking to kill Me … this Abraham did not do" (v40)
GOD	"If God were your Father, you would love Me" (v42)	"you cannot hear My word" (v43)
THE DEVIL	Jesus speaks what He has seen with His Father (v38)	"a murderer from the beginning … a liar and the father of lies" (v44)
HEARING	"He who is of God hears the words of God" (v47)	"you do not hear them, because you are not of God" (v47)

Sproul: "You are the children of the one you obey."

Jesus tests every claim to a father by what the son does — Abraham's deeds, God's love, the devil's murder and lies, and whether a man hears.

Promise to trust — "I do not condemn you, either." I know men who were dragged into a public place and had their sin read out — in a courtroom, in a newspaper, in front of their kids. Some of them still hear the crowd. I've heard my own. I tell them honestly that this story is bracketed in our Bibles, and then I tell them what the whole Bible says just as plainly: "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). The Judge who alone could throw the stone put it down.

Command to obey — "From now on sin no more." Mercy is not permission. Jesus did not say, "Go, it doesn't matter." He said, "Go. From now on sin no more." Pardon is the power to change, not a pass to stay the same. This week I will name the thing I keep going back to and, with a brother, cut off the road back to it.

Sin to confess — picking up stones. I can be quick to grab a rock — the man who relapsed, the brother who failed, the one whose sin is uglier than mine. Verse 9 says they left "one by one, beginning with the older ones." The longer I live, the more I should know my own heart. I confess my stones.

Example to follow — the Light, and following Him. "He who follows Me will not walk in the darkness" (v12). Following is a daily walk, not a one-time decision. I want to bring the hidden things into His light before they grow in the dark.

Command to obey — continue in His word. The men who "believed" in verse 31 held stones in verse 59. I have seen jailhouse faith evaporate in the parking lot on release day. Real freedom comes to the man who stays in the word — daily, when it's dull, when it convicts him.

Promise to trust — free indeed. "Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin" — I don't have to be told; I've lived it. But "if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." Not free in name. Really free. Spurgeon is right: free from, and free to.

Truth to live in — whose son am I? Jesus tested every claim to a father by the son's deeds. Sproul: "You are the children of the one you obey." My family resemblance shows in what I do with the truth, how I treat the man in front of me, and whether I hear God's words.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Which voice condemns me most loudly — my own, someone else's, the accuser's? What does Jesus say to that voice in 8:10–11? (8:10–11; Rom 8:1) *Pardon first, then "sin no more" — never the other way around.*
2. When I'm quick to pick up a stone against another man, what sin of my own am I ignoring? (8:7–9; Matt 7:3–5) *"He who is without sin among you …"*
3. Where am I still walking in darkness — a habit, a secret, a resentment — that I need to bring into His light? (8:12; 1 John 1:7) *The follower "will not walk in the darkness."*
4. Am I continuing in His word, or did I believe once and drift? What does staying put look like for me this week? (8:31–32) *A temporary faith is not a saving faith (Spurgeon).*
5. What chain still holds me, and have I ever asked the Son — not my willpower — to make me free indeed? (8:34–36; Rom 6:18) *Habits are the chains which slaves wear; the Son breaks them.*
6. If someone judged my father by my deeds this week, whom would they say I belong to? (8:39–44; 1 John 3:8) *You are the children of the one you obey (Sproul).*

Worship. Before Abraham was born, He is. The God who spoke from the burning bush stood in the temple treasury and said, "I am." The Light of the world walked into the darkness of the cross so that men who walk in darkness could have the Light of life. He who is without sin did not throw the stone — He took the stones.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You are the I AM, the Light of the world, the Son who sets slaves free. Thank You that You do not condemn me. Now give me the power to go and sin no more. Shine into the places I have kept dark. Keep me in Your word when my faith feels thin. Break the chains I could never break, and make me free indeed. Make me look like my Father, so that the men around me see Your family in me. Take the stones out of my hands. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 9

Once Blind, Now I See — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus is the Light of the world, and He opens eyes nobody else can open. The man He healed saw more of Jesus with every hard question, while the men who were sure they could see went blind.

00 The Text

JOHN 9 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"

3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

5 "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes,

7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came back seeing.

8 Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?"

9 Others were saying, "This is he," still others were saying, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the one."

10 So they were saying to him, "How then were your eyes opened?"

11 He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight."

12 They said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind.

14 Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

15 Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a division among them.

17 So they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews then did not believe it of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight,

19 and questioned them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?”

20 His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;

21 but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself.”

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

23 For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

24 So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner.”

25 He then answered, “Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

26 So they said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

27 He answered them, “I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?”

28 They reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

29 “We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from.”

30 The man answered and said to them, “Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes.

31 “We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.

32 “Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.

33 “If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.”

34 They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” So they put him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

36 He answered, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

37 Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.”

38 And he said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped Him.

39 And Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.”

40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, “We are not blind too, are we?”

41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

Marked in the text

- **v2** “who sinned, this man or his parents” — Sin / warning
- **v3** “so that the works of God might be displayed in him” — God — His character & actions
- **v4** “night is coming when no one can work” — Time / place / contrast
- **v5** “I am the Light of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v6** “made clay of the spittle” — God — His character & actions
- **v7** “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” — Command / instruction
- **v7** “came back seeing” — Promise / blessing
- **v9** “I am the one” — Time / place / contrast
- **v14** “Now it was a Sabbath” — Time / place / contrast
- **v16** “This man is not from God” — Sin / warning
- **v16** “there was a division among them” — Time / place / contrast
- **v17** “He is a prophet” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “they were afraid of the Jews” — Sin / warning
- **v22** “put out of the synagogue” — Sin / warning
- **v25** “one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see” — Promise / blessing
- **v28** “They reviled him” — Sin / warning

- **v32** “Since the beginning of time it has never been heard” — Time / place / contrast
- **v33** “If this man were not from God, He could do nothing” — God — His character & actions
- **v34** “So they put him out” — Sin / warning
- **v35** “finding him” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” — Command / instruction
- **v38** “Lord, I believe” — Promise / blessing
- **v38** “he worshiped Him” — God — His character & actions
- **v39** “For judgment I came into this world” — Time / place / contrast
- **v41** “your sin remains” — Sin / warning
- **v1** “blind” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v6** “eyes” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

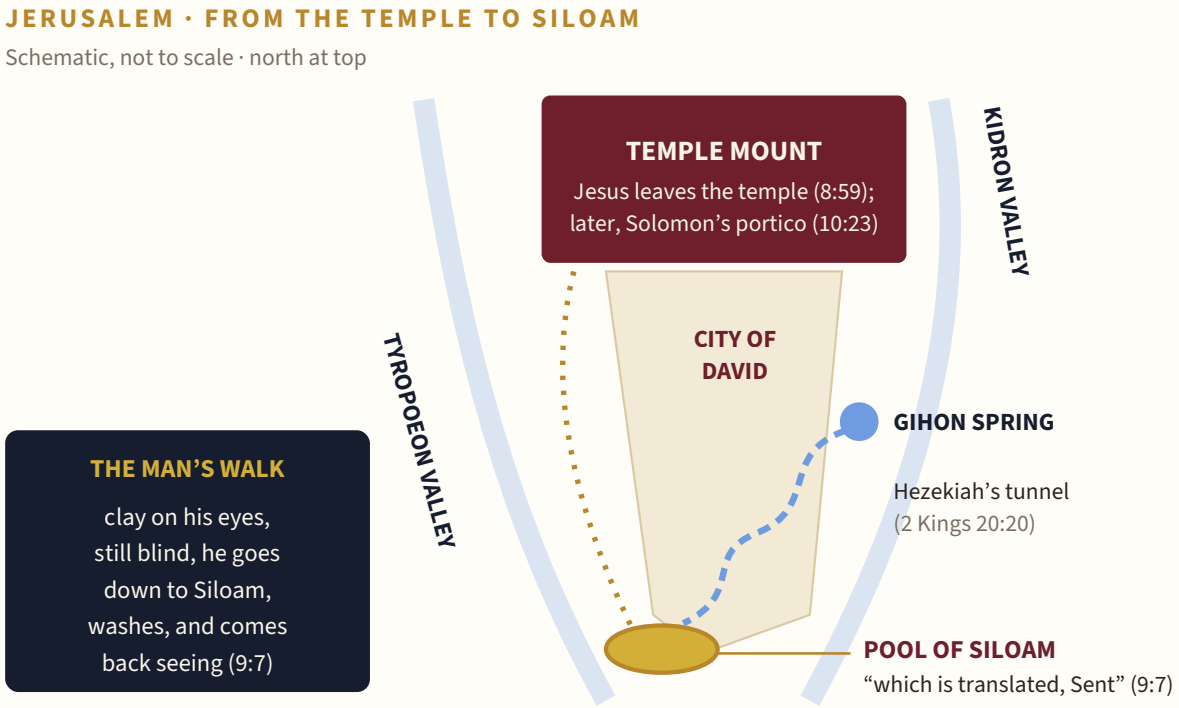
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 9:3

"Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that △the works of God might be displayed in him."

FIGURE · FROM THE TEMPLE TO SILOAM



Jesus left the temple at 8:59 and met the man on the way; the man walked, still blind, down to the pool at the south tip of the City of David, fed through Hezekiah's tunnel.

Setting. Jerusalem, just after the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2, 37). Jesus has said "I am the Light of the world" (8:12), claimed "before Abraham was born, I am" (8:58), and slipped out of the temple as they picked up stones (8:59). As He passes by, He sees a man blind from birth. The healing happens on a Sabbath (v14), at the pool of Siloam south of the temple.

Structure:

- vv1–7 — **the sign:** the disciples ask who sinned; Jesus: neither, but "so that the works of God might be displayed in him." We must work while it is day; "I am the Light of the world." Clay, spittle, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" ("Sent"); he went, washed, came back seeing.

- vv8–12 — **the neighbors:** is this the beggar? "I am the one." He tells it plainly: the man called Jesus made clay, I washed, I received sight. Where is He? "I do not know."
- vv13–17 — **the Pharisees (1):** it was a Sabbath. "This man is not from God" vs. "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" — a division. The man: "He is a prophet."
- vv18–23 — **the parents:** yes, our son; yes, born blind; how he sees, ask him. They feared being put out of the synagogue (v22).
- vv24–34 — **the Pharisees (2):** "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." "One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They revile him; he reasons: if this man were not from God, He could do nothing (v33). "You were born entirely in sins" — and they put him out.
- vv35–38 — **Jesus finds him:** "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.
- vv39–41 — **the verdict:** "For judgment I came into this world" — those who do not see will see, those who see will become blind. "Since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

Repeated words, with counts:

- "blind" ×13 — vv1, 2, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 32, 39, 40, 41.
- "see / sees / seeing / seen / saw / sight" ×16 — vv1, 7, 8, 11, 15 (×2), 18 (×2), 19, 21, 25, 37, 39 (×3), 41.
- "know" ×11 — vv12, 20, 21 (×2), 24, 25 (×2), 29 (×2), 30, 31.
- "eyes" ×10 — vv6, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 21, 26, 30, 32; "open / opened" ×7 — vv10, 14, 17, 21, 26, 30, 32.
- "God" ×7 — vv3, 16, 24, 29, 31 (×2), 33.
- "sin / sinned / sins" ×5 — vv2, 3, 34, 41 (×2); "sinner(s)" ×4 — vv16, 24, 25, 31.
- "clay" ×5 — vv6 (×2), 11, 14, 15; "wash / washed" ×5 — vv7 (×2), 11 (×2), 15.
- "from" (where He is from / from God) ×5 — vv1, 16, 29, 30, 33.
- "believe" ×4 — vv18, 35, 36, 38; "disciple(s)" ×4 — vv2, 27, 28 (×2); "Pharisees" ×4 — vv13, 15, 16, 40.
- "put (him) out" ×3 — vv22, 34, 35.

Contrasts: blind ⟷ seeing (the whole chapter, turned inside out in vv39–41). Day ⟷ night (v4). "Who sinned?" ⟷ "the works of God" (vv2–3). "We know" (vv24, 29) ⟷ "I do not know … one thing I do know" (v25). Disciples of Moses ⟷ His disciple (v28). Put out by men (v34) ⟷ found by Jesus (v35). The man's growing view of Jesus — a man, a prophet, from God, Lord — ⟷ the Pharisees' shrinking one — not from God, a sinner, we don't know where He is from.

Shape of the chapter: a sign (1–7), a series of hearings in which Jesus is absent (8–34), and a meeting in which Jesus finds the man and pronounces judgment (35–41). The man moves from the roadside to the synagogue door to Jesus' feet; the Pharisees move from judges to the judged.

Chapter theme (my words): The Light of the world opens the eyes of a man born blind and then opens his heart to see who He is. Every honest step toward Jesus costs the man something, and every step away from Jesus leaves the experts darker than before.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 9:39

"And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.""

FIGURE · TWO DIRECTIONS IN ONE CHAPTER

THE MAN BORN BLIND sees more of Jesus in every scene	THE PHARISEES see less with every answer
v11 "The man who is called Jesus"	v16 "This man is not from God"
v17 "He is a prophet"	v18 won't believe he was blind
v27 "His disciples too?"	v24 "this man is a sinner"
v33 "from God"	v29 "we do not know where He is from"
v38 "Lord, I believe" — worships	v41 "your sin remains"

JOHN 9:39

"… so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind."

Read down each column: the beggar's words about Jesus climb from "a man" to worship, while the Pharisees' words sink from "not from God" to "your sin remains."

Did sin cause the blindness (vv2–3)? The disciples assumed suffering is always a direct payback for someone's sin. Jesus says not in this case. Sproul calls it a false dilemma: Scripture shows that "God can and does visit people with afflictions when they disobey," but we can't read every affliction that way — "I have no idea why Harvey has cerebral palsy, and he does not either." The point is purpose, not blame: "so that the works of God might be displayed in him." Spurgeon: "Christ is ever for seeking out, not the cause, but the remedy."

Why clay and spittle? All four teachers refuse to make a method out of it. Guzik notes that spittle was thought to have healing qualities, hears an echo of the dust of Genesis 2:7, and says Jesus varied His methods "so one could never make a formula of the methods." Sproul: "Do not think there is a chemical formula in Palestinian clay."

Henry: "Clay made of Christ's spittle was much more precious than the balm of Gilead." The clay also made it a Sabbath case — making clay counted as work under the traditions (v14).

Why Siloam ("Sent")? John translates the name on purpose. Jesus is the One "sent" by the Father all through this Gospel (v4, "Him who sent Me"), and He sends the man to the pool called Sent. The man obeys while still blind — the faith of a few steps, not yet of full sight.

The parents and the synagogue (v22). *Aposynagōgos* — put out of the synagogue — appears only in John (9:22; 12:42; 16:2). It meant losing worship, friends and livelihood. Guzik is gentle with the parents ("It is instinctive and normal for parents to protect their children"); Henry is not ("The fear of man brings a snare"). Both are true.

Testimony and gospel (v25). Spurgeon preached v25 as an unanswerable argument: "If the gospel of God be true, it can stand any quantity of questioning." Sproul honors the man's witness but draws a line: "Do not ever confuse your personal testimony with the gospel. … The gospel is about Him." I need both: my story opens the door; Christ's person and work is what I carry through it.

"Son of Man" or "Son of God" (v35)? The NASB follows the oldest manuscripts ("Son of Man"); the KJV reads "Son of God." Guzik notes the difference and says both point to God's Messiah. Henry, working from the KJV, comments on "Son of God." The man worships either way (v38), and Jesus accepts it — Sproul: worship belongs only to God, so Jesus' acceptance is a claim to deity.

"For judgment I came" (v39) and 3:17. Jesus came to save, not to condemn, but His coming brings a verdict as light exposes what is there. Those who admit blindness receive sight; those who insist they see are left in their sin (v41). Guzik: "We are all spiritually blind from birth." Henry: "Those that are convinced of their disease are in a fair way to be cured."

Word study (Greek):

- **clay — *pēlos* (G4081):** wet earth, potter's clay; five times in John 9, once in Rom 9:21.
- **Siloam / sent — *Silōam* (G4611), *apostellō* (G649):** the pool named "Sent"; the verb behind "apostle."
- **division — *schisma* (G4978):** a tear; in John always over Jesus (7:43; 9:16; 10:19).
- **put out of the synagogue — *aposynagōgos* (G656):** excommunicated; only John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2.
- **know — *oida* (G1492):** knowledge from having seen; the battle word of vv24–34.
- **reviled — *loidoreō* (G3058):** to heap verbal abuse (1 Pet 2:23).
- **disciple — *mathētēs* (G3101):** learner, follower — the insult that was really an honor (v28).
- **worshiped — *proskyneō* (G4352):** to bow down in homage — accepted by Jesus (v38).
- **judgment — *krima* (G2917):** a verdict and its result (v39).
- **blind — *typhlos* (G5185):** physically or spiritually blind; the chapter's key word.

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Jesus answers "why?" with "what now"** — the works of God displayed (v3).
2. **The sign acts out the saying** — "I am the Light of the world" (v5; 8:12).
3. **The man obeyed before he could see** — clay on his eyes, walking to "Sent" (v7).
4. **There is no formula in the clay** (Sproul, Guzik).
5. **The same miracle, two verdicts** — *schisma*, division (v16).
6. **Fear of man silences people who know the truth** — the parents (v22).

7. **“One thing I do know”** — hold to what Jesus has done (v25).
8. **A testimony is not yet the gospel** (Sproul) — it points to a Person.
9. **When the synagogue threw him out, Jesus found him** (v35).
10. **The most dangerous words are “We see”** (v41).

Cross-references: Gen 1:3; 2:7; Exod 4:11; Ps 146:8; Prov 29:25; Isa 6:9–10; 35:5; 42:6–7, 16–19; Dan 7:13–14; Matt 15:14; Luke 4:18; John 1:4–9; 3:17–21; 5:17; 8:12, 58–59; 10:19–21; 11:9–10; 12:35–46; 16:2; Acts 10:25–26; Rom 9:21; 2 Cor 4:4–6; Eph 5:8; 1 Pet 2:9, 23; Rev 3:17–18.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 9:38

"And he said, "☆ Lord, I believe." And △ he worshiped Him."

Example to follow — the man who went. Jesus put clay on his eyes and said go. He couldn't see the pool, the road or the result. He went anyway, and came back seeing. Most of the men I walk with want to see the whole road before they take the first step — I'm the same. This week I will do the next obedient thing Jesus has already made plain, before I can see how it turns out.

Truth to live in — "neither this man sinned, nor his parents." I know men who have spent years asking "whose fault is this?" about the way they were born, the house they grew up in, the addiction that runs in their family. Some of that history is real sin, and it needs to be named and confessed. But Jesus won't let the blame question be the last word. He says: watch what God will do here. My worst chapter can become the place where the works of God are displayed.

Sin to confess — the fear of man. The parents knew the truth and kept their mouths shut so they wouldn't be put out. I confess the times I've gone quiet about Jesus at work, on the yard, at the family table, because I didn't want to lose standing. Fear of man is a snare, and it has caught me.

Command to obey — tell your "one thing." The man didn't have a theology degree. He had one thing he knew: "though I was blind, now I see." Sproul is right that my story isn't the gospel — the gospel is about Him — but my story can point to Him. This week I will tell one man what Jesus has done for me in two sentences, and then tell him who Jesus is and what He did on the cross.

Promise to trust — He finds the ones they put out. The synagogue threw the man out, and Jesus went looking for him. Some of my brothers have been thrown out of families, churches, jobs, communities. Some deserved consequences; some didn't. Either way, verse 35 is true: Jesus heard, and Jesus found him. Being put out by men can be the very place Jesus finds you.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What hard thing in my life have I spent years asking "who sinned?" about — and what might it look like for the works of God to be displayed in it? (9:1–3; Rom 8:28) *Jesus refused the blame question and turned to what God would do.*
2. Jesus told the man to go and wash before he could see anything. Where is Jesus asking me to obey before I see the result? (9:6–7) *He went, washed and came back seeing — obedience before sight.*
3. The parents knew the truth but kept quiet for fear of being put out. Whose opinion keeps me quiet about Jesus? (9:20–23; Prov 29:25) *The fear of man brings a snare; the Light is worth the cost.*
4. What is my "one thing I do know"? Can I tell it in two sentences — and then point past it to Jesus Himself? (9:25; 1 Cor 15:3–4) *Testimony is powerful, but the gospel is about Him, not me.*
5. Have I ever been thrown out — by family, a church, a crowd — for following Jesus? How does verse 35 speak to that? (9:34–35; Heb 13:12–13) *When they put him out, Jesus found him.*

6. Where am I saying "We see" — sure I already understand — in a way that might be keeping me blind? (9:39–41; Rev 3:17–18) *Admitting blindness is the door to sight.*

Worship. "Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind." But He did. The Light of the world stopped for a beggar nobody else saw, made new eyes out of clay, and then came back to find him when everyone else threw him out. The right response is the man's: "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, Light of the world, I was born blind and You opened my eyes. Thank You for passing by, for seeing me when I was just a problem to others, and for finding me when I was put out. Give me the courage to obey before I see, to speak when fear says be quiet, and to tell my one thing and then point to You. Keep me from ever saying "I see" in pride. Open the eyes of the men I serve. Lord, I believe — and I worship You. Amen.

Scripture: New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © 1960–1995 The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. · Teacher material summarized from David Guzik (Enduring Word), R.C. Sproul (Ligonier), C.H. Spurgeon and Matthew Henry — see John-9-Deep-Dive-Four-Voices.pdf for sources. · Importable: the companion .md carries the berean-study block.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 10

The Door and the Good Shepherd — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus is the one door into God's fold and the good Shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep by His own choice. His sheep hear His voice and follow Him, and no one can snatch them out of His hand or the Father's.

00 The Text

JOHN 10 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.

2 "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.

3 "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4 "When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

5 "A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

6 This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.

7 So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 "All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

9 "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

11 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

12 "He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

13 "He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.

14 "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me,

15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

16 "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

17 "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.

18 “No one has taken it away from Me, but △ I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and △ I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

19 A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words.

20 Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?”

21 Others were saying, “These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?”

22 At that time ◷ the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem;

23 ◷ it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.

24 The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”

25 Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me.

26 “But ⚠ you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.

27 “My ⟳ sheep hear My ⟳ voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

28 and ☆ I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and ☆ no one will snatch them out of My hand.

29 “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and △ no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.

30 “△ I and the Father are one.”

31 The Jews ⚠ picked up stones again to stone Him.

32 Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?”

33 The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, ⚠ make Yourself out to be God.”

34 Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS’?

35 “If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and △ the Scripture cannot be broken),

36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?

37 “If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that △ the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.”

39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there.

41 Many came to Him and were saying, “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.”

42 ☆ Many believed in Him there.

Marked in the text

- **v1** “climbs up some other way” — Sin / warning
- **v1** “a thief and a robber” — Sin / warning
- **v3** “he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out” — God — His character & actions
- **v4** “they know his voice” — Promise / blessing
- **v7** “I am the door of the sheep” — God — His character & actions
- **v9** “if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved” — Promise / blessing
- **v10** “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy” — Sin / warning
- **v10** “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” — Promise / blessing
- **v11** “the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep” — God — His character & actions
- **v12** “the wolf snatches them and scatters them” — Sin / warning
- **v14** “I know My own and My own know Me” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold” — Time / place / contrast
- **v16** “one flock with one shepherd” — Promise / blessing

- **v18** “I lay it down on My own initiative” — God — His character & actions
- **v18** “I have authority to take it up again” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “the Feast of the Dedication” — Time / place / contrast
- **v23** “it was winter” — Time / place / contrast
- **v26** “you do not believe because you are not of My sheep” — Sin / warning
- **v28** “I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish” — Promise / blessing
- **v28** “no one will snatch them out of My hand” — Promise / blessing
- **v29** “no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” — God — His character & actions
- **v30** “I and the Father are one” — God — His character & actions
- **v31** “picked up stones again to stone Him” — Sin / warning
- **v33** “make Yourself out to be God” — Sin / warning
- **v35** “the Scripture cannot be broken” — God — His character & actions
- **v38** “the Father is in Me, and I in the Father” — God — His character & actions
- **v42** “Many believed in Him there” — Promise / blessing
- **v1** “sheep” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v3** “voice” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

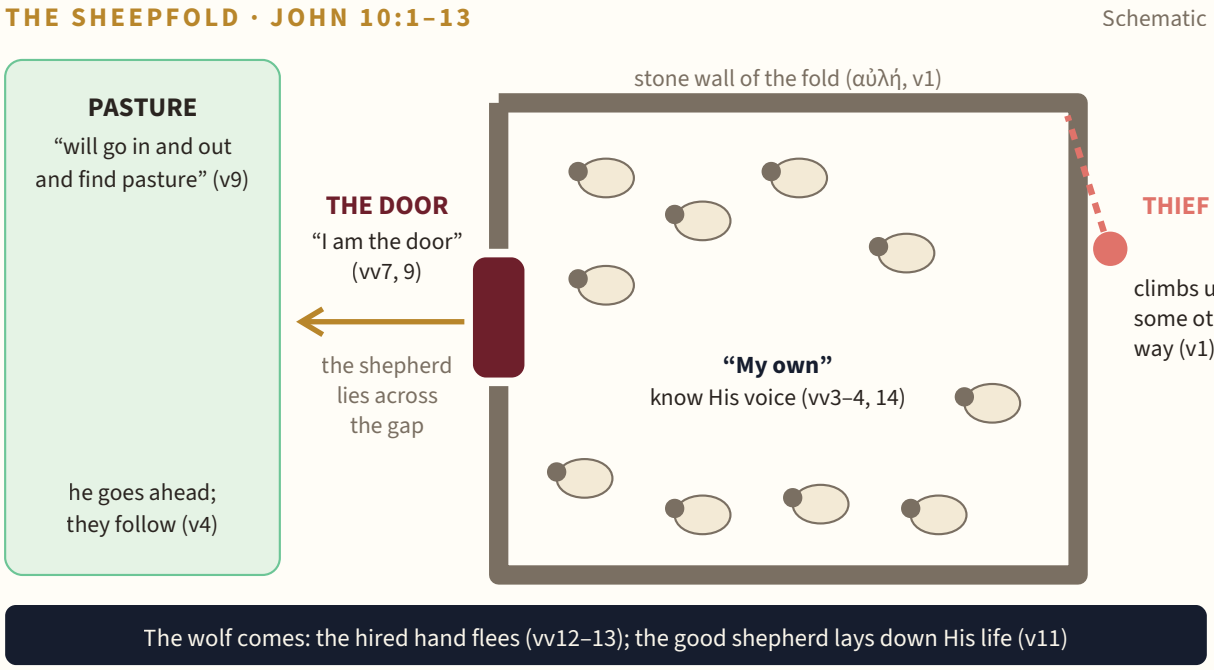
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 10:14

"△I am the good shepherd, and ☆I know My own and My own know Me,"

FIGURE · THE FOLD, THE DOOR AND THE THIEF



One way in, and the shepherd is it: the sheep he knows come and go through him to pasture, while the thief climbs the wall and the hired hand runs from the wolf.

Setting. Jerusalem. Verses 1–21 continue straight from 9:39–41: Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees who had just put the healed man out. Verses 22–39 are set two months or so later, at the Feast of the Dedication (Hanukkah), in winter, in Solomon's portico of the temple. Verses 40–42: Jesus withdraws beyond the Jordan to where John first baptized.

Structure:

- vv1–6 — **the figure:** the thief climbs in another way; the shepherd enters by the door, calls his own sheep by name, leads them out; they follow because they know his voice; strangers they flee. The hearers did not understand (v6).
- vv7–10 — **"I am the door":** all who came before were thieves and robbers; whoever enters through Me will be saved, go in and out, find pasture. The thief steals, kills, destroys; "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

- vv11–18 — **"I am the good shepherd":** He lays down His life for the sheep; the hired hand flees from the wolf. "I know My own and My own know Me." Other sheep not of this fold — one flock, one shepherd. "I lay it down on My own initiative … authority to take it up again."
- vv19–21 — **division:** "He has a demon and is insane" vs. "A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"
- vv22–30 — **Dedication:** "If You are the Christ, tell us plainly." "I told you, and you do not believe … you are not of My sheep." My sheep hear, I know them, they follow; eternal life; never perish; no one will snatch them out of My hand or the Father's. "I and the Father are one."
- vv31–39 — **stones:** "for blasphemy … You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." Psalm 82:6: "YOU ARE GODS"; the Scripture cannot be broken; believe the works — the Father is in Me and I in the Father. He eluded their grasp.
- vv40–42 — **beyond the Jordan:** "John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." Many believed in Him there.

Repeated words, with counts:

- "sheep" ×15 — vv1, 2, 3 (×2), 4, 7, 8, 11, 12 (×2), 13, 15, 16, 26, 27.
- "Father" ×13 — vv15 (×2), 17, 18, 25, 29 (×2), 30, 32, 36, 37, 38 (×2); plus "Father's" ×2 — vv25, 29.
- "know / knows" ×8 — vv4, 5, 14 (×2), 15 (×2), 27, 38.
- "shepherd" ×6 — vv2, 11 (×2), 12, 14, 16.
- "believe / believed" ×6 — vv25, 26, 37, 38 (×2), 42.
- "voice" ×5 — vv3, 4, 5, 16, 27; "follow" ×3 — vv4, 5, 27.
- "life" ×5 — vv10, 11, 15, 17, 28; "lay(s) down / lay it down" ×5 — vv11, 15, 17, 18 (×2).
- "work(s)" ×5 — vv25, 32, 33, 37, 38.
- "I am" ×5 — vv7, 9, 11, 14, 36 ("I am the Son of God").
- "door" ×4 — vv1, 2, 7, 9; "thief / thieves" ×3 — vv1, 8, 10; "robber(s)" ×2 — vv1, 8.
- "stone(s) / stoning" ×4 — vv31 (×2), 32, 33; "blasphemy / blaspheming" ×2 — vv33, 36.
- "hand" (grip) ×2 — vv28, 29; "snatch(es)" ×3 — vv12, 28, 29; "hired hand" ×2 — vv12, 13.
- "Truly, truly" ×2 — vv1, 7.

Contrasts: door ⟷ "some other way" (v1). Shepherd ⟷ thief, robber, stranger, hired hand (vv1–13). Steal, kill, destroy ⟷ life abundantly (v10). Flees ⟷ lays down His life (vv11–13). This fold ⟷ other sheep, one flock (v16). Taken from Me ⟷ I lay it down (v18). Demon-possessed ⟷ opens the eyes of the blind (vv20–21). Not My sheep ⟷ My sheep (vv26–27). Perish ⟷ eternal life (v28). Jerusalem stones (v31) ⟷ beyond the Jordan, many believed (v42).

Shape of the chapter: a picture (1–6), two "I am" explanations (7–18), a division (19–21), then a winter confrontation that climbs from "tell us plainly" to "I and the Father are one" to stones (22–39), and a quiet ending where people believe (40–42).

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is the only way into God's flock and the only Shepherd who dies for it. He knows His sheep by name, they know His voice, and the grip that holds them is His and the Father's — and they are one.

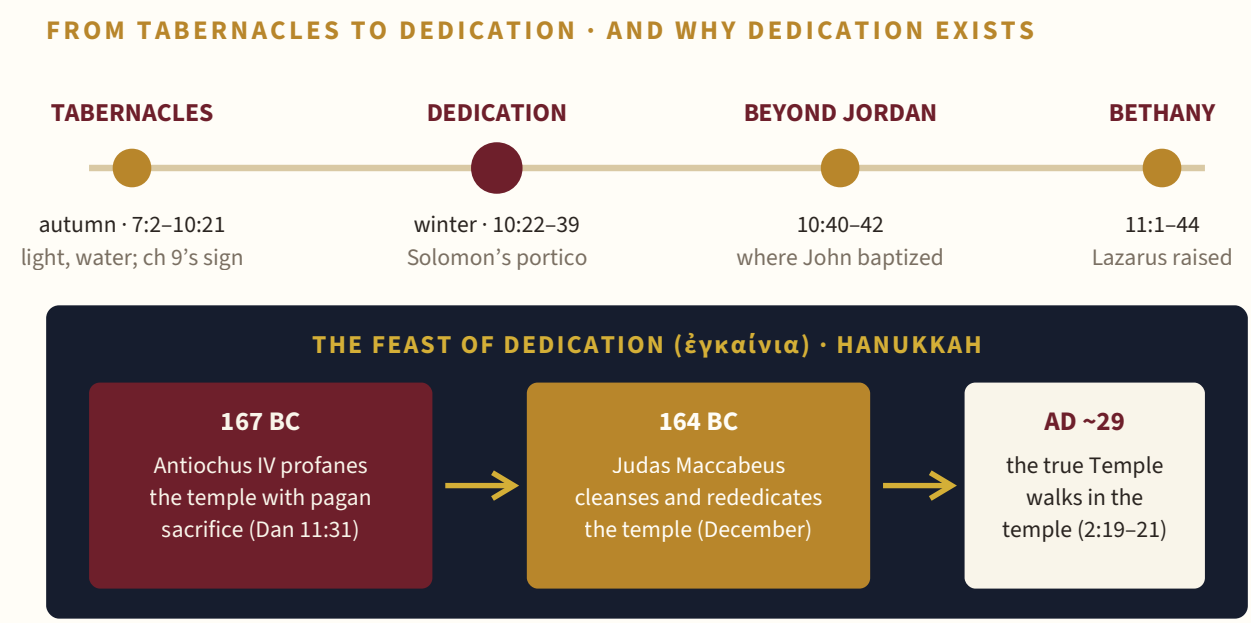
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 10:28

"and △I give eternal life to them, and ☆they will never perish; and ☆no one will snatch them out of My hand."

FIGURE · WHY JESUS WAS AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION



Between Tabernacles and Lazarus comes Hanukkah, the feast of a cleansed temple — and the One who is the true temple stands in its portico.

Who are the thieves and robbers (vv1, 8)? Sproul is clear: not the devil or vague false messiahs, but the leaders of Israel who had just thrown out the man born blind — "those whom God had called to be the shepherds over His flock, the clergy of His day." Guzik agrees the words rebuke the corrupt leaders of Jesus' day. Ezekiel 34 is the background: God against the shepherds who fed themselves.

How can Jesus be both the door and the shepherd? Guzik explains the custom: at night a shepherd lay across the opening of the fold — "The shepherd was in fact the door." Sproul: "Jesus is not only the shepherd of the sheep, but He is the door to the sheepfold." The point of the door is exclusive: one way in (Acts 4:12). Spurgeon shuts the false doors — baptism without faith, church membership, family heritage.

What is "abundant life" (v10)? Not prosperity. Guzik: "Abundant life isn't an especially long life"; it is "a life of satisfaction and contentment in Jesus." Henry: "Life in abundance is eternal life, life without death or fear of death." I have to say this plainly to my men: abundant life can be lived in a cell, in a hospital, in a hard marriage, because it is Him.

The voluntary death (vv17–18). All four stress that no one took Jesus' life. Sproul: "the death of Christ, His perfect sacrifice for us, was voluntary." Guzik: "Anyone can lay down his life; only Jesus could take His life up again," and it "was not an indirect suicide in any sense." Henry: "such a challenge as was never given by the most daring hero." The cross was not an accident or a defeat; it was a Shepherd's choice.

Who are the "other sheep" (v16)? Guzik and Sproul: Gentile believers — the gospel going beyond Israel. Spurgeon notices the tense: "I have," not "shall have." Guzik adds that Jerome's "one fold" bent this into exclusiveness; Jesus promised one flock under one Shepherd. The church is not Israel's replacement but Gentiles brought into one flock with believing Israel under the one Messiah — and God still has a future for the nation (Rom 11).

Can a sheep be lost (vv28–29)? Our four teachers read these verses as the believer's final security. Sproul: "We are secure, not in ourselves, but because of the One in whose hands we are held." Spurgeon: "A double-handed force keeps them safe against all ill." Henry: "Those are safe who are in the hands of the Lord Jesus." Many Arminian Christians agree no outside power can snatch a sheep but hold that a sheep may stop following. I want my men to know both views exist — and to notice the description in v27: the secure sheep are the ones who hear and follow. Spurgeon insists security breeds holiness, not carelessness.

"You do not believe because you are not of My sheep" (v26). Jesus does not say they are not His sheep because they don't believe, but the reverse. Henry states the Reformed reading sharply ("Those to whom God never gives the grace of faith were never designed for heaven"). Others read "not of My sheep" as describing a settled refusal. Either way, the call stands: hear His voice and follow.

"I and the Father are one" (v30). *Hen* is neuter — one thing, not one person. Guzik: distinct Persons, one essence, refuting both Sabellianism and Arianism. Sproul rejects the Arian reading that makes it a mere unity of purpose. The stones settle what the hearers thought it meant (v33).

"You are gods" (v34; Psalm 82:6). Not a teaching that humans are divine. Guzik: the judges of Psalm 82 were called "gods" because "in their office they determined the fate of other men," and Jesus did not apply it "to all humanity or to all believers." Sproul: "one of those lesser-to-greater arguments." If God's word called mere judges "gods," how is it blasphemy for the One the Father sanctified and sent to say "I am the Son of God"? And it rests on one word, because "the Scripture cannot be broken."

Hanukkah and Daniel. The Feast of Dedication remembered Antiochus IV's desecration (167 BC) and the temple's cleansing (164 BC), events Daniel foresaw (Dan 8:9–14; 11:31). I read Antiochus as a preview of a greater desecration still to come (Dan 9:27; Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:3–4). In John 10 the true Temple stands in the rededicated one — and they pick up stones.

Word study (Greek):

- **figure of speech — *paroimia* (G3942):** a veiled saying; John 10:6; 16:25, 29.
- **door — *thyra* (G2374):** the opening itself; "I am the door."
- **abundantly — *perissos* (G4053):** overflowing, beyond measure; only here in John.
- **shepherd — *poimēn* (G4166):** six times in John, all in ch. 10.
- **good — *kalos* (G2570):** beautiful, noble, admirable good.
- **lay down — *tithēmi* (G5087) + life — *psychē* (G5590):** five times in vv11–18.
- **hired hand — *misthōtos* (G3411):** wage-worker; Mark 1:20; John 10:12–13.
- **fold — *aulē* (G833) vs flock — *poimnē* (G4167):** walled courtyard vs. one flock (v16).
- **Dedication — *enkainia* (G1456):** renewal; only here — Hanukkah.

- **snatch — *harpazō* (G726):** seize by force — the wolf's verb (v12), denied twice (vv28–29).
- **one — *hen* (G1520):** neuter; one in nature, not one person.
- **broken — *lyō* (G3089):** loosed, dissolved — Scripture cannot be (v35).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The thieves had names** — the leaders who threw out the blind man (Sproul).
2. **One door — and He is it** (vv7, 9).
3. **Abundant life is a Person, not a lifestyle** (v10).
4. **"Good" means beautiful** — *kalos*, the Shepherd as He should be.
5. **Nobody took His life** — He laid it down and took it up (v18).
6. **"I have other sheep"** — already His (v16).
7. **Sheep are known by ear and foot** — they hear and follow (v27).
8. **Two hands hold the sheep** (vv28–29).
9. **"One" is neuter** — one in nature (v30).
10. **One word in a psalm cannot be broken** (v35).

Cross-references: Exod 3:14; Num 27:16–17; 1 Kgs 8:63; Ps 23; 80:1; 82:6; 95:7; Isa 40:11; 53:6; Jer 23:1–4; Ezek 34; 37:24; Dan 8:9–14; 9:27; 11:31; Zech 11:4–17; 13:7; Matt 5:18; 9:36; 24:15; Mark 6:34; Luke 15:3–7; John 1:14, 28; 2:19–21; 5:18; 8:58–59; 9:35–41; 14:6; 16:25; 21:15–17; Acts 4:12; 20:28–29; Rom 8:38–39; 11:25–26; Eph 2:13–16; Phil 1:6; 2 Thess 2:3–4; Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 2:25; 5:2–4; Rev 7:17.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 10:27

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;"

Promise to trust — "no one will snatch them out of My hand." I know men who are sure they've blown it one too many times — that one more relapse, one more failure, and God will let go. Jesus says the grip is His, and over His hand is the Father's. Sproul's picture of a father holding his small child's hand near the railroad tracks is the one I need: the safety is in His grip, not mine. That doesn't make me careless; it makes me want to follow the One who won't let go.

Command to obey — hear and follow. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (v27). There are a lot of voices in my head — the accuser, the old crowd, the bottle, my own pride. The Shepherd's voice comes through His Word. This week I will spend the first ten minutes of every day with Scripture before I pick up my phone, and do the next thing He says.

Sin to confess — acting like a hired hand. The hired hand runs when the wolf comes because the sheep aren't his. I confess the times I've treated my wife, my kids, the men God gave me, as a job — present when it was easy, gone when it cost something. Jesus lays down His life; I can at least lay down my comfort.

Truth to live in — one door. Not my family's faith, not a program, not a church card, not being a better man than the next guy. Spurgeon: "If you have not Christ your Church certificates are waste paper." Jesus is the door, and whoever enters through Him will be saved and find pasture.

Example to follow — the Shepherd who knows names. "He calls his own sheep by name." In prison ministry men become numbers; in recovery they become "the addict." The Good Shepherd knows names. I will learn and use the name of every man I serve, and pray for each one by name.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What other "doors" have I tried — religion, family, my own effort, a program — and what does it mean that Jesus says "I am the door"? (10:7–9; Acts 4:12) *One opening into the fold, and He is it.*
2. Which thief has been working on my life — stealing, killing, destroying — and what does the abundant life of verse 10 look like for me this week? (10:10) *Not a longer life but His life, overflowing.*
3. When hard times came, where have I acted like a hired hand toward the people God gave me — my family, my men, my church? (10:12–13; 1 Pet 5:2–4) *The hired hand runs because the sheep are not his.*
4. How do I recognize the Shepherd's voice over all the other voices in my head — and what is He saying to me right now? (10:3–5, 27) *Sheep are marked in the ear and in the foot: they hear and follow.*
5. If no one can snatch me from His hand, what fear am I still carrying that verses 28–29 answer? (10:28–29; Rom 8:38–39) *Two hands hold the sheep — the Son's and the Father's.*
6. Jesus said "the Scripture cannot be broken." How does His view of the Bible shape the way I read mine? (10:34–36; Matt 5:18) *He rested His case on one word of one psalm.*

Worship. The Lord who said “I Myself will search for My sheep” came Himself. He is the door and the Shepherd, the One who laid down His life on His own initiative and took it up again, the great Shepherd brought up from the dead. He and the Father are one, and the hand that holds me is the hand that made the world and was pierced for me.

Prayer. Good Shepherd, thank You for coming in by the door and calling me by name. Thank You for laying down Your life for me when no one could take it from You. Tune my ear to Your voice and teach my feet to follow. Forgive me for running like a hired hand. Hold the men I serve, and bring in the other sheep You already call Yours. When I am afraid I will fall, remind me that no one can snatch me out of Your hand or the Father’s. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 11

I Am the Resurrection and the Life — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus loves me enough to let me wait, weeps with me at the grave, and has the voice that empties tombs. He is the resurrection and the life — and the council's plot shows what it cost Him to give that life away.

00 The Text

JOHN 11 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.

7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?"

9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

10 "But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."

12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.

14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,

15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him."

16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."

17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off;

19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.

20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.

21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

22 "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."

28 When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him.

30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him.

31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,

34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

35 Jesus wept.

36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!"

37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"

38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42 "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.

46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.

47 Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs.

48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,

50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."

51 Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,

52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

53 So from that day on ⚠ they planned together to kill Him.

54 Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into 🕒 a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

55 Now 🕒 the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves.

56 So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"

57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him.

Marked in the text

- **v3** "he whom You love is sick" — God — His character & actions
- **v4** "This sickness is not to end in death" — Promise / blessing
- **v4** "for the glory of God" — God — His character & actions
- **v5** "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" — God — His character & actions
- **v6** "He then stayed two days longer" — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep" — Time / place / contrast
- **v16** "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him" — Command / instruction
- **v25** "I am the resurrection and the life" — God — His character & actions
- **v25** "he who believes in Me will live even if he dies" — Promise / blessing
- **v26** "will never die" — Promise / blessing
- **v27** "You are the Christ, the Son of God" — God — His character & actions
- **v35** "Jesus wept" — God — His character & actions
- **v39** "Remove the stone" — Command / instruction
- **v40** "if you believe, you will see the glory of God" — Promise / blessing
- **v41** "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me" — God — His character & actions
- **v43** "Lazarus, come forth" — God — His character & actions
- **v44** "Unbind him, and let him go" — Command / instruction
- **v46** "went to the Pharisees" — Sin / warning
- **v48** "the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation" — Sin / warning
- **v50** "it is expedient for you that one man die for the people" — Sin / warning
- **v51** "he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation" — God — His character & actions
- **v52** "gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" — Promise / blessing
- **v53** "they planned together to kill Him" — Sin / warning
- **v54** "a city called Ephraim" — Time / place / contrast
- **v55** "the Passover of the Jews was near" — Time / place / contrast
- **v17** "four days" — Time / place / contrast (every occurrence)
- **v21** "if You had been here" — Time / place / contrast (every occurrence)
- **v33** "deeply moved" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v15** "believe" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v27** "believed" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v25** "believes" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

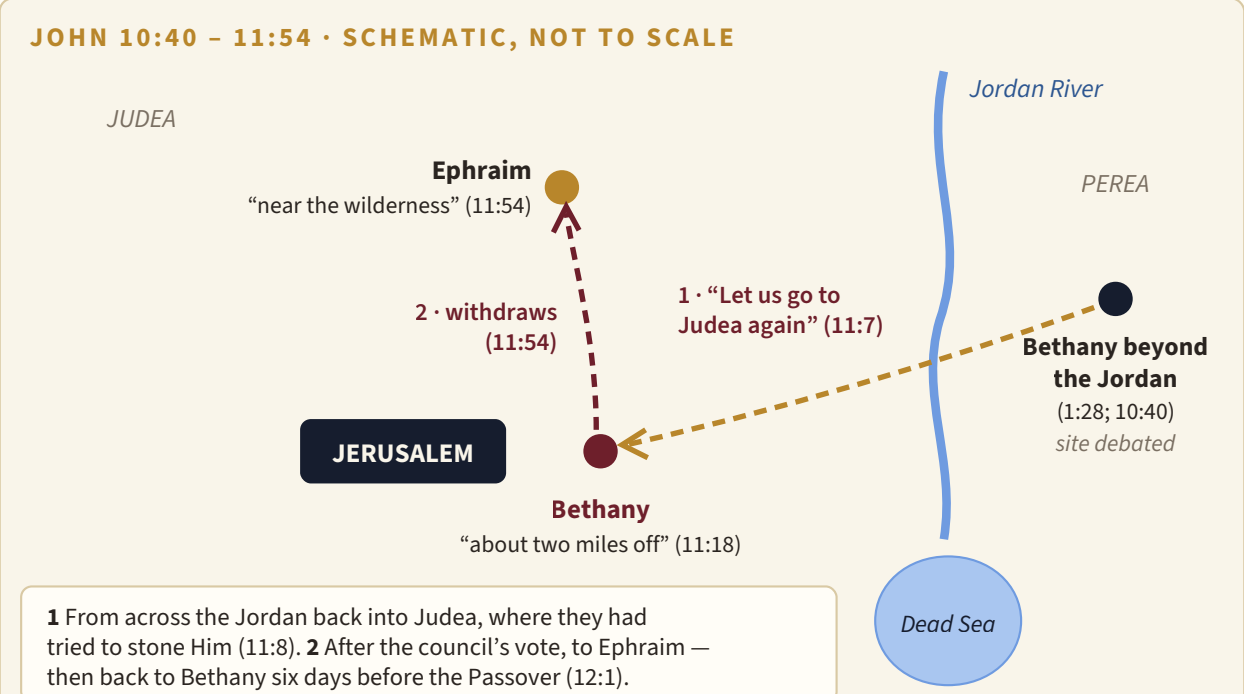
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 11:5–6

"Now △Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when He heard that he was sick, ◷He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was."

FIGURE · WHERE JOHN 11 HAPPENS



Follow the two journeys: back into Judea to a tomb two miles from Jerusalem, then away to Ephraim once the council has voted.

Setting. Jesus is across the Jordan, where He withdrew after the Jews tried to stone Him at the Feast of Dedication (10:31, 39–40). Word comes from Bethany, two miles from Jerusalem (11:18), that Lazarus — brother of Mary and Martha — is sick. The Passover is near (11:55); this is the last sign before the Passion week.

Structure:

- vv1–16 — **the delay:** the message (v3), "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God" (v4), Jesus loved them — so He stayed two days longer (vv5–6). "Let us go to Judea again"; twelve hours in the day (vv7–10). Lazarus "has fallen asleep" — "Lazarus is dead" (vv11–15). Thomas: "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him" (v16).

- vv17–27 — **Martha:** four days in the tomb (v17); "Lord, if You had been here" (v21); "Your brother will rise again" — "on the last day" (vv23–24); "I am the resurrection and the life … Do you believe this?" (vv25–26); her confession (v27).
- vv28–37 — **Mary and the tears:** "The Teacher is here and is calling for you" (v28); Mary at His feet with the same words (v32); He was deeply moved and troubled (v33); "Jesus wept" (v35); two readings from the crowd (vv36–37).
- vv38–44 — **the tomb:** "Remove the stone"; Martha's objection; "if you believe, you will see the glory of God" (vv39–40); the prayer of thanks (vv41–42); "Lazarus, come forth" (v43); "Unbind him, and let him go" (v44).
- vv45–57 — **the verdict:** many believed; some reported (vv45–46). The council: "If we let Him go on like this … the Romans will come" (vv47–48). Caiaphas: "one man die for the people" (vv49–50), which John calls prophecy (vv51–52). "From that day on they planned together to kill Him" (v53). Jesus withdraws to Ephraim; Passover crowds look for Him; orders to report Him (vv54–57).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "believe / believed / believes" ×9 — vv15, 25, 26 (×2), 27, 40, 42, 45, 48.
- "die / died / dies" ×8 — vv16, 21, 25, 26, 32, 44, 50, 51; plus "death" ×2 (vv4, 13) and "dead" ×2 (vv14, 39).
- "Martha" ×8 — vv1, 5, 19, 20, 21, 24, 30, 39; "Mary" ×8 — vv1, 2, 19, 20, 28, 31, 32, 45.
- "the Jews" ×8 — vv8, 19, 31, 33, 36, 45, 54, 55.
- "Lord" ×8 — vv2, 3, 12, 21, 27, 32, 34, 39.
- "Lazarus" ×6 — vv1, 2, 5, 11, 14, 43.
- "rise / resurrection" ×4 — vv23, 24 (×2), 25.
- "sleep / asleep" ×4 — vv11 (×2), 12, 13.
- "weep / weeping / wept" ×4 — vv31, 33 (×2), 35.
- "nation" ×4 — vv48, 50, 51, 52.
- "love / loved" ×3 — vv3, 5, 36.
- "glory / glorified" ×3 — v4 (×2), v40.
- "if You had been here" ×2 — vv21, 32 (word for word, from both sisters); "four days" ×2 — vv17, 39; "deeply moved" ×2 — vv33, 38.

Contrasts: sickness "not to end in death" (v4) ⟷ "Lazarus is dead" (v14). Walking in the day ⟷ walking in the night (vv9–10). Literal sleep ⟷ the sleep of death (vv11–13). Resurrection "on the last day" ⟷ "I am the resurrection" (vv24–25). Mourners' loud weeping ⟷ Jesus' quiet tears (vv33, 35). The stench of four days ⟷ the glory of God (vv39–40). Many believed ⟷ some went to the Pharisees (vv45–46). Caiaphas's meaning ⟷ God's meaning (vv50–52). Lazarus given life ⟷ Jesus marked for death (vv44, 53).

Shape of the chapter: a message and a delay (1–16), a conversation on the road (17–27), tears at the tomb (28–37), a voice into the grave (38–44), and a council in the city (45–57). It moves from a sickbed to a death sentence — and the death sentence falls on the One who gave life.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and He proves it by calling a four-days-dead friend out of the tomb. But the gift of life to Lazarus starts the plot that will take Jesus' own life — one man dying for the people.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 11:40

"Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?""

FIGURE · THE SEVEN SIGNS

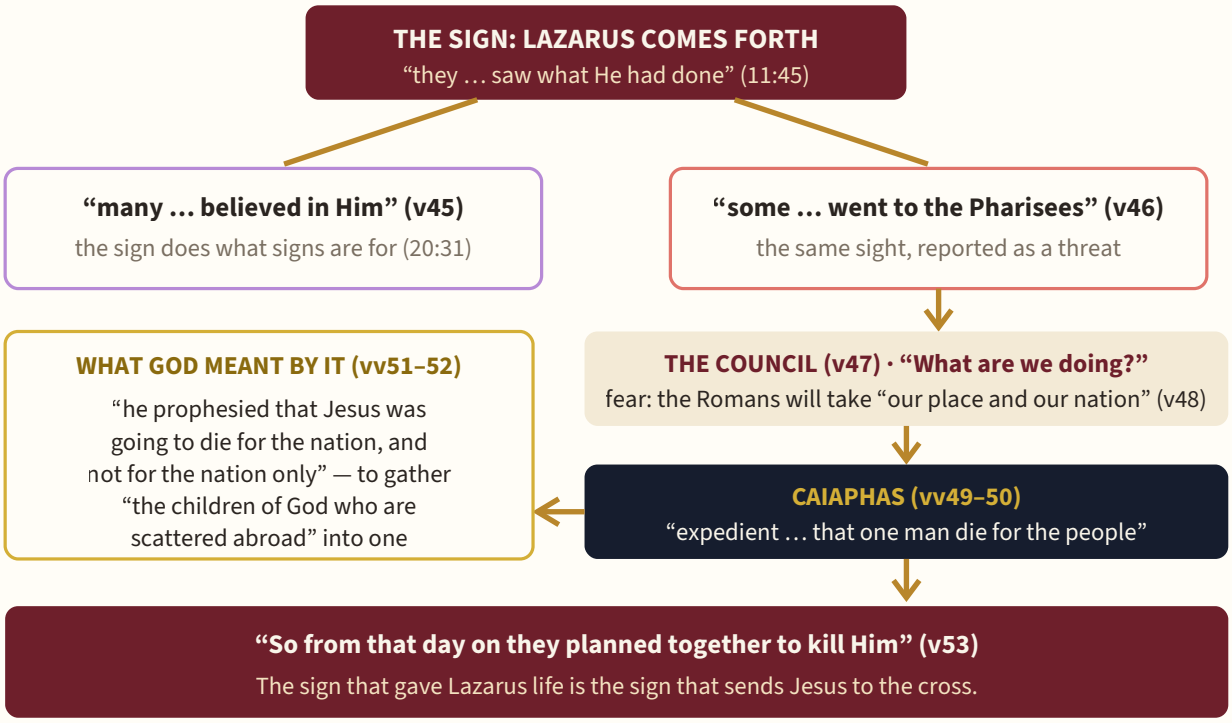
THE SEVEN SIGNS JOHN CHOSE · JOHN 20:30–31

#	JOHN	THE SIGN	WHAT IT SHOWS · THE "I AM" BESIDE IT
1	2:1–11	Water into wine at Cana	*"manifested His glory" (2:11)*
2	4:46–54	The royal official's son	*healed from a distance*
3	5:1–9	The lame man at Bethesda	*ill thirty-eight years*
4	6:1–14	Five thousand fed	*"I am the bread of life" (6:35)*
5	6:16–21	Walking on the sea	*"It is I" (6:20)*
6	9:1–7	The man born blind	*"I am the Light of the world" (9:5)*
7	11:1–44	Lazarus raised	*"I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25)*

"These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31).

John records seven signs; the seventh is the greatest, and three of them stand beside an "I am" saying that tells what the sign means.

FIGURE · ONE SIGN, TWO RESPONSES



Read down the right side to see how unbelief turns a resurrection into a death sentence — and across to the left to see what God meant by it.

Why did Jesus wait (v6)? John puts love and delay side by side on purpose: "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. *So* when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer." Sproul says the delay made the death undeniable — by the fourth day no one could call it a revival: "Jesus lets enough time pass to make it absolutely certain." Spurgeon says Jesus was "glad" (v15) because He values faith too much to spare us the trials that grow it: "Faith untried may be true faith, but it is sure to be little faith." Henry: "man's extremity is God's opportunity." None of them says the delay cost the sisters nothing; all of them say it was love.

What does "not to end in death" mean (v4)? Lazarus did die. Jesus did not mean he would not die; He meant death would not be the last word. The goal is "the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it" — Sproul: "the Father is glorified through the glory of His Son." In John, Jesus' glory and His cross are tied together, and verse 53 shows how: this sign leads straight to the plot.

Martha's theology and Jesus' correction (vv23–27). Martha is orthodox: she believes in the resurrection "on the last day" (Dan 12:2; John 5:28–29; 6:40). Jesus doesn't deny that day — I still look for it, when "God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus" (1 Thess 4:14). But He refuses to let it stay far away: "I am the resurrection and the life." Spurgeon: she "set the promise in the remote distance," and "'I am,' not 'I can get the Resurrection.'" Sproul: "I don't just teach the resurrection." Verse 25 answers the believer who dies (he will live); verse 26 answers the believer who lives (he will never die — Sproul's *thanatos* vs *zōē*).

Why was Jesus angry (vv33, 38)? *Embrimaomai* is the language of indignation; KJV "groaned." Guzik and Sproul both read it as anger at death itself — the enemy He would defeat at the cross — not at the mourners. Spurgeon hears a storm of indignation, grief and sorrow over unbelief that came out as tears; Henry adds that He groaned

more for the sins of men than for His own pain. Verse 33 says literally "He troubled Himself" (Henry: "very significantly") — His emotions were real and freely taken up.

Why weep if He knew He would raise him? Because compassion is not only for problems you can't fix. Sproul: He wept with them though He was about to perform the miracle. Spurgeon: "I like not lightning without rain, nor indignation without tears." Hebrews 4:15 — a high priest who sympathizes.

Resuscitation or resurrection? Guzik: "Lazarus was not resurrected, but resuscitated." Lazarus came out bound and would die again; Jesus rose and left the face-cloth "rolled up in a place by itself" (20:5–7). Bethany is a preview of 5:28 — "all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth."

Why the prayer out loud (vv41–42)? Not for the Father's sake — "I knew that You always hear Me" — but for the crowd, "so that they may believe that You sent Me." Henry: "prayer may preach." Sproul contrasts it with preachers who pretend to pray while talking to the congregation.

How could Caiaphas prophesy (vv49–52)? He was a schemer, not a saint. Guzik: "Caiaphas thought logically but not morally." Sproul: "God can speak even through a donkey." Henry: malicious in intent, prophetic in meaning — God overruled it. John says the death was "for the nation" (Israel) "and not for the nation only" but to gather the scattered children of God (10:16; 1 John 2:2). I read "the nation" plainly as Israel — Jesus died for His own people, who still have a future in God's plan (Rom 11:26) — and the Gentiles gathered in with them. The irony of verse 48: they killed Him to keep the Romans from taking their place and nation, and in A.D. 70 the Romans took both.

Word study (Greek):

- **love — *phileō* (G5368) / *agapaō* (G25):** the sisters' word (v3) and John's word (v5); both say the same thing — they were loved.
- **fallen asleep — *koimaō* (G2837):** sleep as the believer's word for death; perfect tense in v11.
- **resurrection — *anastasis* (G386):** a standing up again; "I am the resurrection" (v25).
- **life — *zōē* (G2222):** the life of God shared with men; "will never die" uses the strongest Greek negative (v26).
- **deeply moved — *embrimaomai* (G1690):** indignant, snorting; only five times in the NT, twice here (vv33, 38).
- **wept — *dakryō* (G1145):** to shed quiet tears; only here (v35). The mourners' *klaiō* (G2799) is loud wailing.
- **come forth — *deuro exō* (G1204):** "Here! Out!" — three words with a loud voice (v43).
- **wrappings — *keiria* (G2750):** grave bands; only here (v44).
- **expedient — *sympherō* (G4851):** advantageous; Caiaphas's calculation (v50; 18:14).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Love waited on purpose** — "So … He then stayed two days longer" (vv5–6).
2. **The fourth day closed every loophole** (Sproul).
3. **Sleep is a word for waking up** — *koimaō*; Henry: names that make death "less formidable."
4. **Jesus brings the last day into the present tense** — "I am the resurrection" (Spurgeon).
5. **He was angry before He wept** — indignation at death (vv33, 38).
6. **God weeps before He fixes** — "no lightning without rain" (Spurgeon).
7. **Believing God is harder than believing in God** (Sproul, v40).
8. **Christ raises; we unbind** — "economical with miracles" (Spurgeon, v44).
9. **The same sign, two verdicts** — believed or reported (vv45–46).

10. **A wicked man spoke a true word** — one man for the people (vv50–52).

Cross-references: Dan 12:2; Isa 25:8; Hos 13:14; Num 22:28; Luke 10:38–42; John 1:4; 5:28–29; 6:39–40; 9:4; 10:16, 31, 39–40; 12:1–11; 18:14; 20:5–7, 30–31; Rom 11:26; 12:15; 1 Cor 15:20–26, 55; 1 Thess 4:13–17; Heb 2:14–15; 4:15; 1 John 2:2; Rev 21:4.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 11:44

"The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go.""

Promise to trust — "I am the resurrection and the life." I have stood at gravesides with men who buried fathers they never made peace with, sons they lost to the needle, brothers from the program. Jesus didn't hand Martha a doctrine; He handed her Himself. If I belong to Him, death is sleep and the last day is as sure as the One standing on the road. I can grieve — He did — but I do not grieve "as do the rest who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13).

Example to follow — "Jesus wept." He knew He was about to fix it, and He still wept. Too often I rush to the fix — the verse, the advice, the plan. This week, when a man tells me about his loss, I will sit with him first. Being there matters more than the right words (Sproul).

Command to obey — "Remove the stone … Unbind him, and let him go." Only Jesus can raise a dead man. But He gave the people standing around two jobs: move the stone and loosen the grave-clothes. A lot of the men I walk with are alive in Christ and still wrapped up — old habits, shame, fear, the language of the yard or the bar. I can't raise anybody, but I can help unwrap. And I have to let Jesus roll away the stones in me that I would rather keep shut because of what's behind them (vv39–40).

Sin to confess — expedience. Caiaphas did the math: one man for the sake of the rest. I confess the times I've sacrificed the truth or a person to protect my place — told the easy lie, kept quiet to stay in good standing, thrown a brother under the bus. That logic crucified my Lord.

Truth to live in — love sometimes waits. When I prayed for my friend and the answer came "two days longer," it felt like neglect. John says it was love: verse 5 comes before verse 6. I can say "Lord, if You had been here" honestly — both sisters did — and still trust that He is never late.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Where has God's timing felt like neglect to me — a prayer for someone I love that seemed to go unanswered for "two days longer"? (11:5–6, 15; Rom 8:28) *Verse 5 comes before verse 6: love first, then the delay.*
2. Martha believed the right doctrine about the last day. Where do I keep Jesus' promises at a safe distance instead of letting Him say "I am" about my situation today? (11:23–27) *Spurgeon: she set the promise in the remote distance.*
3. Jesus wept with people He was about to help. Who around me is grieving, and what would it look like to be present before I try to fix anything? (11:33–35; Rom 12:15) *Sproul: being present matters more than finding the right words.*
4. What "stone" am I afraid to let Jesus remove because of what it might expose — the stench of something long dead? (11:39–40) *"Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"*

5. Lazarus came out alive but still bound. What grave-clothes am I still wearing — and which brother has Jesus told to help unbind me (or me to help unbind)? (11:44; Gal 6:1–2) *Christ raises; human hands unbind.*
6. Caiaphas chose what was expedient over what was right. Where am I tempted to sacrifice the truth, or a person, to keep my place? (11:47–53) *"It was expedient" is the logic that crucified the Lord.*

Worship. The Lord of life stood at a tomb and wept. He was angry at death, and then He spoke to it — and death gave Lazarus back. A week later He would walk into His own tomb so that death could never keep any of us. "O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?"

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You are the resurrection and the life. Thank You that You love me even when You make me wait, and that You weep with me at my graves. Roll away the stones I keep closed. Call me out of every dead place by name. Give me hands to unbind my brothers, and keep me from the cold math of Caiaphas. I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, the One who came into the world. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 12

The Hour Has Come — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The hour has come: the King rides in on a donkey and the grain of wheat goes into the ground to bear much fruit. I can pour out my life on Him like Mary, or hold it back like the rulers who loved men's approval.

00 The Text

JOHN 12 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said,

5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?"

6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.

7 Therefore Jesus said, "Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial.

8 "For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me."

9 The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also;

11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.

12 On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."

14 Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written,

15 "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT."

16 These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

17 So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him.

18 For this reason also the people went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.

19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him."

20 Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast;

21 these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

22 Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

25 "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.

26 "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

27 "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

29 So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him."

30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.

31 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

33 But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.

34 The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

35 So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

36 "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.

37 But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"

39 For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,

40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM."

41 These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

42 Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;

43 for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

44 And Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.

45 "He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.

46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

47 "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for

△ I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings,
has one who judges him; ⚠ the word I spoke is what will
judge him at the last day.

49 “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the
Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a
commandment as to what to say and what to speak.

50 “I know that ☆ His commandment is eternal life;
therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father
has told Me.”

Marked in the text

- **v1** “six days before the Passover” — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** “a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard” — Command / instruction
- **v3** “the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume” — Promise / blessing
- **v6** “he was a thief” — Sin / warning
- **v7** “keep it for the day of My burial” — Time / place / contrast
- **v8** “you do not always have Me” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “planned to put Lazarus to death also” — Sin / warning
- **v13** “BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “the King of Israel” — God — His character & actions
- **v15** “BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered” — Time / place / contrast
- **v19** “the world has gone after Him” — Time / place / contrast
- **v21** “Sir, we wish to see Jesus” — Command / instruction
- **v23** “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” — Time / place / contrast
- **v24** “unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies” — God — His character & actions
- **v24** “it bears much fruit” — Promise / blessing
- **v25** “he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal” — Command / instruction
- **v26** “he must follow Me” — Command / instruction
- **v26** “the Father will honor him” — Promise / blessing
- **v27** “for this purpose I came to this hour” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “Father, glorify Your name” — God — His character & actions
- **v31** “the ruler of this world will be cast out” — God — His character & actions
- **v32** “will draw all men to Myself” — Promise / blessing
- **v35** “Walk while you have the Light” — Command / instruction
- **v36** “believe in the Light” — Command / instruction
- **v37** “they were not believing in Him” — Sin / warning
- **v40** “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART” — Sin / warning
- **v41** “he saw His glory” — God — His character & actions
- **v43** “they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God” — Sin / warning
- **v46** “I have come as Light into the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v47** “I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v48** “the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” — Sin / warning
- **v50** “His commandment is eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v35** “Light” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v35** “darkness” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v23** “hour” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

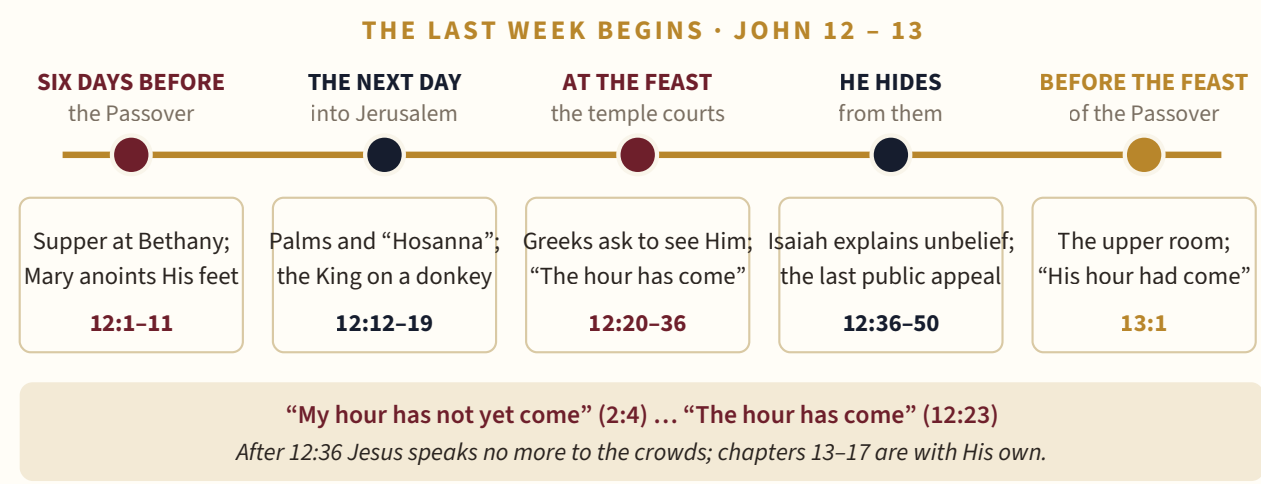
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 12:23

"And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.""

FIGURE · THE LAST WEEK BEGINS



Follow the days from Bethany to the upper room: chapter 12 is the turn from Jesus' public ministry to His hour.

Setting. Six days before the Passover, after the council's death sentence (11:53) and the retreat to Ephraim (11:54). Jesus comes back to Bethany, then into Jerusalem, crowded with festival pilgrims. This is the last chapter of His public ministry in John; from 13:1 He is alone with His disciples.

Structure:

- vv1–11 — **the supper at Bethany:** Martha serving, Lazarus at the table (v2); Mary's pound of pure nard on His feet, wiped with her hair, "the house was filled with the fragrance" (v3); Judas's objection — three hundred denarii — and John's verdict, "he was a thief" (vv4–6); "Let her alone … for the day of My burial" (vv7–8). The crowd comes to see Lazarus; the chief priests plan to kill him too (vv9–11).
- vv12–19 — **the entry:** palm branches and "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel" (vv12–13); a young donkey, Zechariah 9:9 (vv14–15); understood only after He was glorified (v16); the Lazarus witnesses testify (vv17–18); "the world has gone after Him" (v19).
- vv20–26 — **the Greeks and the grain:** "Sir, we wish to see Jesus" (v21); "The hour has come" (v23); the grain of wheat (v24); loving and hating one's life (v25); serving and following (v26).
- vv27–36 — **the troubled soul:** "Now My soul has become troubled" (v27); "Father, glorify Your name" — the voice from heaven, heard as thunder (vv28–30); judgment, the ruler cast out, "lifted up … draw all men" (vv31–33); the crowd's question about the Son of Man (v34); walk in the Light while you have it (vv35–36); He hides Himself.

- vv37–43 — **John's verdict on unbelief:** so many signs, yet not believing (v37); Isaiah 53:1 (v38) and 6:10 (vv39–40); "Isaiah … saw His glory" (v41); rulers who believed but would not confess, loving men's approval (vv42–43).
- vv44–50 — **the last public cry:** believing and seeing Him is believing and seeing the Father (vv44–45); "I have come as Light" (v46); not to judge but to save; the word will judge at the last day (vv47–48); He speaks the Father's commandment, which is eternal life (vv49–50).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "believe / believed / believes / believing" ×9 — vv11, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 44 (×2), 46.
- "die / dies / death / dead" ×8 — vv1, 9, 10, 17, 24 (×2), 33 (×2).
- "world" ×7 — vv19, 25, 31 (×2), 46, 47 (×2).
- "Light" ×6 — vv35 (×2), 36 (×3), 46; "darkness" ×3 — vv35 (×2), 46.
- "glory / glorify / glorified" ×6 — vv16, 23, 28 (×3), 41.
- "Father" ×5 — vv26, 27, 28, 49, 50.
- "judge / judges / judgment" ×5 — vv31, 47 (×2), 48 (×2).
- "Lazarus" ×5 — vv1, 2, 9, 10, 17.
- "life" ×4 — vv25 (×3), 50.
- "hour" ×3 — vv23, 27 (×2); "Son of Man" ×3 — vv23, 34 (×2).
- "serves / servant" ×3 — v26; "sent" ×3 — vv44, 45, 49; "Isaiah" ×3 — vv38, 39, 41; "poor" ×3 — vv5, 6, 8.
- "approval" ×2 — v43; "King" ×2 — vv13, 15; "lifted up" ×2 — vv32, 34; "commandment" ×2 — vv49, 50.

Contrasts: Mary's extravagance ⟷ Judas's calculation (vv3–6). The poor always with you ⟷ "you do not always have Me" (v8). Palms of a conqueror ⟷ a donkey's colt (vv13–15). A grain that remains alone ⟷ a grain that dies and bears much fruit (v24). Loving one's life ⟷ hating one's life (v25). "Save Me from this hour" ⟷ "for this purpose I came to this hour" (v27). Thunder ⟷ a voice from heaven (vv28–29). Light ⟷ darkness (vv35–36, 46). The approval of men ⟷ the approval of God (v43). Not to judge ⟷ to save (v47).

Shape of the chapter: a supper (1–11), a procession (12–19), a request (20–26), a prayer and a voice (27–36), a verdict on unbelief (37–43), and a final cry (44–50). It moves from a house filled with fragrance to a world left in darkness — and the hinge is "The hour has come."

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is the King who comes humble and the grain of wheat that must die. His hour of death is His hour of glory, and the only right response is the one Mary gave — pour it all out — not the silence of the rulers who loved men's approval.

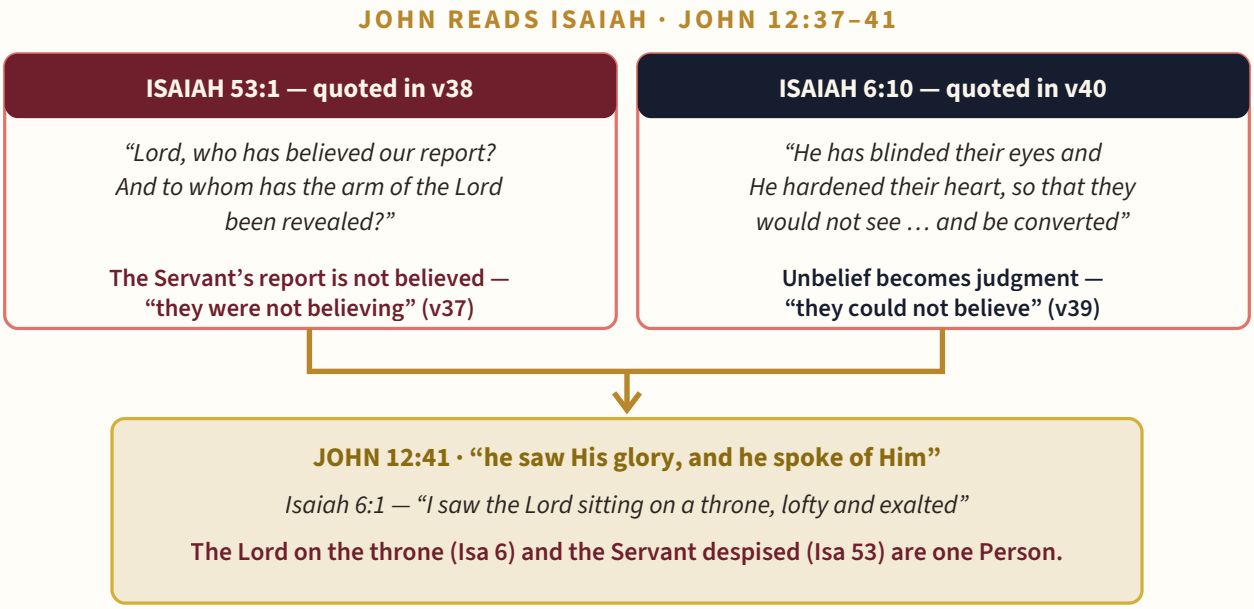
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 12:32

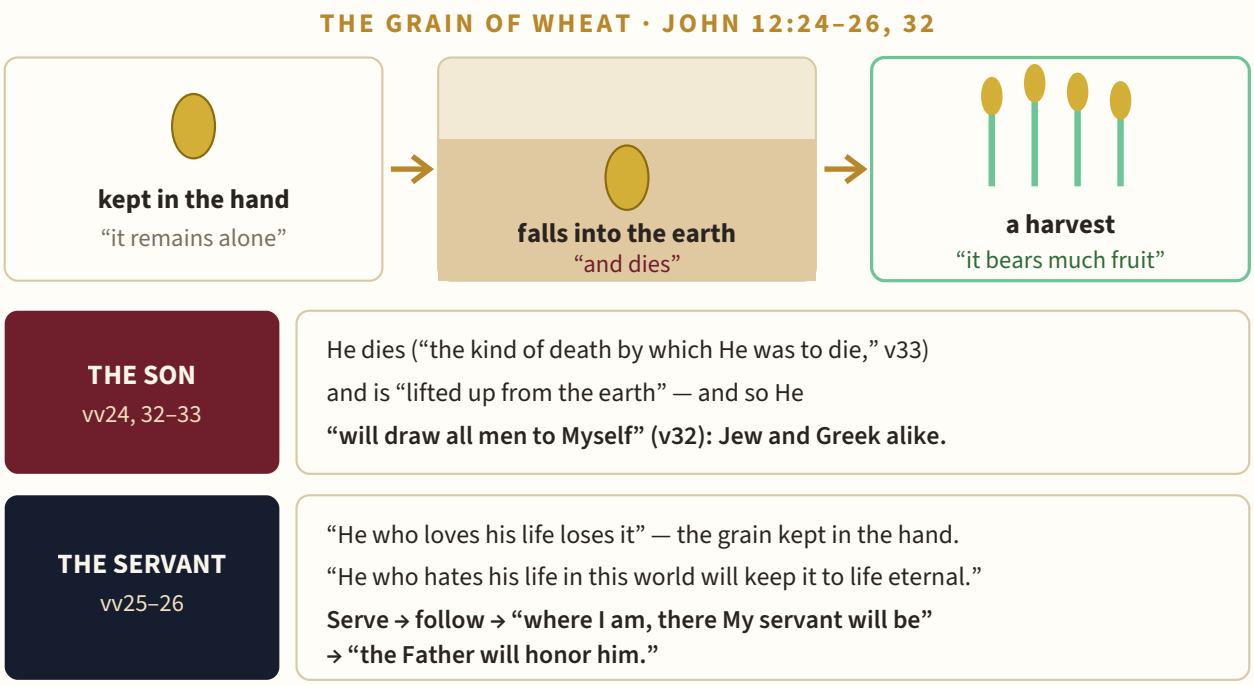
"And I, if I am △lifted up from the earth, ☆will draw all men to Myself."

FIGURE · ISAIAH SAW HIS GLORY



John joins two passages of Isaiah to explain unbelief — and then says both were about the One whose glory Isaiah saw on the throne.

FIGURE · THE GRAIN OF WHEAT



Read the top row as the parable, then the two rows below as its two applications: the Son who dies and draws, and the servant who loses his life to keep it.

Why did Mary anoint His feet (vv3, 7)? A pound of pure nard was worth three hundred denarii — about a year's wages. Jesus interprets it: she kept it "for the day of My burial." Sproul sets her beside Caiaphas in one sermon, "Expediency & Extravagance": the council calculated, Mary worshiped — "a reckless manifestation of extravagant love and worship." Guzik: "Judas successfully hid the darkness of his heart from everyone except Jesus." Henry: "Christ would not have those censured nor discouraged who sincerely design to please him." Mark 14:9 adds that her act will be told wherever the gospel is preached.

Does "the poor you always have" excuse neglecting them (v8)? No. Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 15:11, which goes on to command open-handed giving. His point is timing: the poor would always be there to help; He would not. Judas's "concern" was a cover (v6).

What kind of King (vv12–16)? The palms said national victory (Sproul: "The palm branch became their national symbol of victory"); "Hosanna" means "save now." Guzik: "The crowd looked to Jesus as a political and national savior, but not so much as a spiritual savior." Jesus answers with Zechariah 9:9 — humble, on a donkey. I believe the crowd's words were true even if their timing was off: He is "the King of Israel" (v13), and the same Zechariah who saw Him on a donkey saw Him standing on the Mount of Olives as King over all the earth (Zech 14:4, 9). The first coming was on a colt; the second will be in glory.

Why do the Greeks matter (vv20–23)? Gentiles who could go no farther than the outer court (Sproul) ask to see Jesus — and that is His signal: "The hour has come." Henry sees them as firstfruits of the Gentiles. The answer to "we wish to see Jesus" is the cross: "if I am lifted up from the earth, [I] will draw all men to Myself" (v32).

The grain of wheat (vv24–26). First about Jesus: His death bears the harvest. Sproul presses it — "It is not possible, not even theoretically possible, that the atonement of Christ could go without fruit" (a Reformed reading; others

frame the atonement more broadly). Then about us: the self-protected life "remains alone." Spurgeon: "Death precedes growth." Guzik, quoting Spurgeon: "We are not saved by service, but we are saved to service."

John's Gethsemane (vv27–28). *Tetaraktai* — "My soul has become troubled." Jesus faces the cup days before the garden. Guzik: "Jesus received this crucial hour, yet it troubled Him." Sproul: "Jesus expresses the horror that grabs His soul." He considers asking to be saved from the hour and instead prays, "Father, glorify Your name." Being troubled is not sin; refusing the Father's will would be.

Who is drawn, and who is cast out (vv31–32)? The cross is the judgment of this world and the defeat of its ruler (Heb 2:14; Col 2:15). "Draw" (*helkō*) is strong — the Father's drawing of 6:44. Teachers differ on "all men": all kinds of people (Jews and the Greeks who asked), or all people without exception, drawn but not all coming. Spurgeon preached it as the heart of preaching: "He was never so lifted up as when he was cast down." Henry: to some a stumbling-stone, to others "a loadstone."

"They could not believe" (vv37–40). This is the hardest part of the chapter. They kept on not believing (v37); then they could not (v39). Sproul: "If people do not want to hear, God stops their ears." Guzik, with Morris: the blinding does not take place "without the will or against the will of these people." Henry: a settled moral refusal met by God's just judgment. I hold this beside Romans 11: the hardening of Israel is partial and temporary, "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:25–26). God is not finished with the nation.

"Isaiah … saw His glory" (v41). Isaiah 6 — "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne." John says that was Jesus. Sproul: "Isaiah saw Christ on the throne in His glory before Christ was even born." The Lord on the throne and the Servant despised in Isaiah 53 are one Person (see the figure).

Secret believers (vv42–43). Barclay (in Guzik): "Secret discipleship is a contradiction in terms." Trench (in Guzik): "Is there no smoking flax?" Henry holds both: love of praise is "a very great prejudice" to godliness, yet "Some are really better than they seem to be." Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea (19:38–39) show that secret believers can come into the open.

The last appeal (vv44–50). Guzik: "These are the last words in John's gospel from Jesus to the public," and (Morris) "His last word is not one of condemnation. It is one of tender appeal." He came to save, not to judge; but the word rejected becomes the judge at the last day.

Word study (Greek):

- **pure nard — *nardos pistikē* (G3487, G4101):** genuine spikenard, nothing added; only here and Mark 14:3.
- **money box — *glōssokomon* (G1101):** Judas's box; only 12:6; 13:29.
- **Hosanna — *hōsanna* (G5614):** "Save, we pray!" from Ps 118:25; only at the entry.
- **palm branches — *baia* (G902):** only here.
- **young donkey — *onarion* (G3678):** a little donkey; only here.
- **grain — *kokkos* (G2848):** a single seed; "remains alone" or "bears much fruit."
- **loves / hates — *phileō* (G5368) / *miseō* (G3404):** clutching the self-life vs. loving it less than Christ.
- **troubled — *tarassō* (G5015):** stirred, agitated; perfect tense in v27; compare 14:1.
- **lifted up — *hypsoō* (G5312):** in John always the cross, always exaltation (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34).
- **draw — *helkō* (G1670):** to haul, drag; 6:44; 12:32.
- **cast out — *ekballō* (G1544):** the ruler of this world thrown out (v31).

- **blinded — *typhloō* (G5186) / hardened — *pōroō* (G4456):** judicial blinding and callousing (v40).
- **put out of the synagogue — *aposynagōgos* (G656):** John only (9:22; 12:42; 16:2).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Love is extravagant; calculation is Judas's language** (Sproul).
2. **Pure nard, nothing cut into it** — genuine worship.
3. **Hosanna means "Save us now"** — they meant Rome.
4. **The palms and the donkey argue with each other** — "The ass speaks of peace."
5. **"The hour has come"** — after "not yet" all through John.
6. **A seed kept is a seed lost** — "Death precedes growth" (Spurgeon).
7. **Troubled and obedient at once** — John's Gethsemane.
8. **Lifted up means both cross and throne.**
9. **Isaiah saw Jesus** (v41).
10. **Glory from men or glory from God** (v43).

Cross-references: Num 21:8–9; Deut 15:11; Ps 118:25–26; Isa 6:1–10; 53:1; Zech 9:9; 14:4, 9; Matt 20:2; 26:6–15; Mark 8:36; 14:3–9, 32–36; Luke 14:26; John 2:4; 3:14; 6:44; 7:30; 8:12, 20, 28; 13:1; 17:1; 19:38–39; Rom 11:7, 25–26; 1 Cor 15:36; 2 Cor 4:4; Phil 2:8–9; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 12:26

"If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

Example to follow — Mary's pound of nard. Mary didn't calculate. A year's wages, poured on His feet, wiped with her hair, and the whole house smelled like it. I've spent a lot of my life doing the math Judas did — what's it worth, what do I get back. This week I want to "waste" something on Jesus: an hour in worship I would have spent on myself, a gift I can feel, an act of service nobody will thank me for.

Command to obey — "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me." Following Jesus in John 12 means following Him toward a cross. The grain kept in the hand stays safe — and alone. Some of the men I walk with have survived by holding everything tight: trust no one, need nobody. Jesus says that life stays alone. Letting go — of control, of image, of the old self — is how fruit comes. I will name one thing I'm holding in my fist and open my hand.

Sin to confess — loving the approval of men. The rulers believed and said nothing because they were afraid of losing their seat. I confess the rooms where I go quiet about Jesus — the job site, the family table, the guys from the old life. And I confess that I sometimes measure myself by who claps for me. The *doxa* of men or the *doxa* of God — I can't live for both.

Promise to trust — "I will draw all men to Myself." Jesus didn't say He might. The cross is the magnet. When I pray for a man who seems too hard, too far gone, too long in the dark, I remember that the lifted-up Christ draws, and the ruler of this world has been cast out.

Truth to live in — troubled is not the same as disobedient. Jesus said, "Now My soul has become troubled," and then, "Father, glorify Your name." I don't have to fake calm to be faithful. I can bring a troubled soul to the Father and still say yes.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What would it look like for me to "waste" something costly on Jesus this week — time, money, pride — without calculating the return? (12:3–8; Mark 14:9) *Mary poured out about a year's wages; Judas priced it.*
2. Like the crowd, what "private agenda" have I brought to Jesus — and how have I been disappointed when He came on a donkey instead of a warhorse? (12:12–16; Zech 9:9) *Sproul: the King God appointed, not the king we conjure up.*
3. What part of my life am I keeping "in the hand" so it stays safe — and alone? What would it mean to let it fall into the ground? (12:24–25) *A seed kept is a seed lost; death precedes growth.*
4. Jesus said, "Now My soul has become troubled," and still obeyed. Where is my soul troubled right now, and what would "Father, glorify Your name" sound like in that place? (12:27–28; 14:1) *Troubled and obedient at once.*
5. Whose approval am I most afraid to lose if I openly confess Christ — at work, at home, on the yard, with old friends? (12:42–43; Matt 10:32) *They loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.*

6. Jesus' last public words were an appeal, not a threat. Who do I know who is walking in darkness, and how can I point him to the Light while there is time? (12:35–36, 46–47) *"Walk while you have the Light."*

Worship. Isaiah saw Him high and lifted up on the throne. John saw Him lifted up on a cross. Same glory, same Lord. The King of Israel rode in on a borrowed colt, went into the ground like a grain of wheat, and is bearing a harvest from every nation — Greeks, Jews, and men like me.

Prayer. Father, glorify Your name in me. Lord Jesus, You came as Light into the world so that I would not remain in darkness. Make my worship like Mary's — pure, costly, and unashamed. Break my love for the approval of men. Teach me to let my life fall into the ground so it can bear fruit, and to follow You where You lead, even when my soul is troubled. Draw the men I love to Yourself. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 13

Loved to the End — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus loved His own to the end — enough to kneel at their feet, to wash a betrayer, and to warn a boaster. He tells me to receive His washing and then to love my brothers the same way He loved me.

00 The Text

JOHN 13 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

2 During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,

3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God,

4 got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.

5 Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

6 So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?"

7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter."

8 Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."

10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

11 For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."

12 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?

13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.

14 "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.

16 "Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

17 "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

18 "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'HE WHO EATS MY BREAD ⚠ HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME.'

19 "From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, △ you may believe that I am He.

20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

21 When Jesus had said this, △ He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that ⚠ one of you will betray Me."

22 The disciples began looking at ⟳ one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking.

23 There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 So Simon Peter gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking."

25 He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

26 Jesus then answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

27 After the morsel, ⚠ Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

28 Now no one of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose He had said this to him.

29 For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor.

30 So after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; ◷ and it was night.

31 Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus said, "△ Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is ⟳ glorified in Him;

32 if God is ⟳ glorified in Him, God will also ⟳ glorify Him in Himself, and will ⟳ glorify Him immediately.

33 "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

34 "▤ A new commandment I give to you, that you love ⟳ one another, even △ as I have loved you, that you also love ⟳ one another.

35 "☆ By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for ⟳ one another."

36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later."

37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You right now? ⚠ I will lay down my life for You."

38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, ⚠ a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "His hour had come" — Time / place / contrast
- **v1** "He loved them to the end" — God — His character & actions
- **v2** "the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot" — Sin / warning
- **v3** "the Father had given all things into His hands" — God — His character & actions
- **v4** "taking a towel, He girded Himself" — God — His character & actions
- **v7** "you will understand hereafter" — Promise / blessing
- **v8** "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" — Sin / warning
- **v10** "is completely clean" — Promise / blessing
- **v14** "you also ought to wash one another's feet" — Command / instruction
- **v15** "I gave you an example" — Command / instruction
- **v17** "you are blessed if you do them" — Promise / blessing
- **v18** "HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME" — Sin / warning
- **v19** "you may believe that I am He" — God — His character & actions
- **v21** "He became troubled in spirit" — God — His character & actions
- **v21** "one of you will betray Me" — Sin / warning
- **v27** "Satan then entered into him" — Sin / warning
- **v30** "and it was night" — Time / place / contrast

- **v31** “Now is the Son of Man glorified” — God — His character & actions
- **v34** “A new commandment I give to you” — Command / instruction
- **v34** “as I have loved you” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “By this all men will know that you are My disciples” — Promise / blessing
- **v37** “I will lay down my life for You” — Sin / warning
- **v38** “a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times” — Sin / warning
- **v5** “feet” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v5** “wash” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v12** “washed” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v14** “one another” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v31** “glorified” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v32** “glorify” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

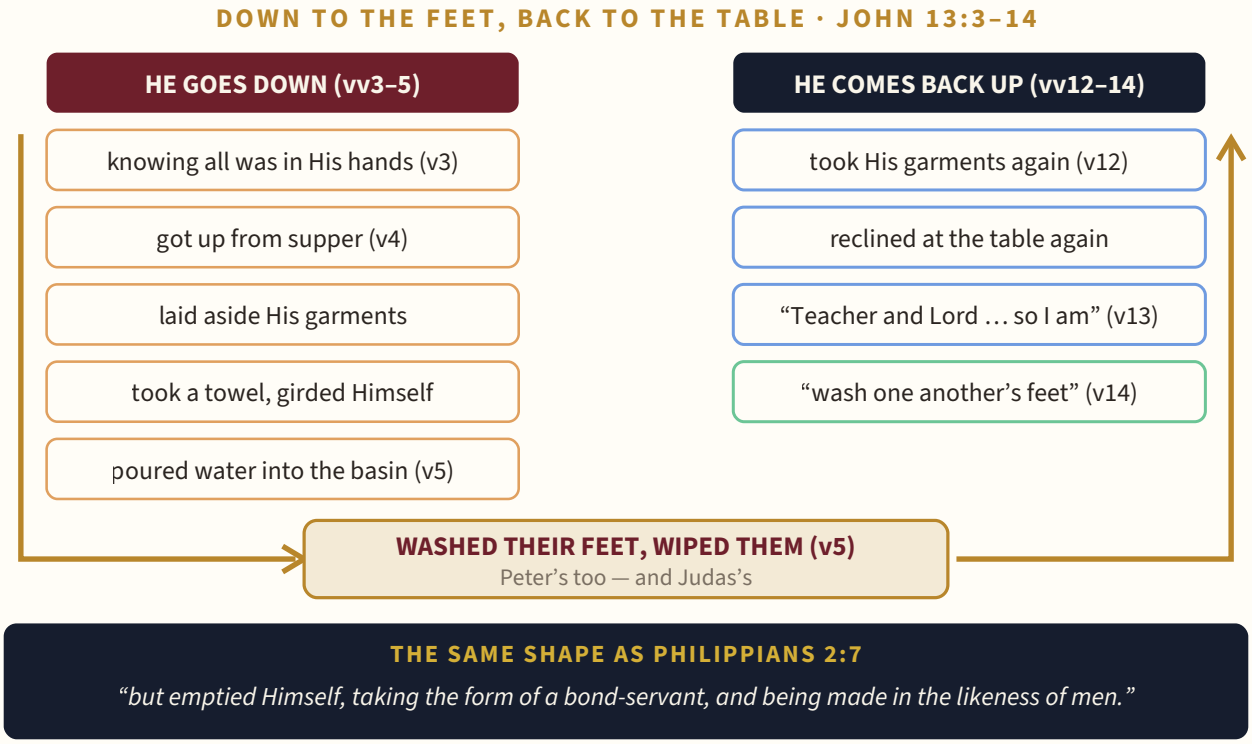
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 13:1

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that ◷ His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, △ He loved them to the end."

FIGURE · DOWN TO THE FEET, BACK TO THE TABLE



Read down the left and up the right: the One who knew all things were in His hands went all the way down to His disciples' feet, then rose, reclined again, and told them to do the same.

Setting. The last evening before the cross, "before the Feast of the Passover" (v1), at supper in a room in Jerusalem. Jesus' "hour" has come (v1; compare 2:4; 12:23). The Twelve recline around a low table; Judas is among them, and the devil has already put the betrayal into his heart (v2). This is the first night of the Upper Room Discourse (chapters 13–17).

Structure:

- vv1–11 — **the towel:** knowing His hour had come and that all things were in His hands, Jesus gets up, lays aside His garments, girds Himself with a towel, pours water and washes the disciples' feet. Peter refuses — "Never

shall You wash my feet!" — then asks for a full bath. "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet … you are clean, but not all of you" (v10).

- vv12–20 — **the example:** "Do you know what I have done to you?" Teacher and Lord washed their feet; they ought to wash one another's. A slave is not greater than his master; blessed if you do them (v17). Not all are chosen — Psalm 41:9 must be fulfilled. He tells them beforehand "so that … you may believe that I am He" (v19).
- vv21–30 — **the night:** troubled in spirit, Jesus says one of them will betray Him. Peter signals the disciple reclining on Jesus' bosom to ask; Jesus gives the morsel to Judas; Satan enters him; "What you do, do quickly." No one understands. Judas goes out — "and it was night" (v30).
- vv31–38 — **the commandment:** "Now is the Son of Man glorified" (vv31–32). "Little children … where I am going, you cannot come" (v33). A new commandment: love one another, even as I have loved you; by this all men will know (vv34–35). Peter: "I will lay down my life for You." Jesus: a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times (vv36–38).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "wash / washed" ×9 — wash vv5, 6, 8 (×2), 9, 10, 14; washed vv12, 14.
- "feet" ×8 — vv5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14 (×2).
- "know / knew / knowing" ×9 — knowing vv1, 3; knew vv11, 28; know vv12, 17, 18, 22, 35.
- "Lord" ×7 — vv6, 9, 13, 14, 25, 36, 37.
- "love / loved" ×7 — loved v1 (×2), 23, 34; love v34 (×2), 35.
- "Simon / Peter" — Peter ×6 (vv6, 8, 9, 24, 36, 37); "Simon" ×6, four of them Peter and two Judas's father (vv2, 26).
- "one another" ×5 — vv14, 22, 34 (×2), 35.
- "glorified / glorify" ×5 — glorified v31 (×2), 32; glorify v32 (×2).
- "God" ×5 — vv3 (×2), 31, 32 (×2).
- "morsel" ×4 — vv26 (×2), 27, 30.
- "Truly, truly, I say to you" ×4 — vv16, 20, 21, 38.
- "send / sent" ×4 — sent v16 (×2), 20; send v20.
- "betray / betraying" ×3 — vv2, 11, 21; "clean" ×3 — vv10 (×2), 11; "follow" ×3 — vv36 (×2), 37.

Contrasts: the Father had given all things into His hands (v3) ⟷ He took a towel (v4). "Never shall You wash my feet!" ⟷ "not only my feet, but also my hands and my head" (vv8–9). Clean ⟷ not all clean (vv10–11). Knowing ⟷ doing (v17). The disciple on Jesus' bosom (v23) ⟷ the disciple who goes out (v30). Night (v30) ⟷ glory (v31). "I will lay down my life for You" ⟷ "Will you lay down your life for Me?" (vv37–38).

Shape of the chapter: a basin (1–11), a lesson (12–20), a morsel (21–30), a commandment and a warning (31–38). It opens with Jesus' love for His own and closes with one of His own about to deny Him — and the love does not change.

Chapter theme (my words): The Lord who holds all things kneels to wash His disciples' feet, betrayer and denier included, and then commands them to love one another the way He has loved them. Love is the mark of the disciple; self-confidence is not.

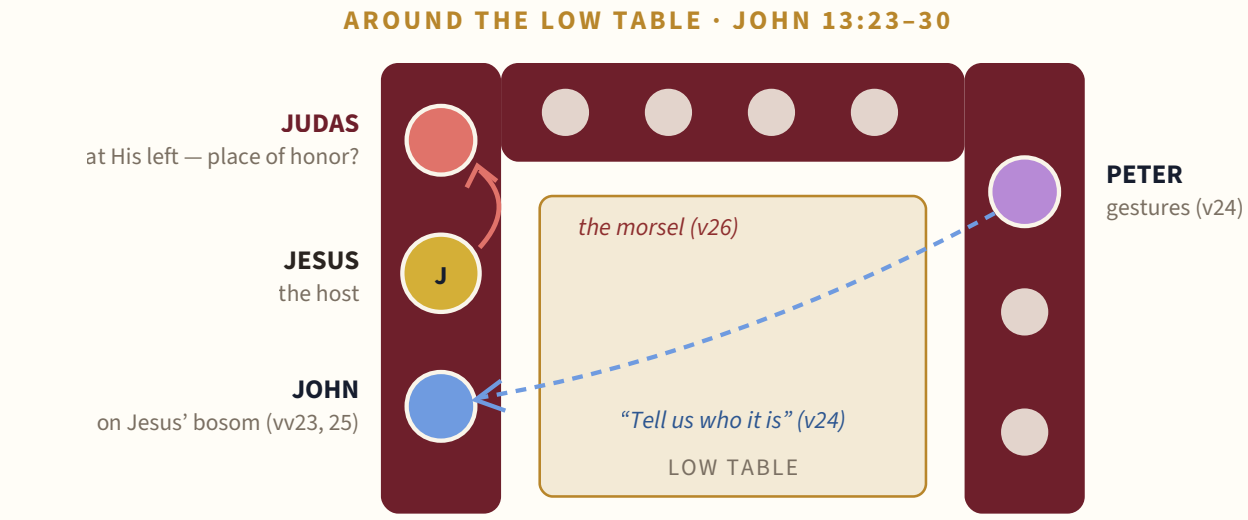
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 13:8

"Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "⚠ If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.""

FIGURE · WHO RECLINED WHERE



The text fixes only John's place: reclining in front of Jesus, he could lean back on His chest (vv23, 25). Judas at Jesus' left is a reconstruction (Sproul; Morris, cited by Guzik) — it explains how the morsel could pass quietly, and why no one at the table understood (v28).

A schematic of the reclining supper: John's place is in the text; Judas's place beside Jesus is a common reconstruction that makes sense of the quiet handing of the morsel.

FIGURE · TWO FAILURES, TWO ENDINGS

JOHN 13	JUDAS ISCARIOT	SIMON PETER
WARNED	“one of you will betray Me” (v21)	“you deny Me three times” (v38)
HIS HEART	the devil put it in his heart; Satan entered (vv2, 27)	“I will lay down my life for You” (v37)
WHAT HE DID	took the morsel and went out immediately (v30)	denied Him three times (18:17, 25, 27)
JESUS’ WORD	“What you do, do quickly” (v27)	“I have prayed for you” (Luke 22:32)
WHERE IT LED	“and it was night” (v30)	turned again and restored — “Tend My sheep” (21:17)

Sproul: “It is not just Judas, but Simon as well.” Both fell that night; only one came back.

Read across each row: Judas and Peter were both warned and both fell, but one went out into the night and the other was prayed for and restored.

Is this the Passover meal? John says “before the Feast of the Passover” (v1) and later has the priests not yet eating the Passover on Friday morning (18:28; 19:14); the other Gospels call the Last Supper a Passover meal. Guzik treats the timing as an open question. I won’t build anything on it; the point John makes is the “hour.”

Why did Jesus wash their feet? Two meanings, and the chapter gives both. First, a cleansing only He can give (vv6–10): “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” Second, an example we must follow (vv12–17): “you also ought to wash one another’s feet.” Morris (in Guzik) calls it “a parable in action.” Henry: “no miracle, unless we call it a miracle of humility.” Sproul: “Only a gentile slave could be required to do such a menial task.”

Bathed and washed (v10). *Louō* is the whole bath; *niptō* is the feet. Spurgeon separates the once-for-all cleansing by Christ’s blood from the daily washing a child of God needs after walking through the world. Sproul: “One touch of the cleansing power of Christ cleanses us from all sin.” Justification is not repeated; confession and cleansing go on (1 John 1:9).

Is foot washing an ordinance? Some churches practice it, and I respect that. Sproul: “Jesus is not instituting a sacrament to be repeated on a regular basis among the people of God,” and Guzik cites Calvin against turning it into ceremony while neglecting its meaning. All four agree on the main thing: humble, costly service of one another is commanded.

“His own” (v1). Sproul reads it as particular redemption — “an atonement not for the whole world, but for His own.” Many evangelicals read John’s “world” texts (3:16; 1 John 2:2) more broadly. Both agree that Jesus loves His own to the end, and that Judas, though he sat at the table, was not clean (vv10–11).

Was Judas ever a believer? Jesus says "not all of you are clean" (v10), "I know the ones I have chosen" (v18), and in 6:64, 70 that He knew from the beginning who would betray Him. Guzik: "Judas had the best example and the greatest Teacher, and was still lost." Spurgeon: the others never suspected him. Judas was near Jesus, never His.

Who is responsible — Satan or Judas? Both, and God is not surprised. The devil "put into the heart" (v2), Satan "entered into him" (v27), and Scripture had foretold it (v18). Bruce (in Guzik) says Satan entered only because Judas let him; Henry: "Christ needed not to expel him, he expelled himself." God's plan never excuses a man's sin.

"I am He" (v19). In Greek simply *egō eimi*. Sproul hears the divine name, as in 8:58 and 18:5–6. Jesus predicts the betrayal so that when it happens their faith in who He is will grow, not collapse.

What is "new" in the new commandment? — the teachers differ. Sproul: "There is nothing new about that commandment" — the newness is "the context of the betrayal." Spurgeon: new in extent ("as I have loved you," not "as yourself"), motive and nature. Henry: renewed after neglect, and "so strangely new as to be always so." Guzik/Tenney: *kainos*, fresh in quality. I land here: the command is old; the standard — the cross — is new.

Peter and Judas. Both are warned, both fail. Guzik: "Peter's denial was terrible, but it wasn't the same as what Judas did." Sproul: "It is not just Judas, but Simon as well." The difference is not the size of the sin but where each man went with it.

Word study (Greek):

- **to the end — *telos* (G5056):** the end, goal, completion; compare *tetelestai*, "It is finished" (19:30).
- **towel — *lention* (G3012):** a servant's linen cloth; only vv4–5.
- **bathed — *louō* (G3068):** to bathe the whole body; perfect tense in v10.
- **wash — *niptō* (G3538):** to wash a part — hands, face, feet.
- **part — *meros* (G3313):** a share, portion; no washing, no share in Him.
- **example — *hypodeigma* (G5262):** a pattern to copy (or a warning); six NT uses.
- **heel — *pterna* (G4418):** only here; lifting the heel against a friend (Ps 41:9).
- **I am — *egō eimi* (G1510):** "I am He" (v19); the divine name echoed (Exod 3:14).
- **troubled — *tarassō* (G5015):** stirred up; of Jesus (11:33; 12:27; 13:21), then "do not let your heart be troubled" (14:1, 27).
- **bosom — *kolpos* (G2859):** John on Jesus' bosom (v23), as the Son in the bosom of the Father (1:18).
- **morsel — *psōmion* (G5596):** a mouthful of bread; all four NT uses in this scene.
- **glorify — *doxazō* (G1392):** five times in vv31–32.
- **little children — *teknion* (G5040):** only here in the Gospels; seven times in 1 John.
- **new — *kainos* (G2537):** new in kind and quality, not merely in time (*neos*).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **He knew everything — and took a towel** (vv3–4). Security in the Father frees a man to serve.
2. **Bathed once, washed daily** — *louō* and *niptō* (v10).
3. **Pride can look like humility** — Peter's refusal; a part with Jesus begins with receiving (Guzik).
4. **Blessed is in the doing** (v17).
5. **Jesus washed the feet of the man who would betray Him.**
6. **Closeness to Jesus is not the same as faith in Jesus** — Judas.

7. **"And it was night"** (v30) — Judas expelled himself (Henry).
8. **The cross is the glory** — *doxazō* five times in vv31–32.
9. **New in kind, not just in time** — *kainos*; the measure is "as I have loved you."
10. **Two failures, two endings** — Judas went out; Peter was prayed for and restored.

Cross-references: Exod 3:14; Lev 19:18; Ps 41:9; Isa 53:12; Matt 26:14–16; Mark 10:45; Luke 22:3, 24–27, 31–34, 62; John 1:11, 18; 2:4; 6:64, 70; 8:12, 24, 58; 12:23–33; 18:5–6, 17, 25–27; 19:30; 21:15–19; Phil 2:5–11; 1 Pet 5:5; 1 John 1:9; 2:7–8; 3:16.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 13:14

"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Example to follow — the towel. Jesus knew the Father had given all things into His hands, and that is exactly why He could kneel (vv3–4). Most of the men I walk with are not too proud to serve because they feel big; they are too insecure. They need to look strong. A man who knows who he is in the Father can pick up a towel. This week I want to do one hidden, menial thing for a brother — no announcement, no credit.

Sin to confess — Peter's kind of pride. "Never shall You wash my feet!" sounds humble, but it is a man who would rather do it himself. I confess the times I would not let Jesus — or a brother — help me, because being helped felt like weakness. A part with Jesus begins with receiving (Guzik). I have to let Him wash me before I can wash anyone else.

Promise to trust — "you are clean." If I have been bathed in Christ, I am "completely clean" (v10). I don't need to get saved again every time I fall; I need my feet washed — honest confession, and His daily cleansing. That is good news for men who are afraid one relapse undoes everything.

Warning to heed — Judas. Judas sat near Jesus, carried the money, heard every sermon, and still went out into the night. Being in the room is not the same as belonging to Him. I want my men to ask the honest question, and I ask it of myself: is there a hidden love — money, a habit, a resentment — that I am letting the enemy use as a door?

Command to obey — love one another, even as I have loved you. Not as I feel like it, not as they deserve, but as He did: patiently, practically, to the end, including the brother who lets me down. Jesus said the world would know we are His by this — not by our programs or our arguments (v35).

Comfort for the man who failed — Peter. Peter promised more than he could keep. Jesus told him the truth about himself and prayed for him before he fell (Luke 22:32). Then He met him again by a charcoal fire and gave him work to do (21:15–17). Failure was not the end for Peter, and it is not the end for any man who comes back.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Jesus knew all things were in His hands — and that freed Him to kneel (vv3–4). Where does my insecurity keep me from serving? (13:3–5; Phil 2:7) *A victor, not a victim: security in the Father makes a man able to stoop.*
2. Like Peter, where do I refuse to let Jesus — or a brother — do something for me? (13:6–10) *A part with Jesus begins with receiving, not achieving.*
3. Whose feet is Jesus asking me to wash this week — and whose is the hardest to wash? (13:14–17) *He washed Judas's feet too. Blessed is in the doing.*
4. Judas was close to Jesus for three years and was still lost. What is the difference between being near Jesus and belonging to Him? (13:18, 21–30) *The best example and the greatest Teacher are not enough without a new heart.*
5. "By this all men will know …" If someone watched our group for a month, what would they conclude about our love? (13:34–35; 1 John 3:16) *Brotherly love is the badge of Christ's disciples.*

6. Peter promised more than he could deliver. What promise have I made to God in my own strength — and what does Luke 22:32 say to me? (13:36–38; Luke 22:32; John 21:17) *Jesus knew Peter's weakness and prayed for him before he fell.*

Worship. The hands into which the Father had given all things held a towel and a basin. The One who is "I am" knelt on the floor of a borrowed room and washed dirt off a fisherman's feet — and a traitor's. He called the cross His glory. That is my Lord.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You loved Your own to the end. Wash me — not only my feet but every hidden place I have kept from You — and keep me clean. Take the pride out of me that will not be served, and the pride that will not serve. Guard my heart from every door Judas left open. Teach me and the men I serve to love one another the way You loved us, so the world will know we are Yours. And when I fail like Peter, pray for me, turn me again, and give me work to do. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 14

Do Not Let Your Heart Be Troubled — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

On the night He was betrayed, Jesus told troubled men that He was going to prepare a place, that He Himself is the only way to the Father, and that He would not leave them alone. I can trust Him with my troubled heart because He gives me His Spirit now and His peace that the world cannot give.

00 The Text

JOHN 14 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

4 "And you know the way where I am going."

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

11 "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

13 "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.

15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but

you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

19 "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.

20 "In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?"

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.

24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

25 "These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you.

26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

28 "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

29 "Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe.

30 "I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me;

31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "Do not let your heart be troubled" — Command / instruction
- **v1** "believe in God, believe also in Me" — Command / instruction
- **v2** "In My Father's house are many dwelling places" — Promise / blessing
- **v2** "I go to prepare a place for you" — Promise / blessing
- **v3** "I will come again and receive you to Myself" — Promise / blessing
- **v6** "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" — God — His character & actions
- **v6** "no one comes to the Father but through Me" — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" — God — His character & actions
- **v10** "I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me" — God — His character & actions
- **v12** "greater works than these he will do" — Promise / blessing
- **v13** "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do" — Promise / blessing
- **v15** "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" — Command / instruction
- **v16** "He will give you another Helper" — God — His character & actions
- **v18** "I will not leave you as orphans" — Promise / blessing
- **v19** "because I live, you will live also" — Promise / blessing
- **v23** "We will come to him and make Our abode with him" — Promise / blessing
- **v26** "He will teach you all things" — God — His character & actions
- **v27** "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you" — Promise / blessing
- **v27** "not as the world gives" — Time / place / contrast
- **v27** "Do not let your heart be troubled" — Command / instruction
- **v28** "the Father is greater than I" — God — His character & actions
- **v30** "the ruler of the world is coming" — Sin / warning
- **v30** "he has nothing in Me" — God — His character & actions
- **v31** "Get up, let us go from here" — Command / instruction
- **v2** "Father" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v15** "love" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v21** "loves" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

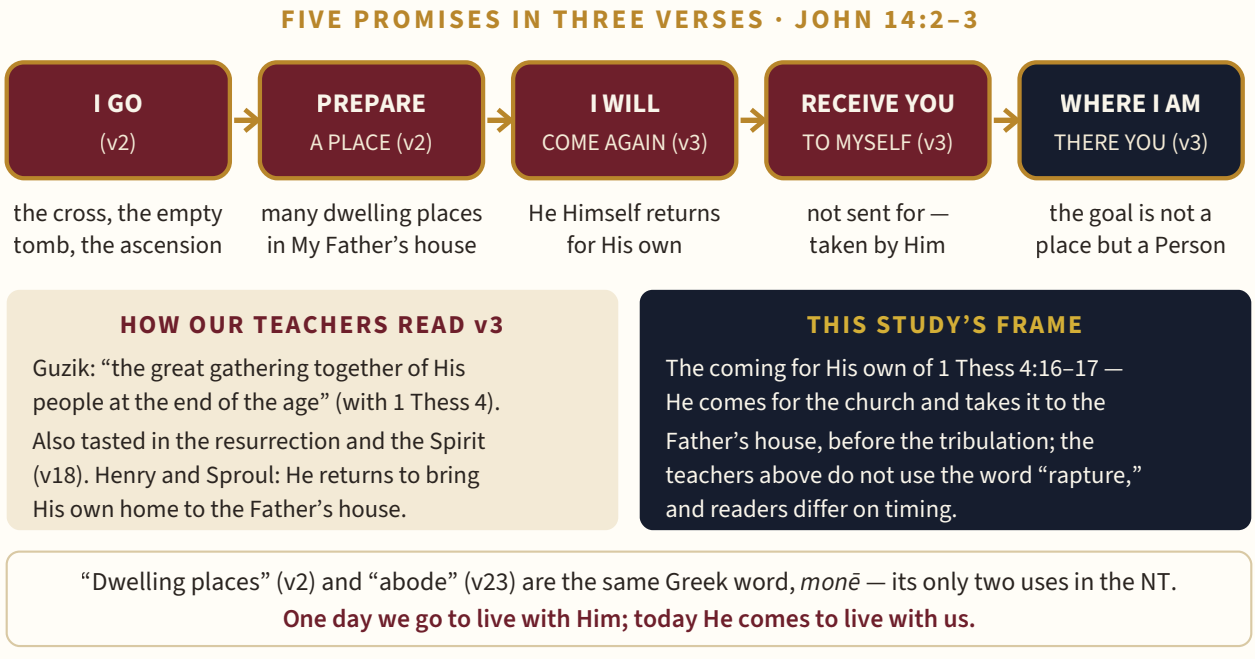
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 14:1

"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me."

FIGURE · I GO, I PREPARE, I COME AGAIN



Read the five promises left to right — each one is something Jesus does — then see how the teachers read "I will come again," and how the same word links the Father's house (v2) with the believer's heart (v23).

Setting. The same night and the same room as chapter 13. Judas has gone out (13:30); Peter has just been told he will deny Jesus three times (13:38). Jesus speaks to the eleven. The chapter ends with "Get up, let us go from here" (v31) — chapters 15–17 are spoken on the way toward the Kidron and Gethsemane (18:1).

Structure:

- vv1–6 — **a place and a way:** "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me." Many dwelling places in My Father's house; I go to prepare a place; I will come again and receive you to Myself (vv2–3). Thomas: "how do we know the way?" Jesus: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (v6).
- vv7–14 — **the Father seen:** if you had known Me you would have known My Father (v7). Philip: "show us the Father." "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (v9). I am in the Father and the Father in Me; believe because of the works (vv10–11). Greater works, because I go to the Father (v12); whatever you ask in My name (vv13–14).

- vv15–26 — **another Helper:** if you love Me, you will keep My commandments (v15). Another Helper, the Spirit of truth, with you forever, in you (vv16–17). Not orphans; because I live, you will live also; you in Me and I in you (vv18–20). Love and obedience, love and disclosure (v21). Judas (not Iscariot) asks why not to the world (v22); We will come and make Our abode with him (v23). The Helper will teach and remind (v26).
- vv27–31 — **peace left behind:** "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you" (v27). "If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced … the Father is greater than I" (v28). Told beforehand so you may believe (v29). The ruler of the world is coming and has nothing in Me; I do as the Father commanded. "Get up, let us go from here" (vv30–31).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Father" ×23 — vv2, 6, 7, 8, 9 (×2), 10 (×3), 11 (×2), 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 (×2), 31 (×2).
- "Me" ×23, plus "Myself" ×2 (vv3, 21) — the chapter is about knowing, believing and loving Him.
- "know / known" ×11 — know vv4, 5 (×2), 7, 9, 17 (×2), 20, 31; known v7 (×2).
- "love / loves / loved" ×10 — love vv15, 21, 23, 24, 31; loves vv21 (×2), 23; loved vv21, 28.
- "in Me" ×7 — vv1, 10 (×2), 11, 12, 20, 30; "in the Father" vv10, 11 (and "in My Father," v20).
- "go / going" — go ×6 (vv2, 3, 12, 28 ×2, 31); "going" vv4, 5, 22.
- "believe / believes" ×6 — vv1 (×2), 10, 11, 12, 29.
- "world" ×6 — vv17, 19, 22, 27, 30, 31.
- "come" ×5 — vv3, 9, 18, 23, 28 ("I will come" vv3, 18, 28; "We will come" v23).
- "works" ×4 — vv10, 11, 12 (×2).
- "keep / keeps" ×4 — vv15, 21, 23, 24; "commandments / commanded" ×3 — vv15, 21, 31.
- "ask" ×3 — vv13, 14, 16; "in My name" ×3 — vv13, 14, 26.
- "see / seen" ×6 — see vv17, 19 (×2); seen vv7, 9 (×2).
- "troubled" ×2 — vv1, 27 (the bookends); "Helper" ×2 — vv16, 26; "disclose" ×2 — vv21, 22.

Contrasts: a troubled heart ⟷ My peace (vv1, 27). I go ⟷ I will come again (vv2–3, 28). We do not know the way ⟷ I am the way (vv5–6). Show us the Father ⟷ He who has seen Me has seen the Father (vv8–9). The world cannot receive Him ⟷ you know Him (v17). The world will no longer see Me ⟷ you will see Me (v19). He who loves Me keeps My word ⟷ he who does not love Me does not keep My words (vv23–24). Not as the world gives (v27). The ruler of the world ⟷ he has nothing in Me (v30).

Shape of the chapter: four answers to four disciples — Peter's "where?" (13:36) answered with a place, Thomas's "how?" with a Person, Philip's "show us" with the Son, Judas's "why us?" with an abode. It is framed by "Do not let your heart be troubled" and closes with Jesus walking toward the cross.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is going away, but not leaving. He goes to the Father to prepare a place, He is Himself the only way there, the Father is seen in Him, and He sends another Helper so that the Father and the Son make their home in everyone who loves Him. So His men can have His peace on the worst night of their lives.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 14:16

"I will ask the Father, and △ He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you ☆ forever;"

FIGURE · THE SEVEN "I AM" SAYINGS

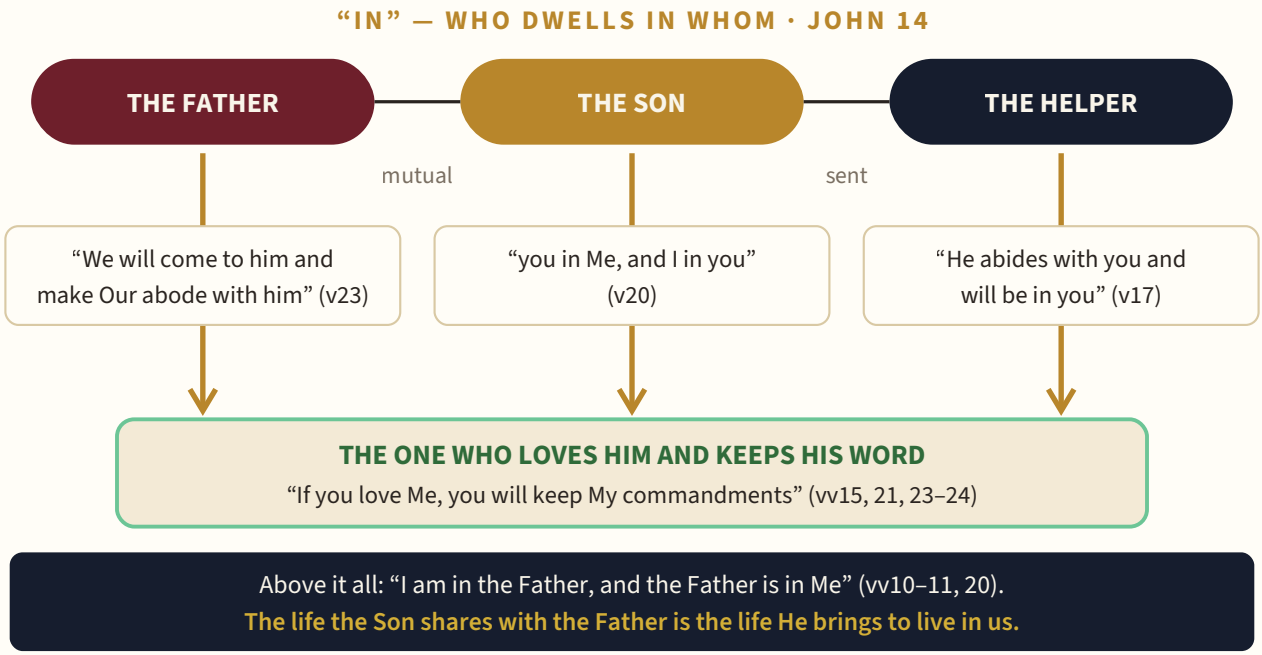
"I AM …" — THE SEVEN SAYINGS IN JOHN

JOHN 6:35	**I am** the bread of life
JOHN 8:12	**I am** the Light of the world
JOHN 10:7, 9	**I am** the door
JOHN 10:11, 14	**I am** the good shepherd
JOHN 11:25	**I am** the resurrection and the life
JOHN 14:6	**I am** the way, and the truth, and the life
JOHN 15:1	**I am** the true vine

And the bare "I am" (*egō eimi*): 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5–6 — the name of Exodus 3:14.
In 14:6 the way, the truth and the life are not things He gives apart from Himself; they are Himself.

John 14:6 is the sixth of seven "I am" sayings with a picture attached; each one names what Jesus Himself is for those who believe.

FIGURE · WHO DWELLS IN WHOM



Follow the arrows down: the Father, the Son and the Helper all come to dwell in the one who loves Jesus and keeps His word.

Why "troubled" — and how can Jesus command it? The verb (*tarassō*) is the one used of Jesus at Lazarus's tomb (11:33), at the coming hour (12:27) and as He named the betrayer (13:21). He is not scolding feelings; He is giving a remedy. Guzik: "a radical call to trust in Jesus *just as* one would trust in God the Father." Spurgeon: "It is a dark night, but the darkness of your heart will not light a candle for you." Henry: "The heart is the main fort."

"Many dwelling places" — mansions or rooms? *Monē* is a place to stay; "mansions" comes through Latin *mansiones*, dwellings. Guzik prefers "dwelling places" but adds, "it will be as glorious as a mansion." The only other use is v23 — the Father and Son make their *monē* with the believer. The house is future; the home begins now.

"I will come again" (v3) — what coming? Guzik sees "the great gathering together of His people at the end of the age" and, with Tasker, ties it to 1 Thessalonians 4; he also sees foretastes in the resurrection and the Spirit's coming (v18). Henry and Sproul read it as Christ returning to bring His people home. None of them uses the word "rapture." I read it with 1 Thess 4:16–17: Jesus Himself comes for His church, receives us to Himself, and takes us to the Father's house — which fits a coming *for* His own before He comes *with* them in judgment. Faithful readers differ on the timing; all agree on the promise: "where I am, there you may be also."

Is Jesus really the only way (v6)? All four teachers say yes, plainly. Guzik: "if Jesus is not *the only* way to God, then He is not *any way* to God." Sproul: "It is because Jesus said that He was the only way. If I deny that, I deny Him." Spurgeon: "Heaven hath but this one gate." Henry: other ways "may seem right, but the end of them is the way of death" (Prov 14:12). Sproul's closing prayer turns the objection around: the burning question is not why there are not more ways, "but rather why there is even one."

"He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (v9). Jesus is not a picture of God; He is God made visible (1:18; Col 1:15). Guzik: "To know Jesus is to know God." Spurgeon warns that a man can be near Christ and not know Him — Judas was. Henry is gentle: many disciples "have more knowledge and more grace than they think they have."

What are the "greater works" (v12)? Not bigger miracles. Guzik: "greater in magnitude," the worldwide spread of the gospel — "We earnestly await proof of those who have repeatedly done greater works than walking on water." Sproul connects them to the Spirit poured on the whole church (Num 11; Joel 2; Acts 2). The reason Jesus gives is "because I go to the Father."

Asking in His name (vv13–14). Guzik: it "is not a magic incantation of prayer." Sproul rejects "name it and claim it." To pray in His name is to pray as His representatives, for His glory, in line with His will.

Who is the Helper? *Allos paraklētos* — another of the same kind as Jesus, who is Himself our Advocate (1 John 2:1). Sproul: "For there to be two, there has to be one before the second." Not a force but a Person who teaches, reminds, abides and indwells. Spurgeon: "The Spirit is a convincer before he is a Comforter."

Love and obedience (vv15, 21, 23–24). Said four ways. Sproul: "Sanctification always flows automatically and necessarily out of our justification." Henry: "The surest evidence of our love to Christ is obedience." This is not earning love; it is what love does.

"The Father is greater than I" (v28). Arians once used this to deny Christ's deity. Our teachers answer together: greater in role, not in being. Guzik: "greater than the Son in position, especially in regard to the incarnation. Yet … not greater … in essence or being." Sproul: "subordination," not "inferiority"; the Son is "coessential with the Father." Henry: the Father's kingdom "will be greater than the mediatorial kingdom."

Word study (Greek):

- **troubled — *tarassō* (G5015):** to stir up, agitate; vv1, 27 (and of Jesus in 11:33; 12:27; 13:21).
- **dwelling places / abode — *monē* (G3438):** a place to stay; only 14:2, 23.
- **way — *hodos* (G3598):** road, path; "the Way" became a name for the church (Acts 9:2).
- **seen — *horaō* (G3708):** perfect tense — having seen and still seeing.
- **greater — *meizōn* (G3187):** comparative of *megas* — in v12 (works) and v28 (the Father).
- **name — *onoma* (G3686):** a person's authority and character.
- **another — *allos* (G243):** another of the same kind (not *heteros*).
- **Helper — *paraklētos* (G3875):** one called alongside; advocate, strengthener (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; 1 John 2:1).
- **orphans — *orphanos* (G3737):** fatherless; only here and James 1:27.
- **peace — *eirēnē* (G1515):** *shalom*; wholeness, right relation with God.
- **fearful — *deiliaō* (G1168):** to shrink back in cowardice; only v27.
- **ruler — *archōn* (G758):** Satan as "ruler of this world" (12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The comfort comes on the worst night** — straight after Peter's warning (13:38).
2. **Heaven is a home, not a camp** (Henry) — and He comes for us Himself.
3. **One word, two homes** — *monē* in v2 and v23.
4. **The way is a Person** (Guzik).
5. **Exclusive because He said so** (Sproul).
6. **Philip had been looking at the answer** (v9).
7. **"Another" of the same kind** — the Spirit is a Helper like Jesus.

8. **Love that does not obey is not love** (vv15, 21, 23–24).
9. **Not orphans** (v18).
10. **Peace as an inheritance** — the world's peace ends in trouble; Christ's in everlasting peace (Henry).

Cross-references: Exod 3:14; 33:18; Num 6:26; 11:16–17, 25; Ps 23:6; Prov 14:12; Isa 26:3; Ezek 37:27; Joel 2:28; John 1:14, 18; 10:9, 30; 12:31; 13:21, 33–38; 15:26; 16:7–15; 17:24; Acts 2:16–18; 4:12; 9:2; Rom 5:1; 2 Cor 5:1; Phil 4:7; Col 1:15; 1 Thess 4:16–17; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 1:3; James 1:27; 1 John 2:1.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 14:23

"Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.""

Command to obey — "Do not let your heart be troubled." Jesus says it twice (vv1, 27), and He says it to men who are about to fail Him. I know men lying awake tonight over a court date, a diagnosis, a son who won't call, a relapse. Jesus doesn't tell them to stop feeling; He tells them where to put their trust: "believe in God, believe also in Me." This week, when the trouble rises, I will name it to Him out loud and say verse 1 back to Him.

Promise to trust — a place, and His coming. "I will come again and receive you to Myself." Not sent for — taken by Him. I am looking for the day He comes for His church (1 Thess 4:17), and I want that hope to change how I live tonight. The goal is not a room; it is a Person: "where I am, there you may be also."

Truth to hold — the only way. In a world that says every road leads to God, Jesus says, "no one comes to the Father but through Me." That isn't arrogance; it's rescue. If there were another way, He would not have gone to the cross the next morning. I can say it humbly and with love, the way Sproul did: I believe it because He said it.

Sin to confess — love that doesn't obey. Jesus says four times that love keeps His word. I confess the times I have sung about loving Him and then gone my own way. Love isn't a feeling I wait for; it's what I do with His commandments this week.

Comfort for the fatherless — "I will not leave you as orphans." So many of the men I serve grew up without a father, or with one they had to survive. Jesus promises that the Father and the Son will come and make their home with the man who loves Him (v23), and that the Helper will be with him forever (v16). I am not alone in the cell, the truck, the empty apartment.

Example to follow — "Get up, let us go from here." Jesus had just been told the ruler of the world was coming, and He stood up and walked toward it, because He loved the Father (v31). Peace isn't hiding; it is walking into the next hard thing with Him.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What is troubling my heart tonight — and what would it look like to "believe also in Me" about that exact thing? (14:1, 27) *Worry lights no candle; trust Jesus just as you trust the Father.*
2. When I picture heaven, do I picture a place or a Person? What changes when "where I am, there you may be also" is the center? (14:2–3; 1 Thess 4:17) *Communion with Jesus is glory.*
3. Where am I tempted to think there are other ways — for me, or for someone I love? (14:6; Acts 4:12) *If Jesus is not the only way, He is not any way.*
4. Like Philip, where have I been "so long" with Jesus and still not trusted Him with something small? (14:8–11) *Thou knowest him not if thou canst not trust him with anything and everything.*

5. Jesus ties love to obedience four times. Which of His commands is my love for Him being tested on this week? (14:15, 21, 23–24) *Love that does not keep His commandments isn't love at all.*
6. Many of us know what it is to feel fatherless. What does "I will not leave you as orphans" mean for me right now? (14:16–18, 23) *The Spirit is another Helper like Jesus, with you forever, in you.*

Worship. The night before the cross, the One about to be betrayed comforted the ones about to run. He is the way, the truth and the life. To see Him is to see the Father. He gives His Spirit, makes His home in us, and leaves us His own peace. And He is coming again.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, my heart is troubled, and I bring it to You. I believe in God; I believe in You. Thank You for the place You are preparing and for Your promise to come and receive me to Yourself. You are the only way to the Father — keep me on that way, and help me tell others about it with love. Holy Spirit, Helper, teach me, remind me of His words, and live in me. Make me a man whose love for Jesus shows in obedience. Give me Your peace, not the world's, and when the next hard thing comes, help me get up and go with You. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 15

The True Vine — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus is the true vine and I am a branch: my whole job is to stay in Him, and the fruit, the love and the courage come from Him. The world that hated Him will not love me, but I am His friend, chosen by Him, and His Spirit testifies beside me.

00 The Text

JOHN 15 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

9 "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.

10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

11 "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you.

15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

17 "This I command you, that you love one another.

18 “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated
Me before it hated you.

19 “If you were of the world, the world would love its
own; but because you are not of the world, but I
chose you out of the world, because of this the world
hates you.

20 “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is
not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they
will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will
keep yours also.

21 “But all these things they will do to you for My name’s
sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.

22 “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not
have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

23 “He who hates Me hates My Father also.

24 “If I had not done among them the works which no one
else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both
seen and hated Me and My Father as well.

25 “But they have done this to fulfill the word that is
written in their Law, ‘THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A
CAUSE.’

26 “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you
from the Father, that is
the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He
will testify about Me,

27 and you will testify also, because you have been
with Me from the beginning.

Marked in the text

- **v1** “I am the true vine” — God — His character & actions
- **v1** “My Father is the vinedresser” — God — His character & actions
- **v2** “He takes away” — Sin / warning
- **v2** “He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit” — God — His character & actions
- **v3** “You are already clean because of the word” — Promise / blessing
- **v4** “Abide in Me, and I in you” — Command / instruction
- **v5** “apart from Me you can do nothing” — Sin / warning
- **v6** “cast them into the fire” — Sin / warning
- **v7** “ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” — Promise / blessing
- **v8** “My Father is glorified by this” — God — His character & actions
- **v9** “Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you” — God — His character & actions
- **v10** “If you keep My commandments” — Command / instruction
- **v11** “that your joy may be made full” — Promise / blessing
- **v12** “love one another, just as I have loved you” — Command / instruction
- **v13** “lay down his life for his friends” — God — His character & actions
- **v15** “I have called you friends” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “You did not choose Me but I chose you” — God — His character & actions
- **v16** “your fruit would remain” — Promise / blessing
- **v19** “I chose you out of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “A slave is not greater than his master” — Time / place / contrast
- **v22** “they have no excuse for their sin” — Sin / warning
- **v25** “THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE” — Sin / warning
- **v26** “the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father” — God — His character & actions
- **v27** “you will testify also” — Command / instruction
- **v4** “abide” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v5** “abides” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v18** “world” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 15:4

"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me."

FIGURE · THREE RELATIONSHIPS IN JOHN 15

TOWARD CHRIST vv1–11 · ABIDE	TOWARD EACH OTHER vv12–17 · LOVE	TOWARD THE WORLD vv18–27 · TESTIFY
THE CALL "Abide in Me, and I in you" (v4)	THE CALL "love one another" (vv12, 17)	THE CALL "you will testify also" (v27)
THE GIFT much fruit, prayer, full joy	THE GIFT friends, not slaves (v15)	THE COST hated, persecuted (vv18–20)
THE WARNING apart from Me — nothing (v5)	THE MEASURE "just as I have loved you"	THE REASON they do not know the Father (v21)

Love among the branches, hatred from the world —
and the Helper, the Spirit of truth, testifying about Christ through both (vv26–27)

The chapter moves outward — from the branch's union with Christ, to the branches' love for one another, to their witness in a world that hates them.

Setting. Thursday night of Passion Week. Judas has left (13:30); Jesus has washed the disciples' feet, given the new commandment, and promised the Helper (ch. 14). At 14:31 He says, "Get up, let us go from here," and 18:1 says He crossed the Kidron only after chapter 17 — so John 15 is spoken as they leave the upper room or walk through Jerusalem toward the garden. All of it is Jesus speaking; the disciples say nothing in this chapter.

Structure:

- vv1–8 — **the vine:** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser." Fruitless branches He takes away; fruitful ones He prunes (v2). "You are already clean because of the word" (v3). "Abide in Me, and I in you" (v4). "Apart from Me you can do nothing" (v5). The branch that does not abide is thrown away, dries up and is burned (v6). Abiding brings answered prayer (v7) and much fruit that glorifies the Father and proves discipleship (v8).
- vv9–11 — **abide in My love:** as the Father loved the Son, so the Son loves us; keep His commandments as He kept the Father's; "so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

- vv12–17 — **friends:** "love one another, just as I have loved you" (v12); greater love — laying down one's life (v13); friends, not slaves, because He has made known all He heard from the Father (vv14–15); "You did not choose Me but I chose you," appointed to bear lasting fruit (v16); the command repeated (v17).
- vv18–25 — **the world's hatred:** it hated Me first (v18); you are not of the world because I chose you out of it (v19); a slave is not greater than his master (v20); they do not know the One who sent Me (v21); no excuse for their sin (vv22–24); "THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE" (v25, Psalm 69:4).
- vv26–27 — **the witness:** the Helper, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, will testify about Me, "and you will testify also."

Repeated words, with counts (NASB95):

- "Me" ×16 and "My" ×17 — the chapter is centered on Christ: abide in *Me*, *My* words, *My* love, *My* commandments, *My* joy, *My* friends, *My* name.
- "love / loves / loved" ×10 — vv9 (×3), 10 (×2), 12 (×2), 13, 17, 19.
- "Father / Father's" ×10 — vv1, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26 (×2).
- "abide / abides" ×9 — vv4 (×2), 5, 6, 7 (×2), 9, 10 (×2); plus "remain" (same Greek *menō*) v16.
- "fruit" ×8 — vv2 (×3), 4, 5, 8, 16 (×2).
- "hate / hates / hated" ×8 — vv18 (×3), 19, 23 (×2), 24, 25.
- "world" ×6 — vv18, 19 (×5).
- "branch / branches" ×5 — vv2 (×2), 4, 5, 6.
- "commandment(s) / command" ×5 — vv10 (×2), 12, 14, 17.
- "word / words" ×5 — vv3, 7, 20 (×2), 25.
- "friends" ×3 — vv13, 14, 15; "slave(s)" ×3 — vv15 (×2), 20; "chose" ×3 — vv16 (×2), 19.
- "joy" ×2 — v11; "ask" ×2 — vv7, 16; "testify" ×2 — vv26, 27; "sin" ×3 — vv22 (×2), 24.

Contrasts: the true vine ⟷ Israel's fruitless vine (OT background). Branches that bear fruit ⟷ branches that do not (v2). Abiding ⟷ apart from Me (vv4–6). Slaves ⟷ friends (v15). You chose ⟷ I chose (v16). Loved by Christ ⟷ hated by the world (vv12, 18). Of the world ⟷ chosen out of the world (v19). No sin ⟷ no excuse (vv22, 24).

Shape of the chapter: it moves outward in three circles — union with Christ (1–11), love among the branches (12–17), and witness to a hostile world (18–27). It begins with the Father tending the vine and ends with the Spirit proceeding from the Father to testify.

Chapter theme (my words): Life comes from staying joined to Jesus. Joined to Him, I bear fruit, obey, love my brothers as His friend, and stand when the world hates me — because He chose me and His Spirit testifies through me.

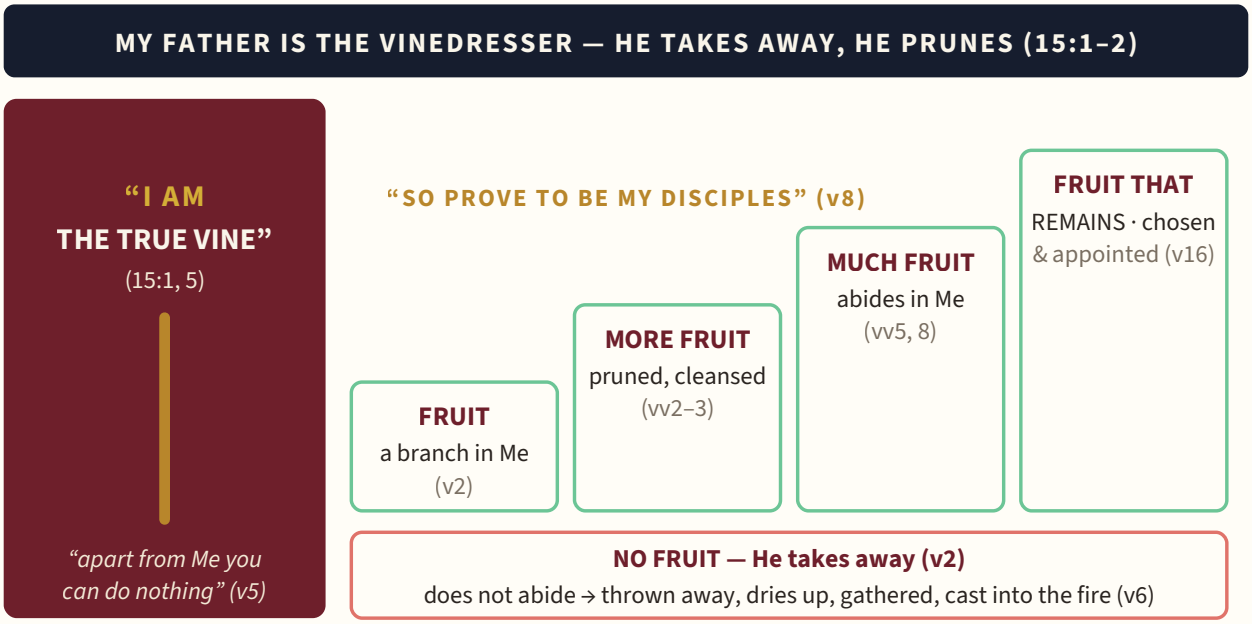
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 15:16

"△ You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that ☆ your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."

FIGURE · THE VINE, THE VINEDRESSER AND THE BRANCHES



Read the steps left to right: fruit, more fruit, much fruit, fruit that remains — every step comes from the Vine, and the only branch that is lost is the one that bears nothing because it does not abide.

Who is the true vine, and why "true"? The Old Testament calls Israel God's vine (Psalm 80:8; Isaiah 5:1–7; Jeremiah 2:21), and every one of those passages laments missing fruit. Guzik: "God repeatedly used a vine as a symbol of His people in the Hebrew Scriptures … In contrast, Jesus is the true vine." Henry opens the same way: "Jesus Christ is the vine, the true vine." *Alēthinos* is "genuine" — the real thing the picture pointed toward.

"He takes away" — or "He lifts up"? (v2) The Greek *airō* can mean either. Guzik keeps "takes away" but says the "lifts up" view (the vinedresser raising a trailing branch out of the dirt) "bears some consideration." Sproul, per Ligonier's summary of his 2003 sermon, stresses "the difference between branch removal and pruning." I take "takes away" as the plain reading because v6 explains it — but the comfort for fruitful branches is unmistakable: they are pruned, not removed. Spurgeon: "What a mercy it is to the believer that it is pruning with him and not cutting off!"

Who are the burned branches of verse 6? This is where Christians differ. Guzik lists three views: true believers who fall away and are lost; people who only looked like disciples, like Judas; and fruitless believers whose lives are wasted though they are saved. He leans toward the second: "The branches that are taken away were never properly abiding in the vine." Sproul raises the same question about the perseverance of the saints, and the Reformed tradition (Sproul, Spurgeon, Henry) reads these as professors, not possessors — Henry: "Unfruitful professors are unfaithful professors; professors, and no more." Arminian readers take the warning as describing real believers who can fall away. Everyone agrees the warning is real and the evidence of life is fruit. Judas had walked out of this very room hours earlier.

What does it mean to abide? Not a mystical state. Verse 7 ties it to His words abiding in us, verse 10 to keeping His commandments. Guzik: "This is not some mystical experience. It is simple obedience." And it is not one-sided effort; Henry: "the communion between Christ and believers never fails on his side." Spurgeon: "You can do nothing if there be not constant union."

"Ask whatever you wish" (v7). The promise is to abiding branches whose desires are being shaped by His words. Henry: "Those that abide in Christ as their heart's delight shall have, through Christ, their heart's desire." It is not a blank check for the flesh; it is a promise that the Vine's life will flow through the branch's prayers.

Joy — whose and how much? (v11) Sproul: "First, the joy that Jesus wants to see in us is His joy." "He wants us to have a permanent joy, not a roller-coaster ride of moods shifting between joy and misery." Guzik: "The joy of Jesus isn't the same as what is commonly understood as happiness or excitement."

Friends, not slaves (v15). The difference is not that friends don't obey (v14) but that friends are told what the Master is doing. Henry: those who do the duty of servants are "advanced to the dignity of his friends." Spurgeon: "friendship needs something from us," and "Familiarity with Jesus ceases when we become familiar with known sin."

"You did not choose Me but I chose you" (v16). In context Jesus speaks of choosing the Eleven as apostles and appointing them to bear fruit — but the principle runs wider (v19, "I chose you out of the world"). Guzik: "They were all rooted in the fact that Jesus chose them, not that they chose Him." Henry: "Christ's choice is prior to theirs and directs and determines it." Readers differ on how far this verse speaks to individual election to salvation; all agree the initiative in this friendship is His.

Why does the world hate? Because it hated Him first, and because the disciples now belong to Him and not to it (vv18–19). Spurgeon: "man naturally hates goodness, because he is so evil that he cannot but detest it," and "Indifference with regard to Christ is a clear impossibility." Henry: "Whom Christ blesseth the world curseth." Verses 22–24 do not say the unevangelized are sinless; they say that rejecting Jesus after His words and works removes every excuse (*prophasis*, "cloak").

The Helper and the witnesses (vv26–27). The Spirit testifies about Christ, and the disciples testify too — one witness, two voices (Tasker, quoted by Guzik). Henry: the Spirit's working "is not to supersede, but to engage and encourage ours." Sproul: "The New Testament clearly identifies the first Helper, or Paraclete, as Jesus Himself." The phrase "proceeds from the Father" lies behind the creed's wording and the East–West dispute over "and the Son"; Guzik notes it without taking sides, and in this verse Jesus also says He Himself will send the Spirit.

Word study (Greek):

- **true — *alēthinos* (G228):** genuine, real — the true light, the true bread, the true vine.
- **vine — *ampelos* (G288):** the grapevine; Israel's emblem.

- **vinedresser — *geōrgos* (G1092):** farmer, tiller of the soil (KJV "husbandman").
- **takes away — *airō* (G142):** take away / lift up (1:29, the Lamb "takes away" sin).
- **prunes — *kathairō* (G2508):** cleanses, prunes; wordplay with *katharos* (G2513), "clean" (v3; 13:10).
- **abide — *menō* (G3306):** remain, stay, dwell; ×9 as "abide" in vv4–10, "remain" in v16.
- **friends — *philos* (G5384):** a loved one; Abraham "the friend of God" (James 2:23).
- **slaves — *doulos* (G1401):** owned, under orders, not told the master's plans.
- **chose — *eklegomai* (G1586):** picked out for Himself (6:70; 13:18).
- **appointed — *tithēmi* (G5087):** set, place, lay down — same verb as "lay down his life" (v13).
- **hate — *miseō* (G3404):** settled hostility; perfect tense in v18, "has hated."
- **excuse — *prophasis* (G4392):** pretext, cloak.
- **without a cause — *dōrean* (G1432):** as a gift, for nothing (Romans 3:24).
- **Helper — *paraklētos* (G3875):** one called alongside; advocate (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; 1 John 2:1).
- **proceeds — *ekporeuomai* (G1607):** goes out from.
- **testify — *martyreō* (G3140):** bear witness.

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Jesus is the vine Israel was meant to be** — every Old Testament vine passage laments missing fruit.
2. **The knife is a mercy** — fruitless branches are taken away, fruitful ones pruned.
3. **The pruning knife is the Word** (v3; Henry: "a cleansing virtue in that word").
4. **Fruit, more fruit, much fruit, fruit that remains** — every rung reached by abiding.
5. **Nothing means nothing** — "apart from Me you can do nothing" (v5).
6. **Abiding is obedience, not a mood** (v10; Guzik).
7. **His joy, made full** — permanent, not a roller-coaster (Sproul).
8. **The One who lays down His life lays us down to bear fruit** — *tithēmi* in vv13 and 16.
9. **Hated for nothing, loved for nothing** — *dōrean* (v25).
10. **The Spirit testifies, and so do we** (vv26–27).

Cross-references: Exod 3:14; 33:11; Ps 35:19; 69:4; 80:8–16; Isa 5:1–7; 41:8; Jer 2:21; Matt 10:8; John 1:29, 38–39; 6:35, 70; 13:10, 18, 34–35; 14:16–17, 26, 31; 16:7; 18:1; Rom 3:24; Gal 5:22–23; Heb 12:11; Jas 2:23; 1 John 2:1, 19; 3:16; 2 Tim 3:12.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 15:12

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you."

Command to obey — "Abide in Me." I have spent a lot of my life trying to produce fruit by gritting my teeth. Jesus doesn't tell the branch to try harder; He tells it to stay. For me that means His words living in me (v7) — real time in the Word every day, not just on Sundays — and doing what He says when I'd rather not (v10). This week I will start each day with one paragraph of John 15 and one honest prayer before I touch my phone.

Sin to confess — trying to live apart from Him. "Apart from Me you can do nothing." I confess the plans, the ministry, the recovery work I have tried to carry in my own strength, and the pride that wanted the credit. Spurgeon is right: "The power lies with the Master, not with the servant."

Promise to trust — pruning, not cutting off. Some of the men I walk with are under the knife right now — a job lost, a marriage hurting, a body breaking down, a sentence still running. The Vinedresser's knife is not punishment for the fruitful branch; it is preparation for more fruit (v2; Heb 12:11). I want to help my brothers see the difference, and I want to believe it myself when it's my turn.

Example to follow — the love that lays down its life. "Love one another, just as I have loved you" (v12). The measure is the cross. In a men's group that means showing up, telling the truth, carrying a brother's load, forgiving what he did to me, and putting his good ahead of my comfort. Henry: "Christ's love to us should direct and engage our love to each other."

Truth to live in — friends, chosen. So many men I serve have been told they were nobody's choice. Jesus says, "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit." I am His friend, not a slave waiting to be fired, and He has told me what He is doing.

Courage to stand — the world will not applaud. If the world hated Him without a cause, it will not cheer for me. My job is to make sure that when I am rejected, it is for His name's sake and not for my own foolishness — and to keep testifying, knowing the Spirit is testifying with me.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Where am I trying to produce fruit by effort instead of by abiding — and what would "staying close to the Vine" look like this week? (15:4–5) *Fruit is the branch's result, not its work. "Apart from Me you can do nothing."*
2. What is the Father pruning in my life right now? Am I calling it punishment when it may be preparation for more fruit? (15:2–3; Heb 12:11) *Spurgeon: pruning is the lot of the fruitful; it is never condemnation.*
3. Verse 6 is a warning. How do I tell the difference between a pruned branch and a dead one — in myself and in the men I walk with? (15:2, 6; 1 John 2:19) *Guzik's three views; fruit and abiding are the evidence.*
4. Jesus says "abide in My love" and "keep My commandments" in the same breath. Which command is He pressing on me right now? (15:9–10, 14) *Not a mystical feeling — simple obedience (Guzik).*

5. What does it change to know that I am His friend, chosen and appointed — not a slave on probation? (15:15–16) *"You did not choose Me but I chose you."*
6. Where am I feeling the world's pressure for following Christ — and is it for His name's sake or for my own foolishness? (15:18–21; 2 Tim 3:12) *Spurgeon: "Take care, if the world does hate you, that it hates you without a cause."*

Worship. The Father tends the vine, the Son is the vine, the Spirit testifies about the Son. The One who said "I am the true vine" went out that same night to be cut down — He laid down His life for His friends — so that branches like me could be grafted in and bear fruit that remains.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, true Vine, keep me in You. Let Your words live in me, and let me keep Your commandments and stay in Your love. Father, prune what needs pruning, and give me grace to trust Your knife. Make my joy full with Your joy. Teach me to love my brothers the way You loved me, and give me courage when the world pushes back. Holy Spirit, testify about Jesus through my life and my words this week. Amen.

Scripture: New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © 1960–1995 The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. · Teacher material summarized from David Guzik (Enduring Word), R.C. Sproul (Ligonier), C.H. Spurgeon and Matthew Henry — see John-15-Deep-Dive-Four-Voices.pdf for sources. · Importable: the companion .md carries the berean-study block.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 16

Sorrow Turned into Joy — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus told His friends the worst and the best on the same night: the world will hurt you, but My going brings the Spirit, your grief will turn to joy, and I have already won. I don't get a trouble-free life; I get peace in Him and courage because He has overcome the world.

00 The Text

JOHN 16 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 "These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling.

2 "They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God.

3 "These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me.

4 "But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'

6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;

9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;

10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me;

11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

12 "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.

15 "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

16 "A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me."

17 Some of His disciples then said to one another, "What is this thing He is telling us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?"

18 So they were saying, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is talking about.”

19 Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, “Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me’?

20 “Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.

21 “Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.

22 “Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.

23 “In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you.

24 “Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.

25 “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.

26 “In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf;

27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

28 “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father.”

29 His disciples said, “Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech.

30 “Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God.”

31 Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?

32 “Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

33 “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

Marked in the text

- **v1** “so that you may be kept from stumbling” — Promise / blessing
- **v2** “outcasts from the synagogue” — Sin / warning
- **v2** “think that he is offering service to God” — Sin / warning
- **v6** “sorrow has filled your heart” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “it is to your advantage that I go away” — Promise / blessing
- **v8** “convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” — God — His character & actions
- **v11** “the ruler of this world has been judged” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “He will guide you into all the truth” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “He will disclose to you what is to come” — Promise / blessing
- **v14** “He will glorify Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “your grief will be turned into joy” — Promise / blessing
- **v21** “Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain” — Time / place / contrast
- **v22** “no one will take your joy away from you” — Promise / blessing
- **v24** “ask and you will receive” — Command / instruction
- **v27** “the Father Himself loves you” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “I came forth from the Father” — God — His character & actions
- **v32** “for you to be scattered” — Sin / warning
- **v32** “I am not alone, because the Father is with Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v33** “in Me you may have peace” — Promise / blessing
- **v33** “In the world you have tribulation” — Time / place / contrast
- **v33** “take courage” — Command / instruction
- **v33** “I have overcome the world” — God — His character & actions

- **v16** “little while” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v1** “These things I have spoken” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v2** “hour” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 16:13

"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, △ He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and ☆ He will disclose to you what is to come."

FIGURE · THE HELPER IN JESUS' FAREWELL

THE FIVE HELPER SAYINGS OF THE LAST NIGHT · JOHN 14–16

14:16–17	**with you forever**	another Helper — abides with you, will be in you
14:26	**teaches & reminds**	teaches all things; brings My words to remembrance
15:26–27	**testifies**	will testify about Me — "and you will testify also"
16:7–11	**convicts the world**	concerning sin, righteousness and judgment
16:13–15	**guides & glorifies**	into all the truth; what is to come; "He will glorify Me"

Maroon = this chapter. Every saying points the Spirit's work back to Jesus — His words, His witness, His glory.

John 16 holds the last two of five promises about the Helper; read down the column and watch the Spirit's work move from the disciples' hearts out to the world and back to Christ's glory.

Setting. Still Thursday night, the last words of the farewell discourse before Jesus' prayer (ch. 17) and the walk to the garden (18:1). For the first time since chapter 14 the disciples speak — confused among themselves (vv17–18) and then over-confident (vv29–30).

Structure:

- vv1–6 — **the warning:** spoken "so that you may be kept from stumbling" (v1). Outcasts from the synagogue; killers who think they serve God (v2), because they have not known the Father or Me (v3). Told now so you will remember (v4). "I am going to Him who sent Me" — and sorrow has filled your heart (vv5–6).
- vv7–11 — **the Helper and the world:** "it is to your advantage that I go away" (v7). He will convict the world concerning sin (unbelief, v9), righteousness (I go to the Father, v10), and judgment (the ruler of this world judged, v11).

- vv12–15 — **the Helper and the disciples:** more to say than they can bear now (v12); the Spirit of truth will guide you into all the truth, speak what He hears, disclose what is to come (v13); He will glorify Me, taking of Mine (vv14–15).
- vv16–24 — **a little while:** you will not see Me, then you will see Me (v16); the disciples' confusion (vv17–19); you will weep, the world will rejoice, your grief turned into joy (v20); the woman in labor (v21); I will see you again and no one will take your joy (v22); ask the Father in My name (vv23–24).
- vv25–33 — **plainly:** no more figures; the Father Himself loves you (vv25–28); "now You are speaking plainly … we believe" (vv29–30); "Do you now believe?" — you will be scattered, yet I am not alone (vv31–32); peace in Me, tribulation in the world, take courage, I have overcome the world (v33).

Repeated words, with counts (NASB95):

- "Me" ×17 — vv3, 5 (×2), 9, 10, 14, 16 (×2), 17 (×2), 19 (×2), 23, 27, 32 (×2), 33.
- "Father" ×12 — vv3, 10, 15, 17, 23, 25, 26, 27 (×2), 28 (×2), 32.
- "go / going" ×9 — vv5 (×2), 7 (×3), 10, 17, 28 (×2).
- "see" ×8 — vv10, 16 (×2), 17 (×2), 19 (×2), 22.
- "world" ×8 — vv8, 11, 20, 21, 28 (×2), 33 (×2).
- "these things" ×7 — vv1, 3, 4 (×2), 6, 25, 33; the formula "These things I have spoken to you" ×4 — vv1, 4, 25, 33.
- "little while" ×7 — vv16 (×2), 17 (×2), 18, 19 (×2).
- "grief / grieve / sorrow / pain / anguish" ×6 — vv6, 20 (×2), 21 (×2), 22; "joy" ×4 — vv20, 21, 22, 24; "rejoice" ×2 — vv20, 22.
- "hour" ×5 — vv2, 4, 21, 25, 32.
- "ask / asks / asked" ×5 — vv5, 23, 24 (×2), 26; "question" ×3 — vv19, 23, 30; "in My name" ×3 — vv23, 24, 26.
- "disclose" ×3 — vv13, 14, 15; "truth" ×3 — vv7, 13 (×2); "Mine" ×3 — vv14, 15 (×2).
- "figurative language / figure of speech" ×3 — vv25 (×2), 29; "plainly" ×2 — vv25, 29; "believe" ×3 — vv9, 30, 31.

Contrasts: offering service to God ⟷ not knowing God (vv2–3). I go away ⟷ the Helper comes (v7). You will weep ⟷ the world will rejoice (v20). Grief ⟷ joy (vv20–22). Pain ⟷ birth (v21). Figurative language ⟷ plainly (v25). Scattered and leaving Me alone ⟷ I am not alone (v32). In Me peace ⟷ in the world tribulation (v33).

Shape of the chapter: from night to morning — warning and sorrow (1–6), the Spirit's work in the world and in the disciples (7–15), grief turning to joy (16–24), and peace in the Victor (25–33). It begins with "kept from stumbling" and ends with "take courage."

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus' going away was not loss but gain: it sent the Spirit, it turned grief into joy, and it won the victory over the world. In Him I have peace even when the world gives me tribulation.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 16:7

"But I tell you the truth, ☆ it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, △ I will send Him to you."

FIGURE · THE SPIRIT'S THREEFOLD CONVICTION

"HE … WILL CONVICT THE WORLD" · JOHN 16:8–11

CONCERNING	BECAUSE … (the reason Jesus gives)	WHAT THE WORLD IS SHOWN
SIN (v9)	*"they do not believe in Me"*	unbelief is the root sin — the one that condemns
RIGHTEOUSNESS (v10)	*"I go to the Father and you no longer see Me"*	the rejected Man was right — the Father received Him
JUDGMENT (v11)	*"the ruler of this world has been judged"*	Satan's verdict is in — and his followers share it

Henry: the Spirit's method is "first to convince, and then to comfort."

Read each row across: what the Spirit convicts the world about, the reason Jesus gives in His own words, and the verdict it brings home.

FIGURE · A LITTLE WHILE, AND AGAIN A LITTLE WHILE



The disciples could not see the timeline; we can — two short "little whiles" separate the upper room from the empty tomb, and the joy that follows is the joy of asking in His name.

Why is it better that Jesus go away (v7)? Because the Helper comes only if He goes — the cross, resurrection and ascension come before Pentecost (Acts 2:33). Sproul: "it is expedient or necessary for Him to go away so that the disciples may be filled with the Holy Spirit," and "What sounds like an absolute disadvantage, Jesus promises will turn into an advantage." Henry: Christ in the flesh was in one place; "his Spirit is every where, in all places, at all times." Guzik: "Jesus meant that the presence and work of the Holy Spirit would actually be better for believers." Notice the same words in Caiaphas's mouth (11:50): "it is expedient for you."

What does the Spirit convict the world of (vv8–11)? *Elenchō* means to expose and prove guilty, not merely to accuse. **Sin** — "because they do not believe in Me"; Guzik: "It is unbelief, the rejection of Jesus, which ultimately proves one to be guilty." **Righteousness** — "because I go to the Father": the Father's receiving Jesus vindicates the Man the world condemned; Spurgeon also hears the righteousness Christ gives, which "makes him righteous on the spot." **Judgment** — "because the ruler of this world has been judged" (12:31); Spurgeon: "the Lord Jesus overthrew the devil for you." Henry: the Spirit works "first to convince, and then to comfort."

"Guide you into all the truth" — to whom (v13)? First to the apostles: Jesus has more to say than they can bear, and the Spirit will remind (14:26), guide and disclose "what is to come" — which is why we trust the New Testament they wrote. Guzik adds, "In another sense the Holy Spirit continues today to personally lead us into truth." That guidance never adds to Christ or contradicts Scripture; Spurgeon: "The Spirit never says one thing at one time and another thing at another." Its test is v14: "He will glorify Me."

What is "a little while" (vv16–19)? Most naturally, the hours until the cross and the three days until Easter (20:20, "The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord"). Henry hears layers: the resurrection, the coming of the Spirit, and Christ's second coming. As a futurist I take the first meaning as primary and the last as a true echo — the whole church now lives in a "little while" before He comes (Hebrews 10:37).

Grief turned, not replaced (vv20–22). The cross that caused the grief became the cause of the joy. Guzik: "God's work was not to replace their sorrow with joy, but to turn sorrow into joy." The woman's labor shows it: the pain

itself brings the child. Henry: "Believers have joy or sorrow according as they have or have not a sight of Christ." Sproul: their mourning gives way "to a great and fulfilling joy."

Asking in His name (vv23–27). "In that day" — after the resurrection and the Spirit's coming — they will pray to the Father directly in Jesus' name. That doesn't mean Christ stops interceding (Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1); it means the Father does not need persuading. Guzik: "Jesus makes it clear that the Son did not need to persuade an angry Father to be gracious." "The Father Himself loves you" (v27).

"Do you now believe?" (v31). The disciples' confession is real but premature; within hours they scatter (Zechariah 13:7). Henry hears a gentle check on overconfidence. Jesus is not alone even when they leave Him, "because the Father is with Me" — Guzik: "In the loneliest moments imaginable, He understood that the Father was with Him."

"I have overcome the world" (v33). Perfect tense, spoken before the cross. Guzik: "Peace is offered to us, but tribulation is promised." Spurgeon: Christ conquered as our Head, so we overcome in Him; Sproul: "Christ, by His resurrection, has overcome the world" (Renewing Your Mind). Henry: "Never was there such a conqueror of the world as Christ was." John's first letter gives the application: "this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Word study (Greek):

- **stumbling — *skandalizō* (G4624):** to trip up, cause to fall (KJV "offended").
- **outcasts from the synagogue — *aposynagōgos* (G656):** only John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2.
- **service — *latreia* (G2999):** priestly, sacrificial worship.
- **advantage — *sympherō* (G4851):** to be profitable, expedient (11:50; 18:14; 16:7).
- **Helper — *paraklētos* (G3875):** one called alongside; advocate.
- **convict — *elenchō* (G1651):** expose, prove guilty (3:20; 8:46).
- **ruler — *archōn* (G758):** prince, ruler of this world (12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
- **guide — *hodēgeō* (G3594):** lead the way (Acts 8:31; Rev 7:17; LXX Ps 25:5).
- **little while — *mikron* (G3398):** a short time; ×7 in vv16–19.
- **grief — *lypē* (G3077):** sorrow, pain of heart (vv6, 20–22).
- **joy — *chara* (G5479):** gladness that no one can take away.
- **anguish / tribulation — *thlipsis* (G2347):** pressure, affliction (vv21, 33).
- **figurative language — *paroimia* (G3942):** proverb, veiled saying (10:6).
- **plainly — *parrēsia* (G3954):** openly, boldly (Acts 4:13, 29, 31).
- **scattered — *skorpizō* (G4650):** dispersed (Zech 13:7).
- **take courage — *tharseō* (G2293):** be of good cheer (Matt 9:2; 14:27; Acts 23:11).
- **have overcome — *nikaō* (G3528):** conquer; perfect tense *nenikēka* (1 John 5:4).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Forewarned is forearmed** — "These things I have spoken to you" ×4.
2. **Religious zeal can kill** — *latreia*, and Saul of Tarsus (Acts 26:9).
3. **Caiaphas and Jesus used the same words** — "it is expedient for you" (11:50; 16:7).
4. **The Spirit proves the case** — first to convince, then to comfort.
5. **Unbelief is the sin the Spirit presses** (v9).

6. **Into the truth, not just to it** — and He always glorifies Jesus (v14).
7. **An absolute disadvantage turned into an advantage** (Sproul).
8. **Grief turned, not replaced** (Guzik).
9. **The mother's anguish and the world's tribulation are one word** — *thlipsis*.
10. **Victory in the perfect tense** — *nenikēka*.

Cross-references: Ps 25:5; Isa 26:17–19; 66:7–14; Zech 13:7; Matt 9:2, 22; 14:27; 26:31; John 3:20; 8:46; 9:22; 11:50–51; 12:31, 42; 14:16–17, 26, 30; 15:18–27; 18:1, 14; 20:19–20; Acts 2:33; 4:13, 29–31; 5:41; 8:1–3, 31; 23:11; 26:9–11; Rom 8:34, 37; Heb 10:37; 1 John 2:1; 5:4; Rev 7:17; 21:4.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 16:24

"Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full."

Promise to trust — "it is to your advantage that I go away." I have prayed for Jesus to just show up and fix things the way I want. He tells me something better is already here: the Helper living in me. When I feel like He's far away, I will remember that His going away is how the Spirit came to me — not a loss, an advantage.

Command to obey — "ask … so that your joy may be made full." Jesus says, "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name." Too often that's me — I worry, plan and complain, but I don't ask. This week I will write down three things I have stopped asking the Father for and ask Him every morning, in Jesus' name, believing the Father Himself loves me (v27).

Sin to confess — over-confidence and running. The disciples said, "Now we know … we believe," and within hours they scattered, "each to his own home." I know that pattern: big words in the group, then running when it gets hard. I confess it, and I take comfort that Jesus told them ahead of time and took them back afterward.

Truth to live in — grief turned into joy. Many of the men I walk with carry real grief — a child they can't see, years lost, a wife who left, a father who died before they got right. Jesus doesn't say the grief is fake or that it will be swapped for something else. He says it will be *turned* — like a mother whose pain becomes the joy of a child born. I want to hold my grief like labor pain, not a dead end.

Example to follow — "not alone, because the Father is with Me." Jesus faced the loneliest night in history knowing the Father was with Him. When I'm in a cell, a hospital room or an empty house, I'm not alone either.

Courage to stand — "take courage; I have overcome the world." I am promised tribulation and offered peace. The peace is in Him, not in my circumstances. When the world pushes on me this week, I will say out loud: "He has overcome the world."

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What trouble has come into my life that Jesus actually warned me about — and did it shake my faith or confirm His word? (16:1–4) *"These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling."*
2. Where do I need to believe that Jesus' "going away" — something I would never have chosen — is to my advantage? (16:6–7) *Sproul: an absolute disadvantage turned into an advantage.*
3. When has the Holy Spirit convicted me — not just made me feel bad, but proved the case? What did He show me about sin, righteousness or judgment? (16:8–11; 8:46) *First to convince, then to comfort (Henry).*
4. What grief am I carrying that I need to see as labor pain rather than a dead end? (16:20–22; Rev 21:4) *Grief turned into joy — the woman in labor.*
5. Jesus says "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name." What have I stopped asking the Father for? (16:23–24) *"Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full."*

6. Where am I feeling alone and scattered this week — and what does it mean that Jesus was "not alone" and has "overcome the world"? (16:32–33; 1 John 5:4) *Peace is offered, tribulation is promised (Guzik).*

Worship. The Father sent the Son; the Son went back to the Father; the Spirit came from the Father in the Son's name to glorify the Son. The night of the cross was a little while, and the morning came. Jesus spoke victory before the battle, and the empty tomb proved He was right.

Prayer. Father, thank You that You Yourself love me. Lord Jesus, thank You for telling me the truth ahead of time, and for going away so the Helper could come. Holy Spirit, convict me where I need it, guide me into the truth, and show me Jesus. Turn my grief into joy. Teach me to ask in Jesus' name again. When I want to run and scatter, hold me. Give me peace in You and courage in the world, because You have overcome the world. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 17

The Prayer of the Son — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

On His last night Jesus prayed for His own glory, for the men in the room, and for me. He asks the Father to keep us, set us apart by the truth, make us one, and bring us home to see His glory.

00 The Text

JOHN 17 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,

2 even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.

3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

5 "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

7 "Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You;

8 for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.

9 "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;

10 and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.

11 "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.

12 "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.

13 "But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.

14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.

16 "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

18 “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

19 “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

20 “I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;

21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

22 “The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;

23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

24 “Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

25 “O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me;

26 and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Marked in the text

- **v1** “the hour has come” — Time / place / contrast
- **v1** “glorify Your Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v2** “He may give eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v3** “This is eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v3** “the only true God” — God — His character & actions
- **v4** “having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do” — God — His character & actions
- **v5** “the glory which I had with You before the world was” — God — His character & actions
- **v6** “I have manifested Your name” — God — His character & actions
- **v9** “I do not ask on behalf of the world” — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** “Holy Father, keep them in Your name” — God — His character & actions
- **v12** “the son of perdition” — Sin / warning
- **v13** “My joy made full” — Promise / blessing
- **v14** “the world has hated them” — Sin / warning
- **v15** “keep them from the evil one” — Promise / blessing
- **v15** “keep them from the evil” — Promise / blessing
- **v17** “Sanctify them in the truth” — Command / instruction
- **v17** “Your word is truth” — God — His character & actions
- **v18** “I also have sent them into the world” — Command / instruction
- **v19** “For their sakes I sanctify Myself” — God — His character & actions
- **v21** “that they may all be one” — Promise / blessing
- **v21** “so that the world may believe that You sent Me” — Command / instruction
- **v23** “perfected in unity” — Promise / blessing
- **v24** “be with Me where I am” — Promise / blessing
- **v24** “before the foundation of the world” — Time / place / contrast
- **v25** “O righteous Father” — God — His character & actions
- **v26** “the love with which You loved Me may be in them” — Promise / blessing
- **v5** “world” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v3** “sent” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v1** “glorify” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v4** “glorified” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

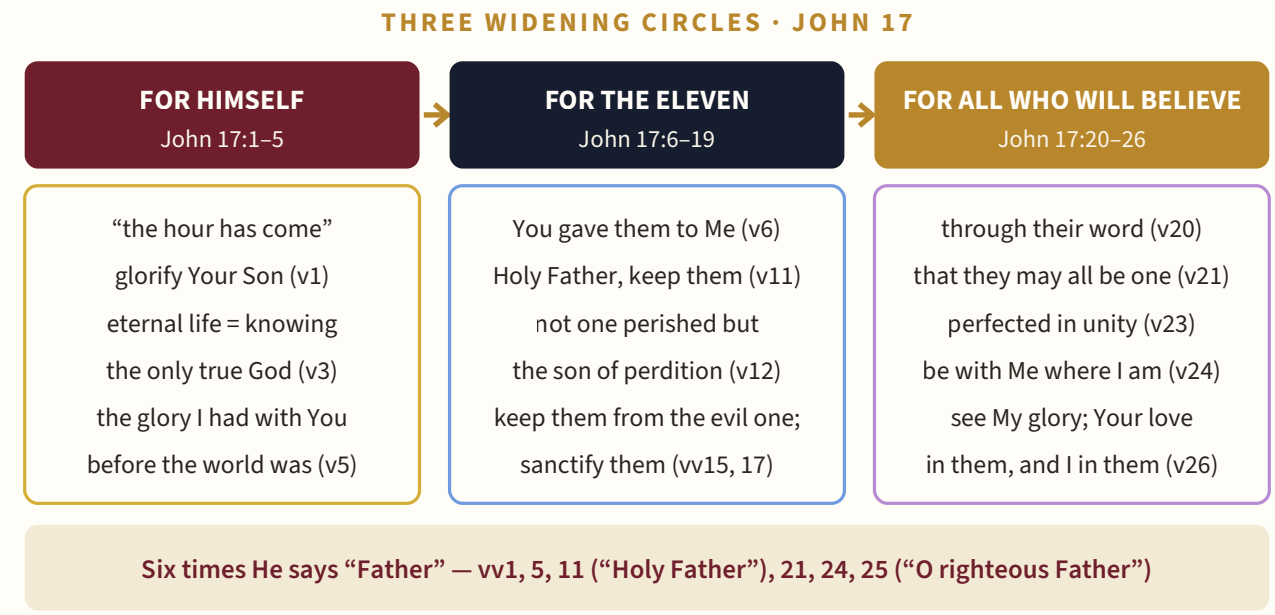
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 17:1

"Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,"

FIGURE · THE SHAPE OF THE PRAYER



Read left to right: the prayer widens from the Son, to the eleven men in the room, to everyone who would believe through their word — which includes you.

Setting. The night before the cross, at the end of the Upper Room teaching (John 13–16). Judas has gone out into the night (13:30). Jesus has just said, "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (16:33). Then He lifts His eyes to heaven and prays aloud in front of the Eleven. Right after, they cross the ravine of the Kidron to the garden (18:1).

Structure:

- vv1–5 — **for Himself:** "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son." Authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom the Father has given Him (v2). Eternal life = knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (v3). "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work" (v4); "glorify Me … with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (v5).
- vv6–12 — **for the Eleven — who they are:** He manifested the Father's name to the men given Him out of the world; they kept His word, received His words, believed He was sent (vv6–8). He asks for them, not for the world (v9). "Holy Father, keep them in Your name … that they may be one" (v11). He kept and guarded them; not one perished but the son of perdition (v12).

- vv13–19 — **for the Eleven — what He asks:** My joy made full in them (v13). The world hated them because they are not of the world (v14). Not out of the world, but kept from the evil one (v15). “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth” (v17). As You sent Me, I have sent them (v18). “For their sakes I sanctify Myself” (v19).
- vv20–26 — **for all who will believe through their word:** that they may all be one, as the Father and the Son, so that the world may believe (v21). The glory given to them, that they may be one, perfected in unity, so the world may know (vv22–23). “Father, I desire that they … be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory” (v24). The world has not known You; I have known You (v25). I have made Your name known and will, that Your love may be in them, and I in them (v26).

Repeated words, with counts:

- “world” ×18 — vv5, 6, 9, 11 (×2), 13, 14 (×3), 15, 16 (×2), 18 (×2), 21, 23, 24, 25.
- “give / gave / given” ×17 — vv2 (×3), 4, 6 (×2), 7, 8 (×2), 9, 11, 12, 14, 22 (×2), 24 (×2).
- “glorify / glorified” ×5 — vv1 (×2), 4, 5, 10; “glory” ×3 — vv5, 22, 24 (eight in all).
- “know / known / knowing” ×8 — vv3, 7, 23, 25 (×3), 26 (×2).
- “sent” ×7 — vv3, 8, 18 (×2), 21, 23, 25 (“You sent Me” five times — vv8, 18, 21, 23, 25).
- “Father” ×6 — vv1, 5, 11 (“Holy Father”), 21, 24, 25 (“O righteous Father”).
- “one” ×6 — vv11, 12, 15, 21, 22 (×2); four of them are “one” as unity (vv11, 21, 22 ×2), with “perfected in unity” (v23).
- “Mine / Yours” ×6 — vv6, 9, 10 (×4).
- “name” ×5 — vv6, 11 (×2), 12, 26; “word / words” ×5 — vv6, 8, 14, 17, 20.
- “love / loved” ×5 — vv23 (×2), 24, 26 (×2).
- “keep / keeping / kept” ×4 — vv6, 11, 12, 15; “ask” ×4 — vv9 (×2), 15, 20.
- “not of the world” ×4 — vv14 (×2), 16 (×2).
- “truth” ×3 — vv17 (×2), 19; “sanctify / sanctified” ×3 — vv17, 19 (×2).

Contrasts: the glory before the world was (v5) ⟷ the work accomplished on the earth (v4). The men given out of the world (v6) ⟷ the world (v9). Kept and guarded (v12) ⟷ the son of perdition (v12). In the world (v11) ⟷ not of the world (vv14, 16). Taken out of the world ⟷ kept from the evil one (v15). The world has not known You ⟷ I have known You (v25).

Shape of the chapter: three widening circles — the Son (1–5), the Eleven (6–19), all believers (20–26). It begins with the Father glorifying the Son and ends with the Father’s love living in the people, “and I in them.”

Chapter theme (my words): On the eve of the cross the Son asks the Father to glorify Him through the cross, and then prays for His people — to be kept, sanctified, sent, united and finally brought to see His glory. Everything He asks for us rests on what He is about to do.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 17:21

"that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."

FIGURE · WHAT THE FATHER GAVE, AND WHAT THE SON GAVE

THE FATHER GAVE THE SON		THE SON GAVE THEM	
authority over all flesh	v2	eternal life	v2
a people out of the world	vv2, 6, 9, 24	Your name, manifested	v6
the work to accomplish	v4	the words You gave Me	v8
the words	v8	Your word	v14
Your name	vv11–12	the glory You gave Me	v22
the glory	vv22, 24	Your name, made known	v26

"give / gave / given" ×17 in the chapter — and the gift named most often is a people

Everything Jesus gives His people He first received from the Father — and the gift the Father gives Him most often in this prayer is a people.

FIGURE · SIX RELATIONS TO THE WORLD

THE DISCIPLES AND "THE WORLD" · JOHN 17:11–23

IN THE WORLD	"they themselves are in the world" (v11)
NOT OF THE WORLD	"even as I am not of the world" (vv14, 16)
HATED BY THE WORLD	"because they are not of the world" (v14)
NOT TAKEN OUT OF THE WORLD	but kept "from the evil one" (v15)
SENT INTO THE WORLD	"As You sent Me … I also have sent them" (v18)
FOR THE WORLD	"so that the world may believe … may know" (vv21, 23)

Not withdrawal and not blending in: located in it, foreign to it, hated by it, guarded in it, sent to it, for its sake.

Read down the column: the same men are in the world, not of it, hated by it, kept in it, sent into it, and given for the sake of it.

Why call it the High Priestly Prayer? Like Aaron carrying Israel's names over his heart into the holy place (Exod 28:29), Jesus brings His people by name before the Father on the eve of the sacrifice — and verse 19 shows He is both priest and offering: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself." Henry: "He, as the priest and altar, sanctified himself as the sacrifice." Isaiah 53:12 said the Servant would bear the sin of many "And interceded for the transgressors"; here is the intercession, and tomorrow the bearing. Sproul: "Christ's priestly work did not end on the cross" (Heb 7:25; Rom 8:34).

What is the "hour," and what is the glory? John has counted toward this hour since Cana (2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1). The hour is the cross, and through it the resurrection and ascension. Guzik: the hour of glorification begins with His death. In verse 5 He asks to return to "the glory which I had with You before the world was." Sproul: "It is a tacit claim to His participation in the eternal glory of God." Isaiah 42:8 says God will not give His glory to another — so the Son is not "another."

Eternal life (v3). Not first a quantity of time but a quality of life: knowing God. *Ginōskō* is relational, covenant knowing (Jer 31:34). Guzik: "Eternal life is found in an experiential knowledge (ginosko) of both God the Father and Jesus Christ, God the Son." Henry: "Life eternal lies in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ." And the object includes Jesus Christ beside "the only true God" — Guzik calls verse 2 "a clear and startling claim to deity."

"I do not ask on behalf of the world" (v9) — where Christians differ. Sproul reads it as particular intercession: "Jesus is praying for all those who belong to God, not for everyone on the planet," and in *The Truth of the Cross* ties it to the extent of the atonement ("He was praying for the elect"). Henry: "There is a world of people that Jesus Christ did not pray for." Spurgeon: He prays the more for us "because we are the Father's." Guzik puts it more modestly: "Jesus specifically had His disciples in mind in this prayer." Many non-Reformed believers read verse 9 as the focus of this prayer rather than a limit on God's love (John 3:16), and the prayer itself keeps the world in

view — "so that the world may believe" (v21). I want my men to see both readings and hold the comfort they share: if you belong to Him, He has prayed for you by name.

Judas, the son of perdition (v12). The idiom marks a man by his end. Henry: "He deserved perdition, and God left him to throw himself headlong into it." Guzik: "There was one exception to Jesus' work in keeping the disciples, Judas." The same title is used of the coming man of lawlessness in 2 Thess 2:3. Judas was near Jesus for three years and never His; Peter fell hard that same night and was restored. Sproul: "Like Judas, Peter had a great fall," but "Unlike Judas, Peter was restored and persevered in faith."

In the world, not of it (vv11–18). Jesus refuses both escape and absorption. Guzik: "Jesus didn't pray that we would be taken out of the battle, but that we would be strengthened and protected in it." Henry: "Not that they may be kept from all conflict with the world, but that they may not be overcome by it." Spurgeon (1855) used verse 15 against the monastery and against wishing to die early: we are left here to serve.

Sanctified in the truth (vv17–19). Sanctification is being set apart from sin and to God; the means is the Word. Guzik: "Sanctify means to be set apart for God's special pleasure and use." Spurgeon: "Justification is perfect the moment it is received, but sanctification is a matter of growth," and "God works sanctification in us by the truth, and by nothing else." Sproul: "If you don't care about truth, there's no concern about sanctification."

What kind of unity (vv20–23)? Not institutional merger but shared life — "even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You." Guzik: organic unity, not uniformity, and "Jesus essentially gave the world permission to judge the validity of His ministry based on the unity of His people." Henry: one body, one Spirit, one love; "The unity of the gospel ministers is both the beauty and strength of the gospel interest." Unity apart from the truth of verse 17 is not the unity Jesus prayed for.

"Father, I desire" (v24). The one petition for heaven. Spurgeon: "It is the very pith and marrow of heaven to be with Christ." Guzik: "Jesus was not yet in heaven, yet He spoke as if He already were there." In the garden He will say, "not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42); He surrenders His will to the cross so that this will of His — us with Him — is done.

Word study (Greek):

- **hour — *hōra* (G5610):** the appointed time; John's countdown (2:4 → 17:1).
- **glorify — *doxazō* (G1392):** to make visible someone's weight and worth; the cross as glory.
- **know — *ginōskō* (G1097):** relational, covenant knowing; present tense in v3.
- **accomplished / perfected — *teleioō* (G5048):** to bring to completion (vv4, 23; cf. 19:28).
- **manifested — *phaneroō* (G5319):** to bring into the open; He showed the Father's name.
- **keep — *tēreō* (G5083):** to guard, preserve (vv6, 11, 12, 15).
- **perdition — *apōleia* (G684):** ruin, destruction; wordplay with "perished" in v12; cf. 2 Thess 2:3.
- **sanctify — *hagiazō* (G37):** to set apart as holy — from sin, to God (vv17, 19).
- **evil one — *ponēros* (G4190):** active malignant evil; "the evil one" as in 1 John 5:18–19.
- **one — *heis / hen* (G1520):** "one thing" — unity of life, modeled on the Father and Son.
- **I desire — *thelō* (G2309):** "I will" — the Son's authoritative request (v24).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The hour has finally come** — the countdown since Cana ends at the cross.

2. **Eternal life is a relationship before it is a length of time** (v3).
3. **Jesus claims the Father's own glory** (v5; Sproul).
4. **Most of what the Father gave the Son is people** — "those whom You have given Me."
5. **The one who was lost was never one of the given** (v12; Ps 41:9).
6. **Kept in the battle, not taken out of it** (v15; Guzik).
7. **Truth is the tool of holiness** (v17; Spurgeon).
8. **He sanctified Himself so we could be sanctified** (v19; Henry).
9. **You are in this prayer** (v20; Sproul).
10. **Unity is evidence** — "so that the world may believe" (vv21, 23).

Cross-references: Exod 28:29; 34:5–7; Ps 41:9; 119:9; Isa 42:8; 53:12; Jer 31:34; Luke 22:42; John 1:14; 2:4; 3:16; 7:30; 8:20; 10:28–30; 12:23, 32; 13:1, 18, 31; 14:6, 9; 16:33; 19:30; Acts 1:8; Rom 8:34; Eph 4:3–6; 2 Thess 2:3; Heb 7:25; 1 John 3:2; 5:18–19; Rev 7:9.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 17:15

"I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but ☆to keep them from the evil one."

Promise to trust — "I ask on their behalf" (v9). I have men at my table who have never had anyone pray for them by name — not a father, not a pastor. Jesus did, the night before He died, and He still does: He "always lives to make intercession" (Heb 7:25). Peter fell hard that same night and came back because Jesus had prayed for him. When I can't pray for myself — the night after a relapse, the day the papers come — I can rest in this: the Son is talking to the Father about me, and His prayers do not fail.

Command to obey — sanctified in the truth (v17). Jesus didn't ask the Father to make us feel holy; He asked Him to set us apart by the Word. So this week I will open the Word before I open my phone, every morning, and I'll ask one other man to hold me to it. Holiness grows in the soil of truth, and I can't skip the soil.

Sin to confess — wanting out, or blending in (vv15–16). Some days I want God to take me out of the world — out of the job, the neighborhood, the cell block, the family mess. Other days I just blend in so nobody notices whose I am. Jesus prayed against both. I confess my escapes and my camouflage, and I ask to be kept from the evil one right where He has put me.

Example to follow — the Son who prayed before He fought. Before the torches came up the hill, Jesus prayed. Spurgeon said God "never" had "a son who did not pray." When I see trouble coming, my first move should be the Father, not the phone, not the bottle, not the fist.

Calling to live — one, so the world may believe (v21). The world is watching how believers treat each other. The men in our group come from different churches, colors and records; our love for each other is part of the evidence that the Father sent the Son. I will reach out this week to the brother I've been avoiding.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. If eternal life is knowing God (v3), how would I describe where my knowing of Him actually stands this week — about Him, or Him? (17:3; Jer 31:34) *Present tense: keep on knowing. Life is measured by relationship before length.*
2. Jesus calls His men a gift from the Father (vv6, 9, 24). How would it change the way I treat the men in this group if I believed that about them? (17:6–10) *"Those whom You have given Me" — the prayer's favorite name for believers.*
3. Judas walked with Jesus for three years and was lost. What is the difference between being near Jesus and being kept by Him? (17:12; 13:18) *Henry: the one loss was no failure of the Keeper.*
4. Where am I tempted to escape the world — or to blend into it? What would "kept from the evil one" look like in that exact place? (17:15–16; 1 John 5:18–19) *Not out of the battle, but protected in it.*
5. Jesus says the Word is the means of sanctification. What place does Scripture really have in my week, and what would change if it had more? (17:17; Ps 119:9) *"Your word is truth" — God sanctifies by the truth and by nothing else.*

6. The world is meant to look at our unity and believe. What division among believers near me could I help heal this month? (17:21–23; Eph 4:3–6) *"So that the world may believe that You sent Me."*

Worship. The Son who had glory with the Father before the world was stepped into our world, finished the Father's work, and on His last night spent His breath praying for us. He wants us with Him, where He is, to see His glory. That is where this whole story is going.

Prayer. Holy Father, righteous Father — thank You that Your Son prayed for me before I was born and prays for me still. Keep me in Your name. Keep me from the evil one, right where You've put me. Sanctify me in the truth; make Your Word the soil I live in. Make me one with my brothers so the world may believe You sent Jesus. And bring me, and the men I serve, to be with Him where He is, to see His glory. In His name, Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 18

The Cup, the Fire and the King — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

On the night He was betrayed, Jesus was never more in control than when He let Himself be bound. He traded Himself for His men, drank the Father's cup, and told the truth to Pilate — while I see myself in Peter by the fire and in Barabbas set free.

00 The Text

JOHN 18 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples.

2 Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples.

3 Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, "Whom do you seek?"

5 They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.

6 So when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

7 Therefore He again asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene."

8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way,"

9 to fulfill the word which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one."

10 Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus.

11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

12 So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him,

13 and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

14 Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.

15 Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest,

16 but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in.

17 Then the slave-girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

18 Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.

19 The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching.

20 Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret.

21 "Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; they know what I said."

22 When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus, saying, "Is that the way You answer the high priest?"

23 Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?"

24 So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" He denied it, and said, "I am not."

26 One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?"

27 Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

29 Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?"

30 They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you."

31 So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death,"

32 to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.

33 Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

34 Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?"

35 Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?"

36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

38 Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in Him.

39 "But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?"

40 So they cried out again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "over the ravine of the Kidron" — Time / place / contrast
- **v2** "who was betraying Him" — Sin / warning
- **v3** "with lanterns and torches and weapons" — Time / place / contrast
- **v4** "knowing all the things that were coming upon Him" — God — His character & actions
- **v6** "they drew back and fell to the ground" — God — His character & actions
- **v8** "let these go their way" — Promise / blessing
- **v9** "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one" — Promise / blessing
- **v10** "cut off his right ear" — Sin / warning

- **v11** “Put the sword into the sheath” — Command / instruction
- **v11** “the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?” — God — His character & actions
- **v14** “it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people” — Time / place / contrast
- **v18** “a charcoal fire” — Time / place / contrast
- **v20** “I have spoken openly to the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “struck Jesus” — Sin / warning
- **v27** “immediately a rooster crowed” — Time / place / contrast
- **v28** “so that they would not be defiled” — Sin / warning
- **v28** “it was early” — Time / place / contrast
- **v32** “signifying by what kind of death He was about to die” — God — His character & actions
- **v36** “My kingdom is not of this world” — God — His character & actions
- **v37** “to testify to the truth” — Command / instruction
- **v37** “Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” — Promise / blessing
- **v38** “What is truth?” — Sin / warning
- **v38** “I find no guilt in Him” — Time / place / contrast
- **v40** “Not this Man, but Barabbas” — Sin / warning
- **v40** “Barabbas was a robber” — Sin / warning
- **v5** “I am He” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v17** “I am not” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v33** “king” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

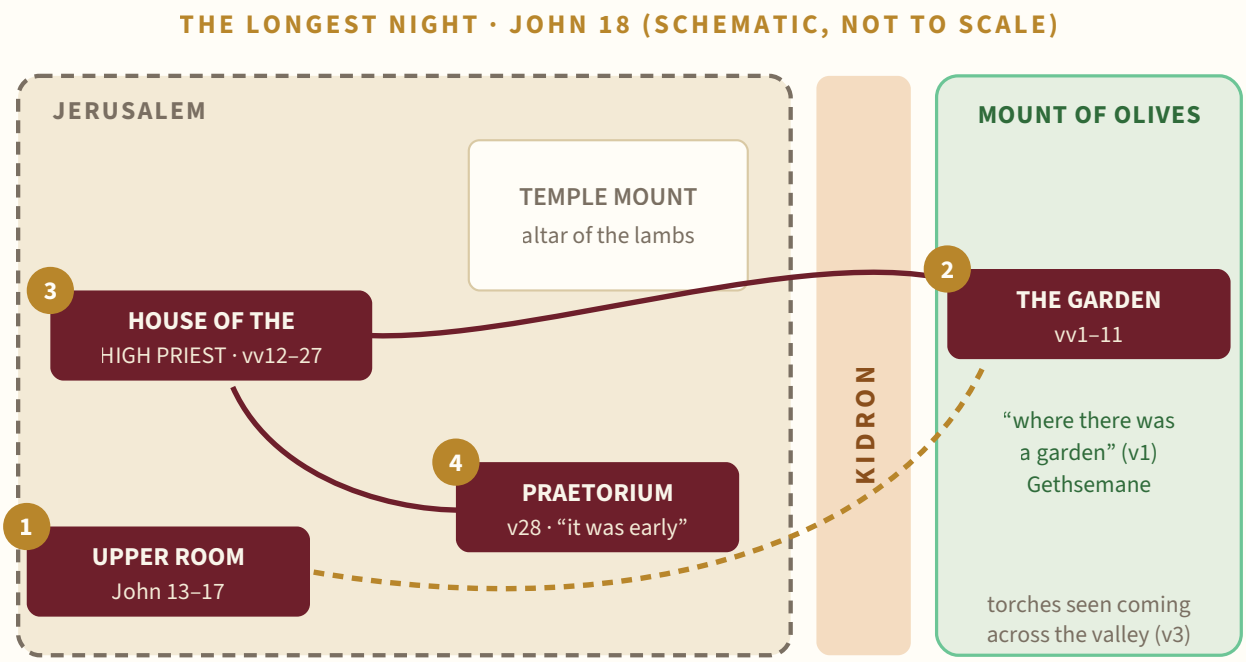
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 18:5

"They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He said to them, "⚠ I am He." And Judas also, ⚠ who was betraying Him, was standing with them."

FIGURE · THE ROUTE OF THE NIGHT



Follow the numbers: from the Upper Room across the Kidron to the garden, back into the city to the high priest's house, and at dawn to the Praetorium.

Setting. Thursday night into Friday dawn of Passover week. Jesus leaves the city with the Eleven, crosses the ravine of the Kidron east of the temple, and enters a garden on the Mount of Olives where He often met with them (vv1–2). From there: back into the city to the house of the high priest (Annas, then Caiaphas, vv13, 24), and at daybreak to Pilate's Praetorium (v28).

Structure:

- vv1–11 — **the garden:** Judas comes with the Roman cohort and temple officers, "with lanterns and torches and weapons" (v3). Jesus, knowing everything, goes out: "Whom do you seek?" … "I am He" — and they drew back and fell to the ground (vv4–6). "If you seek Me, let these go their way," fulfilling "I lost not one" (vv8–9). Peter cuts off Malchus' right ear; "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?" (vv10–11).

- vv12–27 — **two scenes, cut together:** Jesus bound and led to Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas (vv12–14). Peter gets in through another disciple; to the slave-girl at the door, "I am not" (vv15–17); he stands warming himself at the charcoal fire (v18). Inside, Jesus questioned about His disciples and teaching: "I have spoken openly to the world" (vv19–21); an officer strikes Him; "if rightly, why do you strike Me?" (vv22–23). Sent bound to Caiaphas (v24). Outside, "I am not" again (v25); Malchus' relative: "Did I not see you in the garden?"; denied again, and immediately a rooster crowed (vv26–27).
- vv28–40 — **the Praetorium:** they will not enter, so as not to be defiled before the Passover (v28). Pilate goes out: "What accusation?" — "If this Man were not an evildoer…" — "Take Him yourselves" — "We are not permitted to put anyone to death," fulfilling the word of the kind of death He would die (vv29–32). Inside: "Are You the King of the Jews?" … "My kingdom is not of this world" … "For this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth" … "What is truth?" (vv33–38a). Out again: "I find no guilt in Him"; the Passover custom; "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber (vv38b–40).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Jesus" ×20; "Peter" ×10 — vv10, 11, 15, 16 (×2), 17, 18, 25, 26, 27.
- "disciple(s)" ×9 — vv1 (×2), 2, 15 (×2), 16, 17, 19, 25.
- "high priest" ×9 — vv10, 13, 15 (×2), 16, 19, 22, 24, 26; "Annas / Caiaphas" ×6 — vv13 (×2), 14, 24 (×2), 28.
- "Jews / Jew" ×9 — vv12, 14, 20, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39.
- "Pilate" ×6 — vv29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 38.
- "standing / stood" ×6 — vv5, 16, 18 (×2), 22, 25.
- "slave(s) / slave-girl" ×5 — vv10 (×2), 17, 18, 26; "officer(s)" ×4 — vv3, 12, 18, 22.
- "went forth / went out" ×5 — vv1, 4, 16, 29, 38.
- "king / King" ×4 — vv33, 37 (×2), 39; "kingdom" ×3 — v36 (×3); "world" ×4 — vv20, 36 (×2), 37.
- "I am He" ×3 — vv5, 6, 8; "I am not" ×3 — vv17, 25 (Peter), 35 (Pilate: "I am not a Jew, am I?").
- "truth" ×3 — vv37 (×2), 38; "Praetorium" ×3 — vv28 (×2), 33; "warming" ×3 — vv18 (×2), 25.
- "Whom do you seek?" ×2 — vv4, 7; "Jesus the Nazarene" ×2 — vv5, 7; "bound" ×2 — vv12, 24; "denied" ×2 — vv25, 27.

Contrasts: "I am He" (vv5, 6, 8) ⟷ "I am not" (vv17, 25). Armed men fall down (v6) ⟷ one unarmed Man stands. Peter's sword (v10) ⟷ the Father's cup (v11). Jesus spoke "openly" (v20) ⟷ a trial held at night. Careful about defilement (v28) ⟷ careless about an innocent man's blood. A kingdom not of this world (v36) ⟷ the King of the Jews they reject (v39). "I find no guilt in Him" (v38) ⟷ "Not this Man, but Barabbas" (v40).

Shape of the chapter: three places — garden, courtyard, Praetorium — and in each the bound Man is the free one and everyone around Him is trapped: soldiers on the ground, Peter by the fire, Pilate shuttling in and out, the crowd choosing a robber.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus goes to His death on purpose. He gives Himself up so His men go free, drinks the cup His Father gives, and bears witness to the truth before men who refuse it — and the guilty go free while the Innocent is condemned.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 18:36

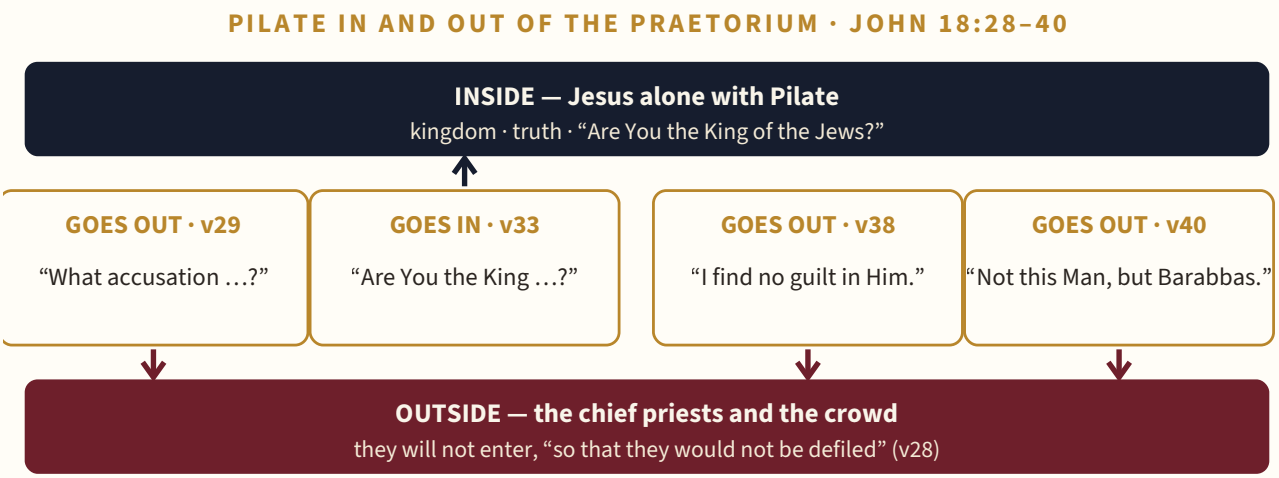
"Jesus answered, "△My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, ◷My kingdom is not of this realm.""

FIGURE · "I AM HE" AND "I AM NOT"

JESUS: "I AM HE" — in the garden, before armed men		PETER: "I AM NOT" — in the courtyard, before slaves	
v5	"Whom do you seek?" … "I am He."	v17	To the slave-girl at the door: "I am not."
v6	They drew back and fell to the ground.	v25	By the charcoal fire: "I am not."
v8	"I told you that I am He; … let these go."	v27	To Malchus' relative: denied again.
He gives Himself up so that "I lost not one" (v9) and drinks the Father's cup (v11)		**"immediately a rooster crowed" (v27)** just as foretold (13:38) — but restored at another charcoal fire (21:9, 15–17)	

Read across each row: the same night, two men, three answers each — the Shepherd gives Himself for His sheep while His sheep denies Him.

FIGURE · PILATE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS



The accusers stay outside to stay clean; Pilate shuttles between them and the prisoner inside — and the scene keeps moving into chapter 19.

"I am He" — and why they fell (vv4–8). In Greek Jesus says only *egō eimi*, "I am" — the words of 8:24, 8:58, 13:19 and Isaiah 43:10. At one level it simply identifies Him; but John tells us twice more that He said it and that armed men "drew back and fell to the ground." Guzik: "There was such a display of divine presence, majesty, and power in those two words." Henry: "Christ was declared to be more than a man." Psalm 27:2 had sung, "When evildoers came upon me … they stumbled and fell." The point is not a magic trick but a surrender: "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative" (10:18). Spurgeon: "There was no power on earth that could have bound Him had He been unwilling."

"Let these go their way" (vv8–9). John says this fulfilled Jesus' word, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one" (17:12; 6:39). The garden is the gospel in small: the Shepherd is seized and the sheep go free. Spurgeon puts it in Christ's mouth: "Here I am; but let these, for whom I stood, go their way."

Peter's sword and the Father's cup (vv10–11). Peter was brave and wrong. Guzik suspects he picked an unarmed slave; Henry: "Thus, while he seemed to fight for Christ, he fought against him." Luke adds that Jesus healed the ear (Luke 22:51). The cup in the prophets is God's wrath against sin (Isa 51:17; Jer 25:15). Jesus does not see Judas or Caiaphas handing it to Him; He sees His Father — "the cup which the Father has given Me."

Annas or Caiaphas (vv13–24)? Annas was the power behind the office (Guzik: "he was the one who put Caiaphas in office"). Guzik and Sproul take the questioner in v19 to be Annas; Spurgeon, preaching the whole trial from Psalm 2:2, has Caiaphas asking about the disciples and the doctrine. John calls both men "high priest," and verse 24 sends Jesus on to Caiaphas. The hearing broke the law's own rules — Sproul: "It was inappropriate, improper, and illegal for a capital trial to be carried out at night." Jesus asks only for witnesses; Spurgeon: "Truth is never shamefaced."

Peter by the fire (vv15–18, 25–27). John cuts back and forth: Jesus standing firm inside, Peter crumbling outside. The steps down: following at a distance, getting inside, standing with the slaves and officers, warming himself at their fire. Henry: "It is ill warming ourselves with those with whom we are in danger of burning ourselves." Guzik: "it was not the faith of Peter that failed, but his courage." Spurgeon: "Backslide a little and you are on the way to utter apostasy." And John alone uses the rare *anthrakia*, charcoal fire — again only at 21:9, where Jesus restores

Peter with three questions. Sproul's commentary, quoted at Ligonier: Jesus "had no need to die for people who are sinless, for there are no such people."

Clean hands, dirty hearts (v28). They would not enter a Gentile house before eating the Passover, while handing over the true Passover Lamb. Guzik: "They refused to break relatively small commands regarding ceremonial defilement." Henry: "They strained at a gnat, and swallowed a camel." Verse 32: Rome executed by crucifixion; Jesus had said He would be "lifted up" (12:32–33). Henry: "No word of Christ shall fall to the ground."

"My kingdom is not of this world" (v36). "Of" (*ek*) speaks of source, not location. Sproul's commentary, as quoted: Jesus "did not say that His dominion and authority did not include this world," nor that it was "a transcendent spiritual Neverland." Henry: "Its nature is not worldly; it is a kingdom within men," and "its weapons are spiritual." Spurgeon: "His kingdom was not of this world, nor to be sustained by force." I read this with Daniel 7:14 and Revelation 11:15: today His kingdom advances by truth, not swords; one day the King returns and His kingdom fills the earth. It does not come from here — but it is coming here.

"What is truth?" (v38). Guzik: "Probably, Pilate did not mean that there was no truth" — it is the shrug of a politician — and "Many in our day ask Pilate's question, but from a different perspective." Henry: "Truth is that pearl of great price which the human understanding has a desire for," yet Pilate walked out on the answer standing in front of him (14:6).

Barabbas (vv39–40). A *lēstēs*, a violent bandit (Mark 15:7: an insurrectionist and murderer). Guzik: "The cross Jesus hung upon was probably originally intended for Barabbas." Spurgeon: "Barabbas must die or Christ must die," and "He dies that we may be delivered." Henry: "Thus those do who prefer their sins before Christ." I am both — the crowd that preferred my sin, and the robber who walked out free.

Word study (Greek):

- **Kidron — *Kedrōn* (G2748):** the valley east of the temple; only here in the NT (cf. 2 Sam 15:23).
- **cohort — *speira* (G4686):** a Roman cohort, up to ~600 men, or a detachment (vv3, 12).
- **I am — *egō eimi* (G1473, G1510):** "I am He" — the words of 8:58 and Isa 43:10.
- **cup — *potērion* (G4221):** in the prophets, the cup of God's wrath (Isa 51:17).
- **charcoal fire — *anthrakia* (G439):** only John 18:18 and 21:9.
- **deny — *arneomai* (G720):** to disown; Peter's *ouk eimi*, "I am not."
- **blow — *rhapisma* (G4475):** a slap or blow; only Mark 14:65; John 18:22; 19:3.
- **Praetorium — *praitōrion* (G4232):** the Roman governor's headquarters (vv28, 33).
- **kingdom — *basileia* (G932):** reign; "not of (*ek*) this world" — source, not location.
- **truth — *alētheia* (G225):** reality unhidden; Jesus is the truth (14:6).
- **robber — *lēstēs* (G3027):** a violent bandit, not a sneak thief (cf. 10:1, 8).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The prisoner is in charge** (vv4, 8, 11).
2. **"I am" knocks armed men down** (v6).
3. **He is taken so they can go** (vv8–9).
4. **The cup came from the Father** (v11).
5. **"I am He" against "I am not"** (vv5–8, 17, 25).

6. **Watch where you warm yourself** (v18; Henry).
7. **The fire returns** — *anthrakia*, 18:18 and 21:9.
8. **A night trial in the dark** (vv19–24; Sproul).
9. **Religious scruples, murderous hearts** (v28).
10. **The robber went free** (v40).

Cross-references: 2 Sam 15:23; Ps 1:1; 2:2; 27:2; Isa 43:10; 51:17; 53:5–7; Jer 25:15; Dan 7:14; Mic 5:1; Matt 26:52; Mark 14:65; 15:7; Luke 22:51, 61–62; John 6:39; 8:24, 58; 10:1, 8, 18; 11:50; 12:32–33; 13:19, 38; 14:6; 17:12; 21:9, 15–17; Acts 23:3; 1 Tim 6:13; Heb 12:2; 1 Pet 2:23; Rev 11:15.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 18:11

"So Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?""

Promise to trust — "let these go their way" (v8). Jesus stood between the soldiers and His men and said, take Me, let them go. That is what He did for me at the cross. Some of the men I sit with have been arrested, booked, sentenced. They know what it is to be the one taken. In the garden Jesus chose to be the one taken so that we could walk out free. I am one of "these."

Command to obey — "Put the sword into the sheath" (v11). Peter's sword was loyalty without trust — swinging at the problem in front of him instead of trusting the Father's plan. My swords are my temper, my tongue, my fists, my plans to get even. This week I will put one of them away: when I want to strike back, I will stop, say "the cup the Father has given me," and trust Him with the outcome.

Sin to confess — warming myself at the wrong fire (vv18, 25). Peter didn't plan to deny Jesus. He just got cold and stood where the crowd was. I confess the places I go to get warm that aren't safe — the old crew, the bar stool, the screen at midnight, the group chat that pulls me away from Christ. I name one this week and walk away from it.

Hope to hold — the second charcoal fire (21:9). If you have denied Him — with your mouth or your life — this chapter is not the end of Peter's story. Jesus built another fire on a beach and asked him three times, "Do you love Me?" He doesn't throw away men who fail. He restores them and gives them work to do.

Example to follow — the good confession before Pilate (1 Tim 6:13). Jesus told the truth when it cost Him everything, without cursing or threatening (1 Pet 2:23). I want to be a man who tells the truth when it costs me — with my parole officer, my wife, my boss, my group.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Jesus walked toward the torches knowing everything that was coming (v4). What am I avoiding this week that I need to walk toward, trusting the Father? (18:4; Heb 12:2) *Knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, He went forth.*
2. Peter grabbed a sword when Jesus wanted him to trust. Where am I fighting in my own strength — with my temper, my mouth, my hands — instead of trusting God's plan? (18:10–11; Matt 26:52) *"Put the sword into the sheath." Zeal without warrant fights against Christ.*
3. Jesus was arrested so His men could go free (vv8–9). How does it change me to see myself as one of "these" who walked away free? (18:8–9; Isa 53:5–6) *The Shepherd is seized; the sheep walk free.*
4. Peter's denial started with standing by the wrong fire with the wrong crowd. What "fire" am I warming myself by that puts me in danger? (18:18, 25; Ps 1:1) *Henry: ill warming ourselves where we may burn.*
5. Peter failed three times and was restored at another charcoal fire. What failure do I need to bring back to Jesus instead of hiding? (18:27; 21:9, 15–17) *The same rare word, anthrakia: where he fell, he was restored.*

6. Pilate asked “What is truth?” and walked away. When truth gets close and personal, how do I walk away — and what would listening to His voice look like? (18:37–38; John 14:6) *“Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”*

Worship. The I AM let Himself be tied up with rope. The One who could have dropped a whole cohort with a word took a slap without striking back. The King whose kingdom will never pass away stood before a Roman governor and told him the truth. And a robber named Barabbas walked out free — the first man to go free because Jesus took his place.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You walked out to meet the torches for me. Thank You that You were taken so I could go free. Take the sword out of my hand and teach me to trust the Father’s cup. Keep me from warming myself at the wrong fire, and when I fail You, call me back to Your fire again. Make me a man of the truth who hears Your voice. You are my King, and Your kingdom is coming. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 19

Behold the Man, Behold Your King — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The Man Pilate could not condemn and the King the crowd would not have finished the work the Father gave Him. Every Scripture came true, every debt was paid, and the only question left is whether I will look on Him whom they pierced and believe.

00 The Text

JOHN 19 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.

2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him;

3 and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face.

4 Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him."

5 Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!"

6 So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him."

7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God."

8 Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid;

9 and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"

11 Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

12 As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."

13 Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!"

15 So they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your

King?" The chief priests answered,
"We have no king but Caesar."

16 So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.

17 They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing
His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull,
which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.

18 There they crucified Him, and with Him two other
men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.

19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross.
It was written, "JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF
THE JEWS."

20 Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for
the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city;
and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek.

21 So the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate,
"Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said,
'I am King of the Jews.'"

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written I have
written."

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took
His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every
soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless,
woven in one piece.

24 So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast
lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill
the Scripture: "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS
AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS."

25 Therefore the soldiers did these things. But standing
by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's
sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple
whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother,
"Woman, behold, your son!"

27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!"
From that hour the disciple took her into his own
household.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already
been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I
am thirsty."

29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a
sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and
brought it up to His mouth.

30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He
said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and
gave up His spirit.

31 Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation,
so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the
Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate
that their legs might be broken, and that they might be
taken away.

32 So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first
man and of the other who was crucified with Him;

33 but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was
already dead, they did not break His legs.

34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear,
and immediately blood and water came out.

35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is
true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that
you also may believe.

36 For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture,
"NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN."

37 And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL
LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED."

38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a
disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews,
asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus;
and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away
His body.

39 Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also
came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a
hundred pounds weight.

40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen
wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the
Jews.

41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a
garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one
had yet been laid.

42 Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation,
since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Marked in the text

- **v1** “scourged Him” — Sin / warning
- **v2** “a crown of thorns” — Sin / warning
- **v4** “I find no guilt in Him” — God — His character & actions
- **v5** “Behold, the Man!” — God — His character & actions
- **v7** “He made Himself out to be the Son of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v11** “unless it had been given you from above” — God — His character & actions
- **v11** “has the greater sin” — Sin / warning
- **v12** “you are no friend of Caesar” — Sin / warning
- **v13** “Gabbatha” — Time / place / contrast
- **v14** “about the sixth hour” — Time / place / contrast
- **v14** “Behold, your King!” — God — His character & actions
- **v15** “We have no king but Caesar” — Sin / warning
- **v17** “bearing His own cross” — God — His character & actions
- **v17** “Golgotha” — Time / place / contrast
- **v19** “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “What I have written I have written” — Time / place / contrast
- **v26** “Woman, behold, your son!” — Promise / blessing
- **v27** “Behold, your mother!” — Promise / blessing
- **v28** “all things had already been accomplished” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “I am thirsty” — Time / place / contrast
- **v30** “It is finished!” — God — His character & actions
- **v30** “It is finished” — God — His character & actions
- **v30** “gave up His spirit” — God — His character & actions
- **v33** “they did not break His legs” — God — His character & actions
- **v34** “pierced His side with a spear” — Sin / warning
- **v34** “blood and water” — Promise / blessing
- **v35** “so that you also may believe” — Command / instruction
- **v36** “NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN” — Promise / blessing
- **v37** “THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED” — Time / place / contrast
- **v38** “a secret one for fear of the Jews” — Sin / warning
- **v41** “a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid” — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** “King” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v24** “Scripture” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

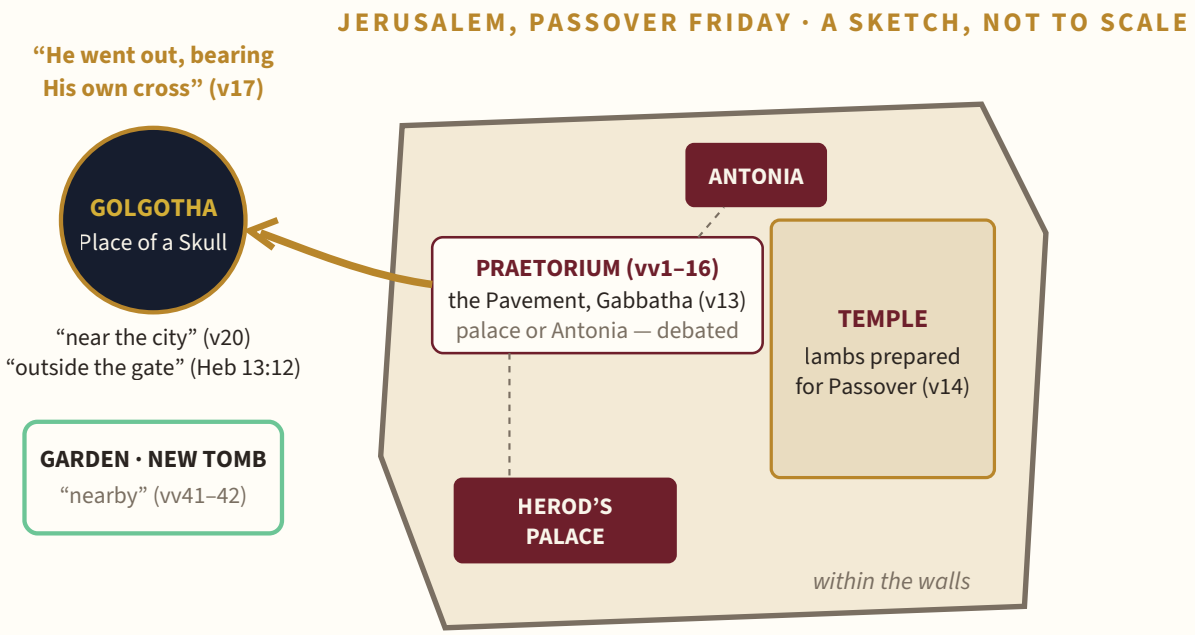
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 19:5

"Jesus then came out, wearing ⚠the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "△Behold, the Man!""

FIGURE · FROM THE PRAETORIUM TO THE GARDEN



Locations follow the text's clues; the exact sites of the Praetorium and Golgotha are still discussed.

Follow the gold arrow: Jesus is led out of the city to Golgotha, and the garden tomb lies close by — every place John names sits within a short walk of the temple where the lambs were being prepared.

Setting. Friday of Passover week, Jerusalem. John 18 ended with Pilate declaring "I find no guilt in Him" and the crowd choosing Barabbas. Chapter 19 runs from the Praetorium in the early morning, to the judgment seat at the Pavement "about the sixth hour" (v14), out of the city to Golgotha, and to a new tomb in a nearby garden before the Sabbath began at sunset (vv31, 42). John was there — at the cross (vv26, 35).

Structure:

- vv1–7 — **behold the Man:** scourged, crowned with thorns, robed in purple, slapped and mocked as "King of the Jews." Pilate brings Him out: "I find no guilt in Him … Behold, the Man!" The chief priests cry "Crucify, crucify!" and reveal the real charge: "He made Himself out to be the Son of God" (v7).
- vv8–16 — **behold your King:** Pilate, more afraid, asks "Where are You from?" Jesus is silent, then answers: "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above" (v11). "If you release this Man, you

are no friend of Caesar" (v12). At Gabbatha: "Behold, your King!" — "We have no king but Caesar." He hands Him over (v16).

- vv17–27 — **the King on the cross:** bearing His own cross to Golgotha, crucified between two men; the title in Hebrew, Latin and Greek — "What I have written I have written"; the soldiers divide the garments and cast lots for the seamless tunic (Ps 22:18); the women at the cross; "Woman, behold, your son! … Behold, your mother!"
- vv28–30 — **finished:** knowing all was accomplished, "I am thirsty"; sour wine on hyssop; "It is finished!"; He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.
- vv31–37 — **pierced:** the legs of the two broken, His not, for He was already dead; the spear, blood and water; the eyewitness's testimony "so that you also may believe"; two Scriptures fulfilled (Exod 12:46 / Ps 34:20; Zech 12:10).
- vv38–42 — **buried:** Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple, asks for the body; Nicodemus brings about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes; linen wrappings and spices; a new tomb in a garden, nearby, because of the day of preparation.

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Jesus" ×19 — vv1, 5, 9 (×2), 11, 13, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30, 33, 38 (×2), 40, 42.
- "Pilate" ×15 — vv1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 31, 38 (×2).
- "crucify / crucified" ×12 — vv6 (×3), 10, 15 (×2), 16, 18, 20, 23, 32, 41.
- "Jews" ×11 — vv3, 7, 12, 14, 20, 21 (×3), 31, 38, 40 (plus "JEWS" in the title, v19).
- "King / king" ×7 — vv3, 12, 14, 15 (×2), 21 (×2) (plus "KING" in the title, v19).
- "write / wrote / written" ×6 — vv19 (×2), 20, 21, 22 (×2).
- "mother" ×5 — vv25 (×2), 26 (×2), 27.
- "Scripture" ×4 — vv24, 28, 36, 37; "to fulfill" ×3 — vv24, 28, 36; "accomplished / finished" (*tetelestai*) ×2 — vv28, 30.
- "Behold" ×4 — vv4, 5, 14, 27 (plus "behold" v26).
- "cross" ×4 — vv17, 19, 25, 31.
- "authority" ×3 — vv10 (×2), 11; "Caesar" ×3 — vv12 (×2), 15.
- "preparation" ×3 — vv14, 31, 42; "Sabbath" ×2 — v31.
- "legs" ×3 — vv31, 32, 33; "Hebrew" ×3 — vv13, 17, 20; "sour wine" ×3 — vv29 (×2), 30.
- "body" ×3 — vv38 (×2), 40; "garden" ×2 — v41; "tomb" ×2 — vv41, 42.
- "guilt" ×2 — vv4, 6; "testified / testimony" ×2 — v35.

Contrasts: a purple robe and a crown of thorns ⟷ the real King (vv2–5). Pilate's claimed authority ⟷ authority "from above" (vv10–11). "Behold, your King!" ⟷ "We have no king but Caesar" (vv14–15). The priests' "He said, 'I am King'" ⟷ Pilate's "What I have written I have written" (vv21–22). The soldiers dividing His clothes ⟷ the women standing by His cross (vv23–25). The legs of the two broken ⟷ not a bone of His (vv32–36). Disciples hidden "for fear of the Jews" ⟷ Joseph and Nicodemus coming into the open (vv38–39). A place of execution ⟷ a garden (v41).

Shape of the chapter: two courtroom scenes (1–7, 8–16), three scenes at the cross (17–27), one word (28–30), one wound (31–37), one burial (38–42). It begins with a whip and ends with spices; it begins in a palace and ends in a garden; and in the middle a single word, *tetelestai*, turns the whole story.

Chapter theme (my words): The world put Jesus on trial and condemned the only innocent Man who ever lived, yet every move it made was under authority from above and fulfilled the Scripture. On the cross the King finished the work of redemption and gave up His own spirit; the soldier's spear proved He was dead, and two secret disciples laid Him in a new tomb.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 19:11

"Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, ⚠ unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you ⚠ has the greater sin.""

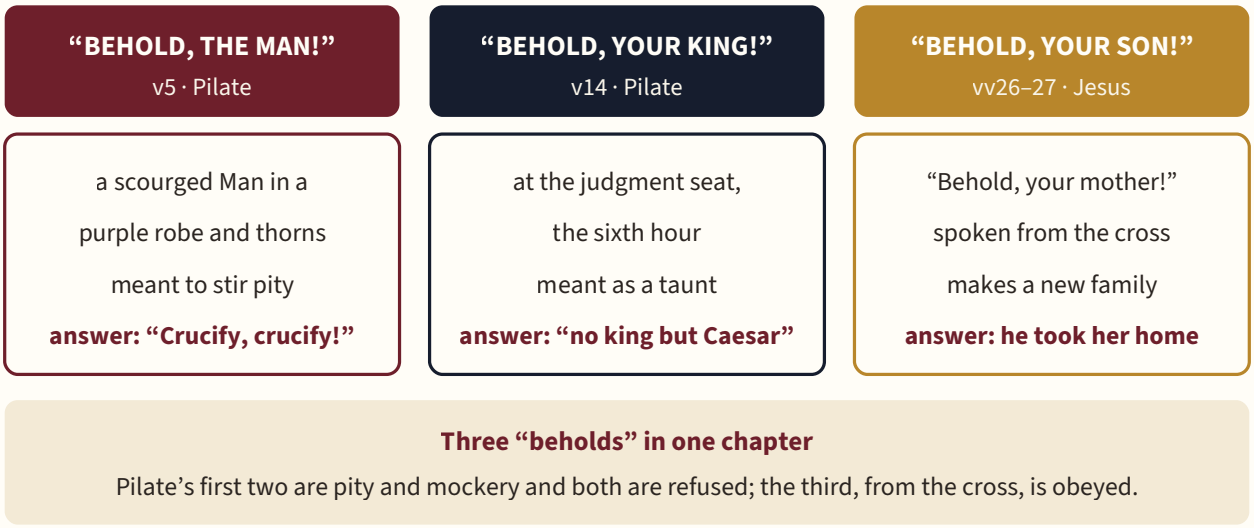
FIGURE · SCRIPTURE FULFILLED AT THE CROSS

JOHN 19	WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CROSS	THE SCRIPTURE IT FULFILLED
v24	They divided My outer garments … cast lots	**Psalm 22:18** the soldiers did these things
v28	"I am thirsty" — sour wine on hyssop	**Psalm 69:21** "for my thirst … vinegar"
v36	Not a bone of Him shall be broken	**Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20** the Passover lamb
v37	They shall look on Him whom they pierced	**Zechariah 12:10** fulfilled now — and at His coming
vv38–42	Laid in a rich man's new tomb	**Isaiah 53:9** an echo John does not name

Soldiers, priests and Pilate act freely — and every act lands exactly where the Scripture said it would.

Read across each row: John names four Scriptures fulfilled in a few hours, and the burial echoes a fifth.

FIGURE · THREE "BEHOLDS"



Compare the three cards: two invitations to look at Jesus are refused by the crowd, and one word from Jesus Himself creates a household.

Who is really on trial? Pilate sits on the judgment seat, but John shows a frightened man. Three times he says "I find no guilt in Him" (18:38; 19:4, 6), and still he scourges Him and hands Him over. Guzik: "It appeared that Jesus was on trial before Pilate, but in an even greater sense Pilate was on trial before Jesus." The fear that finally decides it is not fear of God but fear of Caesar (v12) — Morris, quoted by Guzik: "Humanly speaking, the mention of Caesar sealed Jesus' fate."

"Behold, the Man!" (v5). Pilate meant pity, maybe contempt — Tasker's paraphrase, quoted by Guzik: "Here he is – the poor fellow." John lets the words mean more. Sproul, in his commentary *John*: the crowd should have said, "Yes, here is man as God intended him to be, as God designed him to be, man with no fault in Him." The true Man stands in a mock robe, and the crowd answers, "Crucify!"

The real charge (v7). Not sedition but blasphemy: "He made Himself out to be the Son of God." The leaders had understood His claim all along (5:18; 10:33). Guzik and Henry both note that this charge made Pilate *more* afraid (v8) — a pagan who suspected he was dealing with something more than a man.

Authority from above and the greater sin (v11). Pilate's power is real but lent. Sproul (from the opening of a broadcast of this sermon) says it was through the providence of God that Pilate was ordained to play his part in this drama, and that Jesus knew it. Guzik: "In reality, God held the power." And sin has degrees: the one who delivered Jesus — Caiaphas, with Judas behind him — has the greater sin; Pilate has less, but not none.

The sixth hour (v14) and Mark's third hour (Mark 15:25). Guzik lays out three explanations — different ways of reckoning the hours, approximate time markers, or an early copying slip — and does not force one. What John wants us to notice is the day: the Preparation for the Passover, when the lambs were being made ready.

"We have no king but Caesar" (v15). The chief priests, of all people, disown the King of Israel. Maclaren, quoted by Guzik: "Driven by hate, they deliberately disown their Messianic hope, and repudiate their national glory." Henry records it without softening. Spurgeon's "Ecce Rex" answers from the other side: the thorn-crowned Man really is the King — "No thorn no throne."

The title (vv19–22). Pilate's placard meant to mock the Jews; God made it a proclamation in the world's three languages. Spurgeon: "Divine Providence always has its way!" Henry: it foretold "that Jesus Christ should be a Saviour to all nations, and not to the Jews only."

Mary and John (vv25–27). Jesus, dying, provides for His mother — honoring the fifth commandment to the end — and joins her to the beloved disciple. "Woman" is not cold (Clarke via Guzik: "It conveys no idea of disrespect"). Henry: "Those that truly love Christ, and are beloved of him, will be glad of an opportunity to do any service to him or his." The Roman church has built a great deal on this verse about Mary; I read it as a son caring for his mother and creating the first family of the cross, which is what the text says.

"It is finished" (v30). One word, *tetelestai*, perfect tense — the work completed and standing complete. It is not a gasp of defeat: "It is the cry of One who has completed a tremendous labor" (Spurgeon, via Guzik); "Jesus died with the cry of the Victor on His lips" (Morris). Sproul: "His mission had been fulfilled." Spurgeon: "Why improve on what is finished? Why add to that which is complete?" Tenney's "Paid in full" (via Guzik) is a fair picture of the result.

He gave up His spirit. The Passion is full of hands passing Jesus along — Judas, the priests, Pilate all "hand Him over" (*paradidōmi*). In verse 30 He hands over His own spirit. He had said so: "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative" (10:18). Henry: "composing himself, as it were, to fall asleep."

The blood and water (v34). All four teachers take it first as proof of real death, witnessed by John (v35). Beyond that they read it as a sign: Henry, "blood for remission, water for regeneration"; Spurgeon, blood for sin's guilt and water for its power. Those are applications, not something John explains; I hold them loosely and hold the fact firmly — He really died.

"They shall look on Him whom they pierced" (v37). John quotes Zechariah 12:10, and he will quote it again in Revelation 1:7 of the Second Coming. Guzik (with Trench) keeps it open: the piercing is done, the mourning look is still ahead. Henry sees a first fulfillment in those of His killers who repented. My own reading is futurist: Zechariah 12 describes a day when God pours out the Spirit of grace on the house of David and Israel as a nation looks on the One they pierced and mourns — a promise to national Israel God has not withdrawn.

Word study (Greek):

- **scourged — *mastigoō* (G3146):** to whip with the Roman lash.
- **Behold — *idou* (G3708) / the Man — *anthrōpos* (G444):** "Look — the human being!" (*Ecce homo*).
- **authority — *exousia* (G1849):** Pilate's boast (v10) and Jesus' answer (v11).
- **from above — *anōthen* (G509):** the word of 3:3 and 3:31; Pilate's power is lent.
- **greater — *meizōn* (G3173) / sin — *hamartia* (G266):** degrees of guilt.
- **friend — *philos* (G5384):** "a friend of Caesar," a political title Pilate could not afford to lose.
- **Pavement — *lithostrōtos* (G3038) / Gabbatha (G1042):** the stone platform of the judgment seat; both only here.
- **preparation — *paraskeuē* (G3904):** the day of preparing the Passover (vv14, 31, 42).
- **Golgotha (G1115) / Skull — *kranion* (G2898).**
- **inscription — *titlos* (G5102):** the placard; only vv19–20.
- **tunic — *chitōn* (G5509) / seamless — *araphos* (G729):** woven in one piece; *araphos* only here.
- **cast lots — *lanchanō* (G2975).**
- **I am thirsty — *dipsaō* (G1372).**

- **finished / accomplished — *teleō* (G5055):** *tetelestai*, perfect tense, vv28 and 30.
- **bowed — *klinō* (G2827); gave up — *paradidōmi* (G3860); spirit — *pneuma* (G4151).**
- **pierced — *nyssō* (G3572):** the spear-jab (v34); **pierced — *ekkenteō* (G1574):** pierced through (v37; Rev 1:7).
- **bone — *osteon* (G3747) / broken — *syntribō* (G4937).**
- **testimony — *martyria* (G3141); true — *alēthinos* (G228).**
- **secret — *kryptō* (G2928):** Joseph "hidden" for fear.
- **garden — *kēpos* (G2779); new — *kainos* (G2537); tomb — *mnēmeion* (G3419).**

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Pilate is the one on trial** — the judge is afraid; the Prisoner is not (Guzik).
2. **All authority is borrowed** — "from above" (v11).
3. **Sin has degrees, and every degree is still sin** (v11).
4. **The people chose Caesar** (v15) — every man makes the same choice in smaller words.
5. **The thorns built the throne** — "No thorn no throne" (Spurgeon).
6. **The title preached the gospel in three languages** (Henry: "a Saviour to all nations").
7. **Even from the cross, Jesus keeps the fifth commandment** (vv26–27).
8. **"Finished" is a perfect tense** — done, and it stays done (vv28, 30).
9. **He handed over His own spirit** — no one took His life (v30; 10:18).
10. **The cross made secret disciples public** (vv38–39).

Cross-references: Gen 3:18; 22:6–8; Exod 12:46; Num 9:12; Deut 21:22–23; Ps 22:1, 15, 18; 34:20; 69:21; Isa 50:6; 52:14; 53:5, 7, 9, 12; Zech 12:10–14; Matt 27:11–61; Mark 15:1–47; 15:25; Luke 23:1–56; John 1:29; 3:14; 5:18; 10:17–18; 12:32–33; 17:4; 18:28–40; Rom 13:1; 1 Cor 5:7; 15:3–4; Gal 3:13; Heb 10:12–14; 13:12–13; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 John 5:6–8; Rev 1:7.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 19:38

"After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but ⚠a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body."

Promise to trust — "It is finished." I have sat with men who believe they still owe God — another year clean, another program finished, another apology made — before He will take them back. I have lived that way myself. *Tetelestai* is a perfect tense: done, and it stays done. Christ did not make a down payment on my debt; He paid it. My obedience now is the answer of a forgiven man, not the price of forgiveness. When I feel the old pull to add something to the cross, I will say it out loud: it is finished.

Sin to confess — the fear of man. Pilate knew the truth and handed Jesus over anyway because "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar." I confess the times I have done the wrong thing to keep my standing — with the guys, with a boss, with my family, with my own image. The fear of man sealed the worst verdict in history. I want the fear of God to be bigger in me than the fear of Caesar.

Truth to live under — authority from above. Many of the men I serve live under someone's authority every day — an officer, a judge, a parole board, a sponsor, a boss. Jesus stood before the most powerful man in Judea and was not intimidated, because He knew where that power came from. That doesn't make me disrespectful; it makes me unafraid. No one has authority over my life except what God gives — and He is my Father.

Example to follow — the Son who cared for His mother. In the worst hour of His life, Jesus made sure His mother would be taken care of and put her in the hands of a man who loved Him. If He could think of her from the cross, I can make the phone call, pay the bill, make the visit I have been putting off. And like John, I can take someone "into my own household" — a brother who has nowhere to go this holiday.

Command to obey — come out of hiding. Joseph and Nicodemus were secret disciples until the cross made them brave. Spurgeon: "Be a disciple by all means, but not secretly." This week I will say plainly, to at least one person who doesn't know, that I belong to Jesus.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and still handed Him over to protect himself. Where am I tempted to do the wrong thing to keep my standing with someone? (19:12–16; Prov 29:25) *"If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar" — the fear of man sealed the verdict.*
2. Whose authority am I under right now — a judge, an officer, a boss, a parole board — and what changes if that authority is "given … from above"? (19:10–11; Rom 13:1) *Borrowed power answers to God; Jesus was not intimidated by it.*
3. "We have no king but Caesar." What "Caesar" have I been tempted to put on the throne instead of Christ? (19:14–15) *The leaders disowned their King to keep their place.*

4. From the cross Jesus made John and Mary into family. Who has God given me to look after — or to be looked after by? (19:25–27) *"Behold, your son! … Behold, your mother!" — the first household of the cross.*
5. If "It is finished" is true, what am I still trying to add to Christ's work to feel right with God? (19:30; Heb 10:14) *A perfect tense: done, and it stays done. Nothing to add.*
6. Joseph and Nicodemus had followed Jesus in secret. Is there a place where I am still a secret disciple — and what would coming into the open look like this week? (19:38–40; 12:42) *The cross that scattered the Twelve drew the hidden two into the light.*

Worship. Behold the Man — the only one who ever was what God made man to be. Behold your King — crowned with thorns, enthroned on a cross, His title written in every language. Behold the Lamb — not a bone broken, His side pierced, His blood shed, His work finished. One day every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him. I want to look on Him now, and believe.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, King of the Jews and King of my life — thank You that You were scourged for me, mocked for me, lifted up for me, and that You cried "It is finished" over all my sin. Forgive me for the times I have chosen Caesar over You and the fear of man over the fear of God. Take me out of hiding. Give me the heart of a son who cares for his own, and the courage of Joseph and Nicodemus. Let me rest today in Your finished work, and keep me and the men I serve looking on You until the day we see You face to face. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 20

My Lord and My God — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The tomb is empty and the Lord is alive, and He comes to grieving, frightened and stubborn people with their names, His peace, His wounds and His Spirit. John wrote it all down so that I, who have not seen, may believe and have life in His name.

00 The Text

JOHN 20 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

2 So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

3 So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb.

4 The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first;

5 and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in.

6 And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there,

7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself.

8 So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed.

9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

10 So the disciples went away again to their own homes.

11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb;

12 and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.

13 And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means, Teacher).

17 Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"

18 Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her.

19 So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

23 "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing."

28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "while it was still dark" — Time / place / contrast
- **v1** "the stone already taken away from the tomb" — Time / place / contrast
- **v2** "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb" — Sin / warning
- **v7** "rolled up in a place by itself" — Time / place / contrast
- **v8** "he saw and believed" — Promise / blessing
- **v9** "He must rise again from the dead" — God — His character & actions
- **v15** "Whom are you seeking?" — Command / instruction
- **v16** "Mary!" — God — His character & actions
- **v16** "Rabboni!" — Time / place / contrast
- **v16** "Rabboni" — Time / place / contrast
- **v17** "Stop clinging to Me" — Command / instruction
- **v17** "I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God" — Promise / blessing
- **v18** "I have seen the Lord" — Promise / blessing
- **v19** "the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews" — Sin / warning
- **v20** "He showed them both His hands and His side" — God — His character & actions
- **v20** "The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord" — Promise / blessing
- **v21** "as the Father has sent Me, I also send you" — Command / instruction
- **v22** "He breathed on them" — God — His character & actions
- **v22** "Receive the Holy Spirit" — Promise / blessing
- **v23** "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them" — Command / instruction
- **v25** "I will not believe" — Sin / warning
- **v27** "do not be unbelieving, but believing" — Command / instruction
- **v28** "My Lord and my God!" — God — His character & actions
- **v28** "My Lord and my God" — God — His character & actions
- **v29** "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed" — Promise / blessing
- **v31** "these have been written so that you may believe" — Command / instruction

- **v31** “believing you may have life in His name” — Promise / blessing
- **v1** “tomb” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v19** “Peace be with you” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

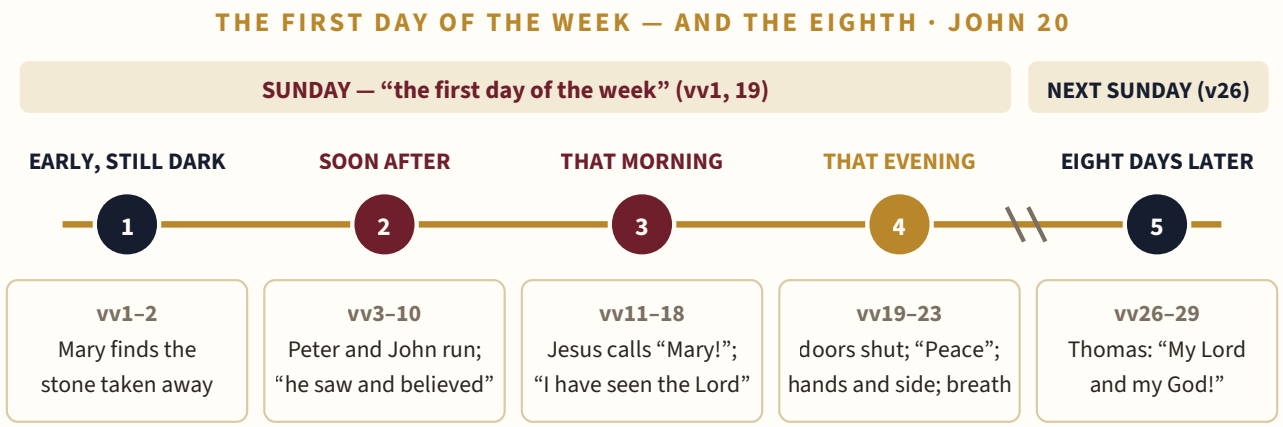
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 20:8

"So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and ☆ he saw and believed."

FIGURE · TWO SUNDAYS



Every scene ends with someone who has seen the Lord — and the last word goes to those who have not seen (v29).

Follow the five scenes left to right: four on the first day of the week, one a week later, and in each one someone sees the risen Lord.

Setting. Jerusalem, the first day of the week after the crucifixion — Sunday — from before dawn (v1) to evening (v19), then one week later (v26). Places: the garden tomb of 19:41, and a room with shut doors where the disciples hid "for fear of the Jews" (v19). John himself is "the other disciple whom Jesus loved" (v2).

Structure:

- vv1–10 — **the empty tomb:** Mary Magdalene comes while it is still dark and sees the stone taken away; she runs to Peter and John: "They have taken away the Lord." The two run; John arrives first and looks in; Peter enters and sees the linen wrappings and the face-cloth rolled up by itself; John enters, "saw and believed" — though they did not yet understand the Scripture that He must rise (v9).
- vv11–18 — **Mary:** weeping outside the tomb, she sees two angels where the body had lain; she turns, sees Jesus, takes Him for the gardener; He says, "Mary!" — "Rabboni!"; "Stop clinging to Me … go to My brethren"; she announces, "I have seen the Lord."
- vv19–23 — **the locked room:** evening, doors shut; Jesus stands in their midst — "Peace be with you"; He shows His hands and side; they rejoice; "as the Father has sent Me, I also send you"; He breathes on them — "Receive the Holy Spirit"; forgiving and retaining sins.

- vv24–29 — **Thomas:** absent, he hears "We have seen the Lord!" and refuses: "Unless I see … I will not believe." Eight days later Jesus comes, invites him to reach with finger and hand; "My Lord and my God!"; "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."
- vv30–31 — **the purpose:** many other signs not written; "these have been written so that you may believe … and that believing you may have life in His name."

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Jesus" ×14 — vv2, 12, 14 (×2), 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31.
- "see / sees / saw / seen" ×13 — vv1, 5, 6, 8, 12, 14, 18, 20, 25 (×2), 27, 29 (×2).
- "disciple(s)" ×11 — vv2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 30.
- "tomb" ×9 — vv1 (×2), 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11 (×2).
- "believe / believed / believing" ×7 — vv8, 25, 27, 29 (×2), 31 (×2) (plus "unbelieving," v27).
- "laid / lying" ×7 — vv2, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 15.
- "Lord" ×6 — vv2, 13, 18, 20, 25, 28.
- "hand(s)" ×5 — vv20, 25 (×2), 27 (×2); "side" ×3 — vv20, 25, 27; "nails" ×2 — v25; "finger" ×2 — vv25, 27.
- "weeping / weep / wept" ×4 — vv11 (×2), 13, 15.
- "Father" ×4 — vv17 (×3), 21.
- "first" ×4 — vv1, 4, 8, 19; "stood / standing" ×4 — vv11, 14, 19, 26.
- "Peace be with you" ×3 — vv19, 21, 26; "ran / running" ×3 — vv2, 4 (×2); "sins" ×3 — v23.
- "Woman" ×2 — vv13, 15; "doors" ×2 — vv19, 26; "send / sent" ×2 — v21.

Contrasts: darkness (v1) ⟷ the risen Light. "They have taken away the Lord" (v2) ⟷ "I have seen the Lord" (v18). Lazarus bound (11:44) ⟷ the wrappings left behind (vv5–7). Weeping (vv11–15) ⟷ rejoicing (v20). The gardener (v15) ⟷ the risen Lord. Doors shut for fear (v19) ⟷ "Peace be with you." "I will not believe" (v25) ⟷ "My Lord and my God!" (v28). Seeing and believing (v29a) ⟷ not seeing and yet believing (v29b).

Shape of the chapter: four scenes, each ending with someone who has seen the Lord — John (v8), Mary (v18), the ten (v20), Thomas (v28) — and then a turn to the reader who has not seen (vv29–31). It moves from an empty tomb to a full confession, and from "they have taken away the Lord" to "My Lord and my God."

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is risen. He shows Himself to the grieving, the afraid and the stubborn — by His word, His wounds and His breath — turns deserters into brothers and witnesses, and gives the Gospel's purpose: that we who have not seen may believe He is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name.

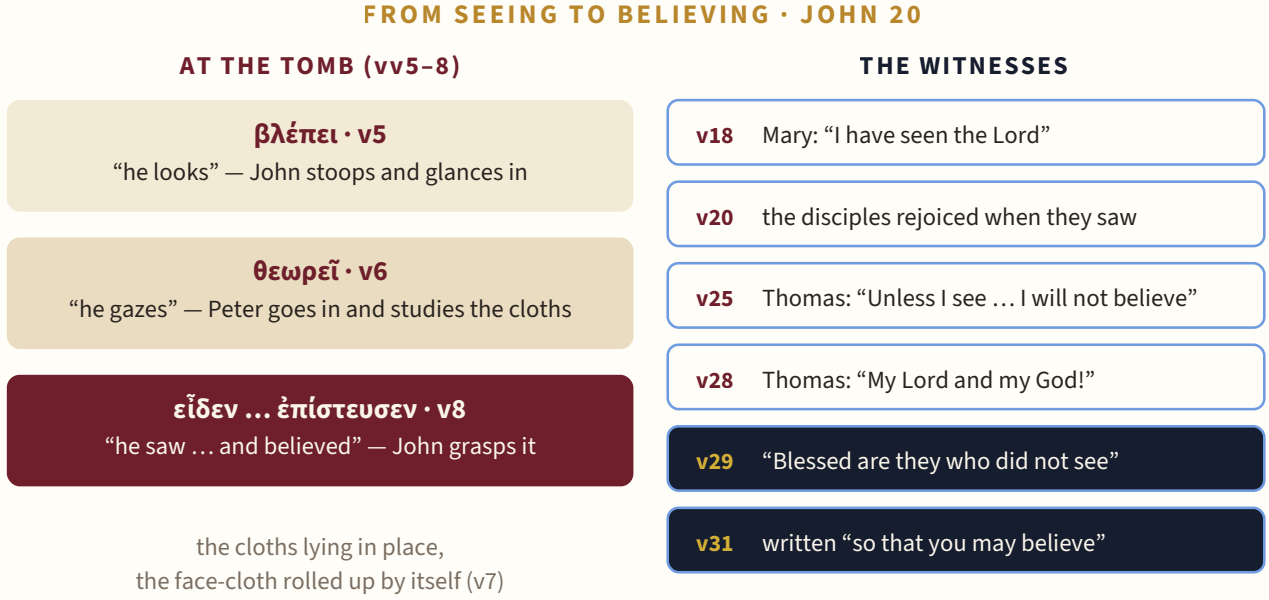
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 20:17

"Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'""

FIGURE · FROM SEEING TO BELIEVING



On the left, John's three verbs at the tomb move from a glance to understanding; on the right, the chapter's witnesses lead to the reader, who believes without seeing.

What did John see that made him believe (vv5–8)? Not yet the risen Lord, but the grave clothes: the linen lying there and the face-cloth "rolled up in a place by itself." Barclay, quoted by Guzik: they "did not look as if they had been put off or taken off." Thieves do not unwrap a body and fold the cloths. Henry adds that the disciples' slowness — "as yet they knew not the scripture" — is itself an argument: these were not men primed to imagine a resurrection. Guzik: the fact of the resurrection is the start; Scripture gives its meaning.

John and the other Gospels. Matthew, Mark and Luke mention several women and angels who speak first. John tells one woman's story, though her "we do not know" (v2) shows she was not alone. Sproul, in Ligonier's summary

of his sermon, showed this from the text itself and worked through other seeming inconsistencies. Different eyewitnesses tell the same morning from where they stood.

Why didn't Mary recognize Him (vv14–16)? Tears, the half-light, the last thing she expected. Whatever the reason, she knew Him by His voice speaking her name. Guzik: "Jesus didn't reveal Himself to Mary by telling her who He was, but by telling her who she was to Him." It is John 10:3 come true — He "calls his own sheep by name."

"Stop clinging to Me" (v17). Not "never touch Me" — a week later He tells Thomas to touch (v27). Guzik: stop holding on, not a ban on touch. Sproul, cited from his commentary *John*: Jesus was telling Mary that He was not yet leaving to return to heaven. Spurgeon: "Embrace me not; there will be time in heaven for that" — there was a message to carry. Henry: "Public service ought to be preferred before private satisfaction."

"My Father and your Father, and My God and your God." Jesus does not say "our Father" — His sonship is unique — but He shares it: what He is by nature, we become by grace. And He calls the deserters "My brethren." Spurgeon: "They were his brethren still, though they had forsaken him."

Peace and wounds (vv19–20). Jesus walks into a room of men who had abandoned Him and says, "Peace be with you," then shows His hands and side. The wounds prove identity — Henry: "Christ's wounds were to speak on earth that it was he himself" — and they are the price of the peace He speaks.

What happened when He breathed on them (v22)? *Emphysaō*, the verb of Genesis 2:7: a new creation. Guzik ties the breath to the creation account and quotes Dods: "His very own Spirit was imparted to them." Some read this as a real first gift of the Spirit for their mission, with Pentecost the full outpouring; others as an acted promise fulfilled in Acts 2. I hold the first loosely, and hold firmly that Pentecost (Acts 2) is when the Spirit came to baptize the church.

Forgiving and retaining sins (v23). Rome built the sacrament of penance on this verse. The grammar points the other way: "have been forgiven … have been retained" are perfect passives — the church announces what God has already done. The church's authority is the gospel: tell the repentant believer, with Christ's authority, that he is forgiven; tell the unrepentant the truth. Guzik takes the passage as a pattern for the church's ongoing ministry.

Was Thomas a doubter or a refuser (vv24–25)? Guzik: "Thomas didn't doubt; he plainly and strongly refused to believe." He had missed the meeting (Maclaren, via Guzik: he "went away to brood in a corner by himself"), and Henry warns, "Those know not what they lose who carelessly absent themselves." Yet Henry is fair: "Thomas is not Judas." Jesus quotes Thomas's own terms back to him — and Thomas, says Spurgeon, probably never reached out his hand at all.

"My Lord and my God!" (v28). Not an exclamation but a confession "said to Him." Spurgeon: "a most plain and hearty confession of the true and proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ." It closes the circle of 1:1 — "the Word was God." Jesus accepts it; a mere man would have torn his clothes.

The last beatitude (v29) and the purpose (vv30–31). "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." Sproul: "If you're a Christian, you're included in that benediction." Henry: Christ calls such faith blessed because it shows more of God's grace. Then John tells us why he wrote — Sproul calls John the "most theological" of the Gospels, and Henry says "it was written to bring men to believe." The book exists so that we may believe and have life.

Word study (Greek):

- **sees — *blepō* (G991):** to look (vv1, 5).
- **sees — *theōreō* (G2334):** to gaze, observe (v6).

- **saw — *horaō / eidon* (G3708):** to see, perceive (vv8, 18, 20, 25, 29).
- **stooping and looking — *parakyptō* (G3879):** to bend and peer in (v5).
- **linen wrappings — *othonion* (G3608):** the strips of 19:40.
- **face-cloth — *soudarion* (G4676):** as at Lazarus's tomb (11:44).
- **rolled up — *entylissō* (G1794):** folded, rolled together (v7).
- **must — *dei* (G1163) / rise — *anistēmi* (G450):** divine necessity (v9).
- **weeping — *klaiō* (G2799):** loud mourning (vv11–15).
- **gardener — *kēpouros* (G2780).**
- **Rabboni (G4462):** "my Teacher" (also Mark 10:51).
- **cling / touch — *haptomai* (G680):** present imperative with *mē* — "stop clinging."
- **ascended — *anabainō* (G305); brethren — *adelphos* (G80).**
- **peace — *eirēnē* (G1515):** vv19, 21, 26.
- **sent — *apostellō* (G649); send — *pempō* (G3992).**
- **breathed on — *emphysaō* (G1720):** only here in the NT; LXX Gen 2:7.
- **receive — *lambanō* (G2983).**
- **forgive — *aphiēmi* (G863); retain — *krateō* (G2902):** perfect passives in v23.
- **Didymus (G1324):** "Twin."
- **imprint — *typos* (G5179); nails — *hēlos* (G2247).**
- **unbelieving — *apistos* (G571); believing — *pistos* (G4103).**
- **Lord — *kyrios* (G2962); God — *theos* (G2316).**
- **blessed — *makarios* (G3107).**
- **signs — *sēmeion* (G4592); believe — *pisteuō* (G4100).**

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The first believer believed before he understood** (vv8–9).
2. **The grave clothes are a witness** — no thief folds the cloths (v7).
3. **The risen Lord is recognized by His voice** — "Mary!" (v16; 10:3).
4. **The first witness was a woman** — not the way anyone would invent it.
5. **Deserters became brothers** (v17) — Spurgeon: "his brethren still."
6. **He came through locked doors with peace, not blame** (vv19, 21, 26).
7. **A new creation breath** — *emphysaō*, Genesis 2:7 (v22).
8. **We announce forgiveness; God grants it** — perfect passives (v23).
9. **Thomas refused — and was still welcomed** ("Thomas is not Judas," Henry).
10. **The last beatitude is for us** (v29; Sproul: "you're included in that benediction").

Cross-references: Gen 2:7; Ps 16:10; 30:5; Isa 53:10–12; Ezek 37:9–10; Matt 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; 10:51; Luke 24:1–49; John 1:1, 18; 2:19–22; 10:3, 14–18; 11:25–26, 44; 14:19, 27; 15:15; 16:7, 16–22; 17:18; 21:24–25; Acts 1:3; 2:1–4, 27; 13:35; Rom 1:4; 10:9; 1 Cor 15:3–8, 20; Heb 2:11–12; 10:24–25; 1 Pet 1:3, 8; 1 John 1:1–3; 5:13.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 20:21

"So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.""

Promise to trust — He knows my name. Mary was crying too hard to recognize Him, and Jesus didn't argue with her; He said her name. I have men at the table who think God knows them only as a file number, a case, a disappointment. The risen Lord calls His own sheep by name. When I can't see Him for the tears, I can still listen for His voice in His Word.

Command to obey — "I also send you." Jesus didn't leave the disciples in the locked room. He gave them peace, showed them His wounds, breathed His Spirit on them and sent them out. Fear had locked them in; the mission sent them out. This week I will go to one man God puts on my heart — the one who just got out, the one who relapsed, the one who stopped coming — and tell him the good news that sins are forgiven in Jesus' name.

Sin to confess — Thomas's empty chair. Thomas missed the meeting and then dug in. I know that pattern: when I am hurting or ashamed, I isolate, and when I isolate, my unbelief grows. I confess the Sundays and group nights I have skipped because I didn't feel like being seen. "Those know not what they lose" (Henry). I will be in the room this week.

Truth to live in — brothers, not ex-cons. "Go to My brethren." Every one of them had run off when Jesus was arrested — and the first thing He calls them after the resurrection is "brothers." I want the men I serve to hear that their worst night does not get the last word. In Christ we have His Father as our Father.

Example to follow — Thomas on his knees. Thomas's story doesn't end with "I will not believe." It ends with "My Lord and my God!" — the highest words anyone says about Jesus in the whole Gospel. If you are the hardest skeptic in the room, Jesus is not finished with you. And if you believe without seeing, you are in the beatitude: "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Mary came "while it was still dark." What darkness am I carrying to Jesus this week — and am I still coming? (20:1, 11; Ps 30:5) *Henry: "Love to Christ, if it be cordial, will be constant."*
2. Jesus called Mary by name before she recognized Him. When have I known that Jesus knew me personally — not just mankind in general? (20:15–16; 10:3) *He revealed Himself by telling her who she was to Him.*
3. The disciples were behind locked doors "for fear." What fear has me locked in right now, and what does Jesus say when He comes in? (20:19–21; 14:27) *Peace first, then His wounds, then a mission.*
4. "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." Where is Jesus sending me this week — and to whom? (20:21; 17:18) *The mission flows from the Son's mission and counts forever (Sproul).*
5. Thomas missed the meeting and dug in. When have I pulled away from the brothers — and what did it cost me? (20:24–25; Heb 10:24–25) *Henry: those who absent themselves "know not what they lose."*

6. I have not seen Jesus with my eyes. What helps me believe — and how can I help a man who is where Thomas was? (20:29–31; 1 Pet 1:8) *"Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." The book was written for exactly that.*

Worship. The stone is gone, the cloths are folded, the tomb is empty. He called a weeping woman by name, walked through a locked door with peace, breathed His Spirit on cowards and made them brothers and apostles, and bent down to the hardest heart in the room. He is the Christ, the Son of God. He is my Lord and my God.

Prayer. Risen Lord Jesus — thank You that the tomb is empty and that You know my name. Come through the locked doors of my fear and speak Your peace. Show me Your wounds when I doubt. Breathe Your Spirit on me and send me as the Father sent You. Forgive me for the times I have isolated like Thomas, and bring me back to the brothers. Bless the men I serve who have not seen and yet believe, and bring the ones still saying "I will not believe" to their knees with Thomas. My Lord and my God. Amen.

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SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 21

Breakfast on the Shore, Follow Me — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The risen Jesus does not wait for failed men to find their way back; He comes to their shore, feeds them, and asks the one question that matters. He restores me by love, sends me to feed His sheep, and tells me to quit comparing and follow Him.

00 The Text

JOHN 21 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

1 After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way.

2 Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.

3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

5 So Jesus said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No."

6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea.

8 But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.

9 So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread.

10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught."

11 Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn.

12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.

15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You

know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep.

18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."

19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"

20 Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"

21 So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?"

22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!"

23 Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"

24 This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.

Marked in the text

- **v3** "that night they caught nothing" — Sin / warning
- **v4** "the day was now breaking" — Time / place / contrast
- **v4** "the disciples did not know that it was Jesus" — Sin / warning
- **v5** "Children" — Promise / blessing
- **v6** "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat" — Command / instruction
- **v7** "It is the Lord" — God — His character & actions
- **v7** "threw himself into the sea" — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** "a charcoal fire already laid" — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** "a hundred and fifty-three" — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** "the net was not torn" — Promise / blessing
- **v12** "Come and have breakfast" — Promise / blessing
- **v13** "took the bread and gave it to them" — God — His character & actions
- **v15** "more than these" — Time / place / contrast
- **v15** "Tend My lambs" — Command / instruction
- **v16** "Shepherd My sheep" — Command / instruction
- **v17** "Peter was grieved" — Sin / warning
- **v17** "Lord, You know all things" — God — His character & actions
- **v17** "Tend My sheep" — Command / instruction
- **v18** "someone else will gird you" — Time / place / contrast
- **v19** "by what kind of death he would glorify God" — God — His character & actions
- **v19** "Follow Me!" — Command / instruction
- **v22** "until I come" — Promise / blessing
- **v22** "what is that to you?" — Sin / warning
- **v22** "You follow Me!" — Command / instruction
- **v24** "his testimony is true" — God — His character & actions
- **v25** "the world itself would not contain the books" — Time / place / contrast
- **v1** "manifested" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v15** "Simon, son of John" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v15** "love" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

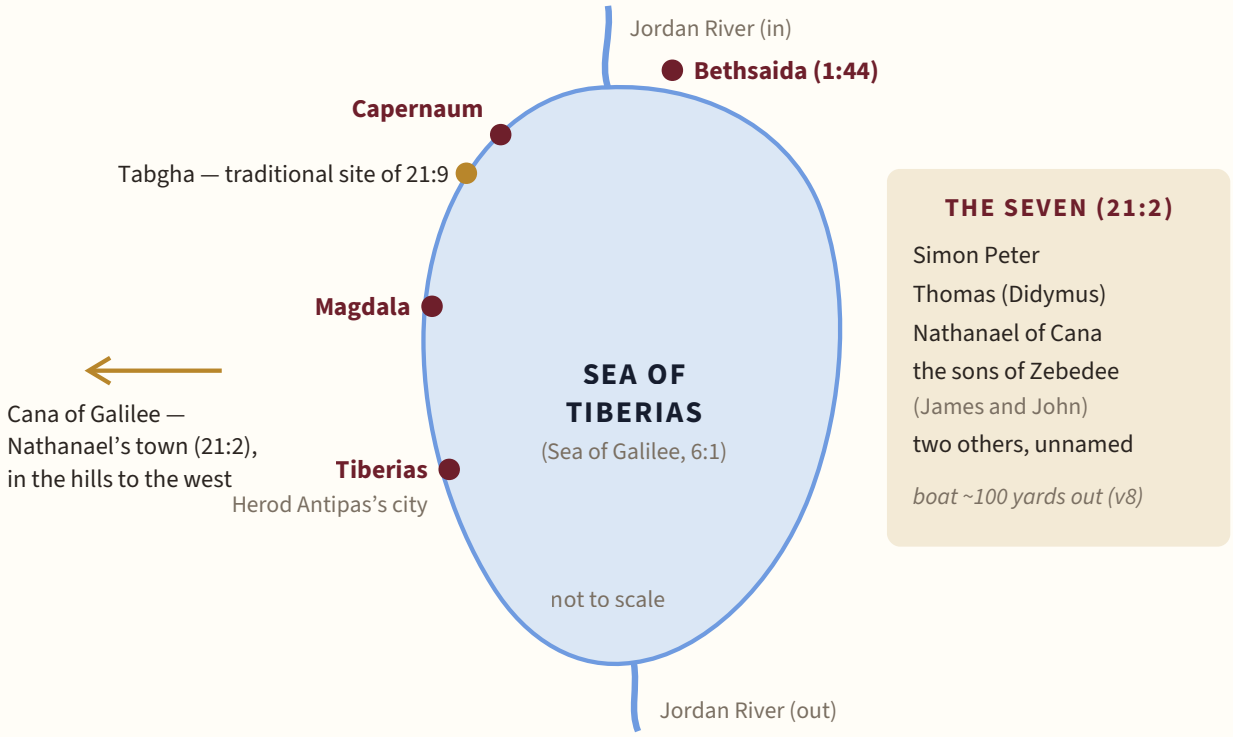
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 21:7

"Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "△ It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and ◷ threw himself into the sea."

FIGURE · THE SEA OF TIBERIAS



The disciples are back on home water in Galilee: Bethsaida was Peter's town, Capernaum his base, and later tradition places the breakfast at Tabgha on the north-west shore.

Setting. "After these things" — after the resurrection appearances in Jerusalem (John 20) — seven disciples are back in Galilee at the Sea of Tiberias. Jesus had told them He would go ahead of them to Galilee (Mark 16:7). It is night, then daybreak, on the lake; then a charcoal fire on the beach; then a walk along the shore. This is Jesus' third appearance to the disciples as a group in John (v14).

Structure:

- vv1–8 — **the empty net:** Peter says, "I am going fishing"; six go with him; that night they catch nothing. At daybreak a Stranger on the beach asks, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" — "Cast the net on the

right-hand side of the boat." The net is too full to haul. The beloved disciple: "It is the Lord." Peter puts on his garment and throws himself into the sea; the others bring the boat about a hundred yards.

- vv9–14 — **breakfast:** a charcoal fire already laid, fish on it, and bread. "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught." Peter hauls the net ashore — 153 large fish, and the net not torn. "Come and have breakfast." No one dares ask, "Who are You?" Jesus takes the bread and gives it to them, and the fish. The third manifestation.
- vv15–17 — **restored:** three times, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Three answers, "You know that I love You." Three commands: "Tend My lambs … Shepherd My sheep … Tend My sheep." Peter is grieved at the third.
- vv18–23 — **follow:** "when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you" — the death by which he would glorify God. "Follow Me!" Peter turns, sees the beloved disciple, asks, "Lord, and what about this man?" — "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!" A false rumor corrected.
- vv24–25 — **the witness:** this is the disciple who testifies and wrote; his testimony is true; the world could not contain the books.

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Jesus" ×16 — vv1, 4 (×2), 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25.
- "Peter" ×9 — vv2, 3, 7 (×2), 11, 15, 17, 20, 21; "Simon" ×8 — vv2, 3, 7, 11, 15 (×2), 16, 17; "Simon, son of John" ×3 — vv15, 16, 17.
- "Lord" ×8 — vv7 (×2), 12, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21; "It is the Lord / it was the Lord" ×3 — vv7 (×2), 12.
- "love / loved" ×9 — "love" ×7 in vv15 (×2), 16 (×2), 17 (×3); "loved" ×2 — vv7, 20 ("the disciple whom Jesus loved"). "Do you love Me?" ×4 — vv15, 16, 17 (×2).
- "know / knew / knowing" ×7 — vv4, 12, 15, 16, 17 (×2), 24; "You know" ×4 — vv15, 16, 17 (×2).
- "fish" ×7 — vv5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13; "net" ×4 — vv6, 8, 11 (×2); "boat" ×3 — vv3, 6, 8.
- "disciples" ×6 — vv1, 2, 4, 8, 12, 14; "disciple" ×4 — vv7, 20, 23, 24.
- "manifested" ×3 — vv1 (×2), 14; "third (time)" ×3 — vv14, 17 (×2).
- "Tend / Shepherd" ×3 — vv15, 16, 17; "sheep" ×2, "lambs" ×1.
- "follow / following" ×3 — vv19, 20, 22; "Follow Me!" ×2 — vv19, 22.
- "remain until I come" ×2 — vv22, 23; "what is that to you?" ×2 — vv22, 23.
- "wrote / written" ×3 — vv24, 25 (×2); "testifying / testimony" ×2 — v24.

Contrasts: night and nothing (v3) ⟷ daybreak and a full net (vv4–6). They did not know it was Jesus (v4) ⟷ "It is the Lord" (v7). Peter by the officers' charcoal fire (18:18) ⟷ Peter by Jesus' charcoal fire (21:9). Three denials (18:17, 25, 27) ⟷ three confessions (vv15–17). Young Peter girding himself and going where he wished ⟷ old Peter girded by another and led where he did not wish (v18). "What about this man?" ⟷ "You follow Me!" (vv21–22). What was said ⟷ what was not said (v23). Many things written ⟷ more than the world could hold (vv24–25).

Shape of the chapter: a night (1–3), a dawn (4–8), a meal (9–14), a conversation (15–17), a walk (18–23), a signature (24–25). It moves from the boat to the fire to the road, and from a group to one man — and ends with that man told to follow.

Chapter theme (my words): The risen Lord comes to failed men on their own shore, feeds them with His own hands, and by a second fire turns Peter's three denials into three confessions and a lifelong commission — then shuts down comparison with one command: "You follow Me!"

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 21:15

"So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs.""

FIGURE · TWO CHARCOAL FIRES

THE FIRST CHARCOAL FIRE John 18:15–27		THE SECOND CHARCOAL FIRE John 21:9–17	
WHEN	night, "for it was cold" (18:18)	WHEN	"the day was now breaking" (21:4)
WHO LIT IT	the slaves and the officers	WHO LIT IT	Jesus — "already laid" (21:9)
PETER	standing, warming himself	PETER	threw himself into the sea to reach Him
THREE TIMES	"I am not," "I am not," denied again	THREE TIMES	"You know that I love You" (21:15–17)
THE END	"a rooster crowed" (18:27)	THE END	"Tend My sheep … Follow Me!" (21:17, 19)

ἀνθρακιά (anthrakia, G439) — used only in these two scenes in the whole New Testament

John 18:18 and 21:9: the place of the fall becomes the place of the restoring

Read across each row: John uses the word for a charcoal fire only twice, and the second scene answers the first point for point.

FIGURE · THREE QUESTIONS, THREE ANSWERS, THREE COMMANDS

	JESUS ASKS	PETER ANSWERS	JESUS COMMISSIONS
v15	*agapaō* "… do you love Me more than these?"	*phileō* "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."	*boskō* "Tend My lambs."
v16	*agapaō* "… do you love Me?"	*phileō* "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."	*poimainō* "Shepherd My sheep."
v17	*phileō* "… do you love Me?"	*phileō* "Lord, You know all things …"	*boskō* "Tend My sheep."

Three denials by one fire (18:17, 25, 27) — three confessions by another
and every confession answered with work: "My lambs … My sheep … My sheep"

Follow the Greek verbs: Jesus twice asks with agapaō, Peter answers each time with phileō, and the third time Jesus takes up Peter's own word.

Was Peter wrong to go fishing (v3)? Our teachers lean different ways. Guzik lays out both views — a "compromised return to a former occupation," or simply being wise and practical — and lets the heart decide: "Whether their motives were good or bad, that night they caught nothing." Henry is gentle: "They knew not well what to do with themselves." I won't make Peter a backslider the text doesn't call one; but I notice that the old skill, without Jesus, produced nothing.

Why didn't they recognize Him (v4)? John doesn't say. It was dawn and about a hundred yards; Henry says they took Him "for some common person," not expecting Him. Guzik: "We don't know exactly why they did not know that it was Jesus." As at the tomb and on the Emmaus road, recognition is given — here through a familiar miracle (Luke 5).

The 153 fish (v11). Allegories abound (Augustine built one on seventeen). Guzik: "all we know for certain is that 153 represents the number of fish in the net," and with Tenney he sees an eyewitness and a fisherman who counted. Spurgeon draws a picture from it — God knows the exact number of His own — and from the net that did not tear: "the invisible Church is one." Henry stays practical: more than they needed, so they could sell them. I hold the number as a fact and Spurgeon's picture as a picture.

Two charcoal fires. John uses *anthrakia* only at 18:18 and 21:9. He doesn't comment; he lets the word do it. Peter denied Jesus three times at one fire; Jesus asks him three questions at another. Henry: the third question "put him in mind of his threefold denial of Christ, and was plainly designed to do so." Sproul's article grants that reading but adds another possibility — emphasis by repetition, as in Isaiah 6:3. Both can be true: the repetition presses home both the wound and the charge.

"More than these" (v15). Three options: more than these men love Me; more than you love these men; more than these things (the boat and nets). Sproul's sermon weighed all three (per Ligonier's summary). Guzik takes the first — Peter had boasted, "I will lay down my life for You" (13:37) — and Henry presses the third: "Those only love

Christ indeed that love him better than all the delights of sense and all the profits of this world." Peter's answer claims no comparison at all — Spurgeon: "not as to the quantity but as to the quality of his love."

agapaō and phileō — does the change matter? Jesus asks twice with *agapaō*, Peter answers with *phileō*, and the third time Jesus uses *phileō*. Guzik reports that most commentators see a humbled, more reserved Peter. A Ligonier devotional answers that "the words are used interchangeably throughout John's gospel," and John does use both for the Father's love of the Son (3:35; 5:20) and for the beloved disciple (20:2; 21:7). I teach it carefully: the text says Peter was grieved because Jesus asked "the third time," not because He changed verbs.

Does this give Peter primacy over the church? Henry says no: "Peter himself never claimed such a power, nor did the other disciples ever own it in him." Peter's own letter calls himself a "fellow elder" and Christ the "Chief Shepherd" (1 Pet 5:1, 4). The flock is always "My sheep."

Peter's death (vv18–19). "Stretch out your hands" is widely read as crucifixion (Guzik; Henry: "some think"); that Peter was crucified upside down is later church tradition (Guzik via Clarke), not Scripture. John's phrase "by what kind of death" is the same he used of Jesus (12:33; 18:32). Peter knew it was coming (2 Pet 1:14) — and followed anyway.

"Until I come" (vv22–23). Jesus speaks of His return as real and personal (14:3). John carefully corrects the rumor: Jesus did not say John would not die, only "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?" Henry: "Let the words of Christ speak for themselves." I believe He is coming again; I also take Spurgeon's warning not to let prophecy-speculation replace following.

Who are the "we" of verse 24? The beloved disciple wrote the Gospel; "we know that his testimony is true" sounds like the circle around him vouching for him. Henry: "they ventured both this life and the other upon it." Guzik: "John gave solemn testimony to the truth of what he wrote."

Word study (Greek):

- **manifested — *phaneroō* (G5319):** to make visible; vv1 (×2), 14 — and the word of the first sign (2:11).
- **children — *paidia* (G3813):** "lads," a diminutive; Jesus calls across the water.
- **fish (to eat) — *prosphagion* (G4371):** anything eaten with bread; only here.
- **charcoal fire — *anthrakia* (G439):** only John 18:18 and 21:9.
- **fish (cooked) — *opsarion* (G3795):** the small fish of 6:9, 11.
- **torn — *schizō* (G4977):** to split; in John only of the seamless tunic (19:24) and this net.
- **love — *agapaō* (G25) / *phileō* (G5368):** Jesus' word and Peter's; in v17 Jesus uses Peter's.
- **know — *oida* (G1492) / *ginōskō* (G1097):** "You know all things; You know that I love You."
- **tend — *boskō* (G1006):** to feed, pasture (vv15, 17).
- **shepherd — *poimainō* (G4165):** the whole care of a shepherd (v16; 1 Pet 5:2).
- **lambs — *arnion* (G721); sheep — *probaton* (G4263):** always "My."
- **grieved — *lypeō* (G3076):** pained, hurt.
- **gird — *zōnnymi* (G2224):** only here (×2) and Acts 12:8.
- **follow — *akoloutheō* (G190):** present imperative — keep on following; v22 adds an emphatic "you."
- **remain — *menō* (G3306):** to abide, stay.
- **testifying / testimony — *martyreō* (G3140) / *martyria* (G3141):** witness; the root of "martyr."

- **true — *alēthēs* (G227):** truthful, reliable.

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **The Lord meets failure at the place of failure** — two charcoal fires (18:18; 21:9).
2. **The question is designed to hurt so it can heal** — Henry: "plainly designed to do so."
3. **Breakfast before the hard conversation** — Spurgeon: "not with prayer, but with provender."
4. **Their catch added to the menu; it did not make it** (Guzik).
5. **The sheep stay His** — "My lambs … My sheep."
6. **Restoration ends in work, not in a feeling** — tend, shepherd, tend, keep on.
7. **Love, not performance, is the test** — Spurgeon: "love is the best evidence of piety."
8. **Peter would die his Master's kind of death** (v19; 12:33; 2 Pet 1:14).
9. **Comparison is the enemy of following** — "What is that to you? You follow Me!"
10. **The Gospel ends with a signature and an admission** — true testimony, and more than the world could hold.

Cross-references: Ps 23:1; Isa 6:3; Ezek 34:23; Matt 26:33–35; Mark 16:7; Luke 5:1–11; 24:16; John 1:39–44; 2:11; 6:1, 9–11; 10:1–16, 27; 12:26, 33; 13:23, 36–38; 14:3; 18:15–18, 25–27, 32; 19:24, 26, 35; 20:2, 19–31; Acts 12:8; 1 Pet 5:1–4; 2 Pet 1:14.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 21:22

"Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain ☆ until I come, ⚠ what is that to you? You follow Me!""

Promise to trust — He comes to my shore. I didn't go looking for Jesus the night I hit bottom; He came looking for me. That's John 21. The disciples were back in the boat doing what they knew, catching nothing, and Jesus showed up on the beach with breakfast already on the fire. Some of the men I sit with think they have to clean up and crawl back before God will have them. Not here. He comes to the shore of my failure and calls out, "Children."

Sin to confess — my own charcoal fire. Every man I know has one: the night he said "I am not," the thing he did that he swore he'd never do. Peter warmed himself by a fire and denied his Lord three times. I confess mine to Jesus by name. And I notice Jesus doesn't pretend it didn't happen — He asks three times, and Peter is grieved. But the grief is the doorway, not the verdict. "Every remembrance of past sins, even pardoned sins, renews the sorrow of a true penitent" (Henry) — and then Jesus hands him work to do.

Command to obey — "Tend My lambs." Restoration isn't a feeling I wait for; it's a job I'm given. If I love Him, I feed His sheep. For me that means the men in my group, the new guy who can't sit still, my own family at the table. This week I will name one "lamb" Jesus has put near me and do one concrete thing to feed him — a call, a meal, an hour in the Word together.

Example to follow — Peter in the water. John saw first; Peter went first. He didn't wait for the boat. When I realize it's the Lord, I don't want to be careful and slow about getting to Him.

Command to obey — "You follow Me!" Peter's first reflex after hearing about his own cross was to look at John: "Lord, and what about this man?" That's me — comparing my road, my sentence, my recovery, my ministry to another man's. Jesus says, "What is that to you?" My business is to keep following, and to keep my eyes off the other guy's path. Until He comes.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Where have I gone back to "fishing" — the old life, the old way of coping — when I didn't know what else to do? (21:3; Luke 5:5) *Henry: "They knew not well what to do with themselves." Jesus met them right there.*
2. What is my "charcoal fire" — the place or memory of my worst failure — and what would it mean to meet Jesus there? (21:9; 18:18) *The same word, two fires: the place of the fall becomes the place of restoring.*
3. Jesus fed Peter before He questioned him. How have I experienced His kindness before His correction? (21:12–15) *Provender before prayer — the meal came first.*
4. If Jesus asked me today, "Do you love Me more than these?" — what would "these" be for me? (21:15; 13:37) *Henry: love Him "better than all the delights of sense and all the profits of this world."*
5. Who are the "lambs" Jesus has put near me to feed, and what would tending them look like this week? (21:15–17; 1 Pet 5:2) *Love proved by work: "Do something to prove thy love."*

6. Whose life or calling am I comparing mine to, and what does “You follow Me!” say to that? (21:20–22) *Emphatic “you”: your road, your cross, your Master.*

Worship. The risen Son of God, with the wounds still in His hands, kneels by a fire on a beach and cooks fish for the men who ran away. He serves the bread Himself. He knows all things — every denial — and still says, “Follow Me.” The Gospel that began with the Word who was God ends with that Word making breakfast. The world could not contain the books.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You know all things; You know that I love You — and You know how weak that love has been. Thank You for coming to my shore when I had nothing in the net. Meet me at my charcoal fire and heal what I did there. Give me Your lambs to feed and the love to feed them. Take my eyes off the other man’s road. Whatever death or life You have for me, let it glorify God, and keep me following You until You come. Amen.

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