

# **JOHN**

You, God, and a KJV Bible

By Eric Neumann

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The only material quoted in this book is the Word of God in the King James Version. No commentaries or scholars are quoted, because God's Word is important, not man's word. As such, I encourage all readers to be good Bereans by searching the scriptures to see if what I have said is true (Acts 17:11). It is okay if you do not agree with what I say, but it is not okay if your disagreement is not based upon the Word of God in its proper context, which involves "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

## **Goal**

The goal of this Bible study is to cast "down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and [bring] into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5) so that members of the body of Christ may "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).

## **Contact the author**

Therefore, the author encourages any disagreements be brought to his attention so that future versions of this Bible study can be changed if deemed necessary.

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## **Books by Eric Neumann**

All books are available in paperback and in Kindle formats by going to: [www.amazon.com/author/bibledivider](http://www.amazon.com/author/bibledivider). You may also access the author's sermons by going to: <http://www.youtube.com/user/bibledivider/videos>.

Eric has been working on a Bible study guide since 2011. So far, the following books are available:

**Genesis**

**Matthew**

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In addition, the following books are available:

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**A Bible Believer's Critique of Ironside's "Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth": A Defense of Paul's Mystery** – (150 pages)



## **John Introduction**

John 20:31 tells us the purpose of the book of John. John was written so that Israel “might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.”

There are four prophesied aspects to the Messiah, which is why there are four gospels. Matthew shows the Christ as Israel's king. Mark shows the Christ as Israel's servant. Luke shows the Christ as Israel's man. John shows the Christ as Israel's God (Isaiah 40:9). Since being God is so much different from the other three aspects of Messiah, John's portrayal of the Christ is much different from the other three accounts, which are often called "the synoptic gospels," meaning similar gospel accounts.

Since John shows Jesus as God, the genealogy is of His deity (1:1-2). We also see John the Baptist in the light of being sent by God (1:6). The first miracle John shares is turning water into wine (2:1-11), because it shows what God is doing for Israel by saving them and bringing them into the kingdom. Thus, only John records this miracle. The religious leaders are usually called by their name (Pharisees, priests, scribes, Sadducees, etc.) in Matthew – Luke, but John, taking God's perspective, refers to them as “the Jews”—as this term appears 64 times in John and only 16 times in Matthew – Luke combined. Nicodemus is used in John alone, as an example of a religious leader who: 1) Questions his religion (3:1-2), 2) Speaks against his religion (7:50-51), and 3) Becomes a member of the believing remnant (19:38-40). This shows that Jesus, as God, can convert anyone, including the religious folks. He can also convert the Samaritans, even though they were hated by the Jews in Jerusalem. The woman at the well shows Samaria going from being “not My people” to being “the sons of the living God” (Hosea 1:10). This is what John 4 is all about. John 5 tells of the man at Bethesda being healed. This story is only found in John, because he was sick for 38 years (5:5), which is the time that Israel was spiritually sick in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 2:14), showing that Jesus, as God, can also heal evil unbelievers.

Romans 10:17 says, “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Since John shows Jesus as God and He is “the Word” (John 1:1), most of the book of John reveals Jesus as Israel's God, since “salvation is of the Jews” (4:22). In the Old Testament, God revealed Himself to Israel as the “I AM” (Exodus 3:14). Jesus never calls Himself the “I AM” in Matthew – Luke, but He does call Himself “I AM” 14 times in John (6:35, 6:41, 6:48, 6:51, 8:12, 8:58, 10:7, 10:9, 10:11, 10:14, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1, and 15:5).

In John 8, Jesus shows “the Jews” that they are not Abraham's seed, because they do not believe God's Word (8:33-40). Instead, they are children of the devil (8:44). Jesus shows them this so that they may come to Him, the “living bread” (6:51), and have faith in God's Word, rather than in the Jewish religion. Unfortunately, in the healing of the blind man, in John 9, we see the Jews continue to hold to their religion and reject God's Word.

John 11-19 all occur in the one-week period before Jesus' crucifixion. Jesus shows He is God by raising Lazarus from the dead (11:43-44), which foreshadows Jesus raising Himself from the dead. Note the power that Jesus displays with regard to His death and resurrection. He says, "I lay down my life....No man taketh it from me....I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (10:17-18). Only God could make such a statement! When Judas is about to betray Jesus, it is Jesus who orders him to go ahead: "That thou doest, do quickly" (13:27). There is no agonizing prayer in the garden before His death in John, because Jesus, as God, does not agonize over the cross. Instead, chapters 14-16 show Him giving instructions to His disciples with chapter 17 being the true Lord's prayer for the believing remnant of Israel. When the soldiers come to arrest Jesus, Jesus says, "I AM He," which causes the band of arresting men to go backward and fall to the ground (18:6). Only God's Living Word could have such an effect on men. John concludes with Jesus, after His resurrection, commanding Peter to take care of the little flock for Him (21:15-17). Thus, everything Jesus does in John shows that He is God, which is why the book of John is so much different from Matthew – Luke.

**Summary:** The Christ comes as Israel's God, making sure Christ Jesus, the man, fulfills all the requirements necessary to bring eternal life to all people who believe what God tells them.

**Key passage:** 20:30-31 (30) And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (31) But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

**1** God (v. 1) becomes flesh (v. 14) to bring grace and truth to Israel (v. 17). Since no man has seen God (v. 18), God has to point Him out to John (v. 33), who points Him out to his disciples (vs. 29 and 36). Only a few Jews are willing to "come and see" (vs. 39 and 46) Him and be His disciples.

**1:1** John gives the genealogy of Jesus as God. Since God exists in eternity past and future, He has no beginning. Therefore, we are told that He was there "in the beginning." He is called "the Word" up until He "was made flesh" (1:14). He is not called "Jesus" until then. The Lord Jesus Christ is the living Word. Christians today will say that we need to follow what Jesus said to do. They mean that we should follow what He said in Matthew through John. Such importance is put on these words that most Bibles highlight them by putting them in red letters. The truth is that, because Jesus is the Word, every word in the Bible should be in red letters, because it is all His Word. His spoken words while in the flesh are no more important than His other words that make up the rest of God's Holy Word.

**1:2** The Word was God (1:1), and He "was in the beginning with God." This tells you immediately that there has to be at least two members of the Godhead—the Father and the Son.

**1:3** The Word created everything. This sheds light on Genesis 1. In that chapter, we see the phrase "and God said," given ten times (Gen 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26,28,

and 29), telling us that God spoke everything into existence. Since the Lord Jesus Christ is the Word, the Word created everything by merely speaking everything into existence. Colossians 1:16 says that this includes everything in heaven and in earth: "by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth."

**1:4** When God breathed into man's "nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7), He gave man a soul and a spirit. These are "the light of men."

**1:5** Now, we skip ahead to after the fall of man, when the world was in darkness due to Satan becoming "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4) by getting Adam to sin. Yet, God always had good news for man that he could be redeemed from Satan's grasp. That good news was initially the promise of a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15) and is the light that shines in darkness. If man would have just felt after God in the darkness, he would have found Him, even in the Old Testament (Acts 17:27).

Note that this verse says that "the darkness comprehended it not." What this tells us is that Satan is so engulfed in darkness and his own unbelief that he did not even recognize that, all throughout the Old Testament, God's light was still shining for men to be saved. Satan had all the kingdoms of the world in his grasp (Luke 4:6), and he thought no one could take those kingdoms away from him. If Satan knew that the cross was the means by which God would reconcile the earth back to Himself, Satan "would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:8).

**1:6** Because God was still in control at that time, He began to reconcile the earth back to Himself through this step of sending a man named John. Note that he was "sent from God" (1:6). God the Father sent John the Baptist by a miraculous birth, since John's mother was barren and both of his parents were beyond the age of being able to have children (Luke 1:7). Then, God raised John by Himself in the desert (Luke 1:80), where he stayed until he began his ministry.

John the Baptist prepared the way for the Messiah (Matthew 3:3) by preaching the following new message to Israel: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," confess your sins, and be water baptized (Matthew 3:2,6). Because of this new message, Jesus said that "among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11). Therefore, John's message was the best news Israel had ever heard, but it is better to believe that message and enter the kingdom than just to be the messenger.

**1:7** If men only believed the gospel of the kingdom that John preached, they would have eternal life with God on earth in His kingdom. Note that the word "Light" is now capitalized. The Lord Jesus Christ placed light in men (1:4), but, with the fall of man, man allowed darkness to take over his spirit and soul. Therefore, the Light Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, had to come to reignite the light of the soul and spirit within all men who believe the gospel of the kingdom.

Note that this verse says that Jesus came so “that ALL men through Him might believe.” In Matthew, we learned that Jesus was “not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24). Once Israel is saved, they are to go out to the Gentiles for them to hear the gospel of the kingdom and be saved, as well. Therefore, Luke says that Jesus was also “a light to lighten the Gentiles” (2:32). Since you should already know this information, John can say, in summary form, “that all men through Him might believe.”

Because most Christians are taught to believe that God is no respecter of persons at this time, they tell new Christians to read the gospel of John before they read any other portion of the Bible. In so doing, they indoctrinate these people into their religion, blinding them to the truth that “salvation is of the Jews” (4:22) at this time. This perpetrates the lie that the book of John is written to us today. If Christians read and believe Matthew through Luke FIRST, then they will understand what is meant by this verse and by 3:16, such that they will know that God has Jews in mind now and Gentiles in mind later for salvation, all within Israel’s program.

**1:8** John makes it clear that John the Baptist was only the messenger. He was not the Lord himself.

**1:9** There is a great push among Christianity today to get the gospel to the unreached nations. They say they are following the commission of Matthew 28:19-20, even though, with the dispensation of grace, the apostles, to whom this commission was given, recognized that they were not to follow it any more (Galatians 2:9). Of course, the real reason for promoting missions is that it takes a lot more money to go to third-world countries with the gospel than it does to reach the people in the church’s own neighborhood. Therefore, the church can ask for more money. They can also put a great deal of it into their own pockets, since it is also harder to track what the church does with the money if it is supposedly being used clear across the world. This is why I Timothy 6:10 says that people err from the faith because they covet money.

“But,” they will say, “the people in the unreached nations will all go to hell if they do not hear and believe the gospel.” If that were true, don’t you think that God would have somehow made sure that all nations instantaneously heard the gospel once Jesus rose from the dead? And, what about the people in the 4,000 years before Jesus’ resurrection? I guess God does not love them either, since they will all go to hell.

NO! The truth of the matter is that the Lord Jesus Christ “lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (1:9). He does this by implanting within each person the knowledge that He has created the world, He is God, and He has eternal power (Romans 1:19-20). If man recognizes this and worships God (by believing this internal witness), instead of becoming vain in his own imaginations (Romans 1:21), God will give him eternal life, even if he has never heard of the Lord Jesus Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection. Therefore, there is no need to give your life savings over to missions. God has already taken care of reaching the



“unreached nations” by lighting “every man that cometh into the world” with some basic information that will give him eternal life, if he merely believes it.

**1:10** Building on the internal witness of God that every man has, Romans 1:21 says “that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Romans 1:21). Since the world rejects the internal witness of God, it should come as no surprise that the world would also reject the external witness of God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was “God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

**1:11-13** Romans 1:24,26, and 28 tell us that, once man rejected God, God gave the Gentiles up to their own wickedness, but Genesis 12:1-3 tells us that God did not give up the nation of Israel. Exodus 19:5-6 says that God will reconcile the world back to Himself through the nation of Israel. Therefore, when John 1:11 says that the Lord Jesus Christ "came unto His Own," it means that He came to the nation of Israel.

The nation of Israel as a whole did not receive their Messiah, because they were apostate. However, there was a remnant among the Jews, who believed the gospel of the kingdom. They are the ones who will enter God's eternal kingdom. The Pharisees taught that all Jews would make it into God's kingdom (8:33), but God reveals here that being born of the flesh does not make them sons of God. They have to be born of God. That is why Jesus told Nicodemus that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (3:3) because "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" (3:6). "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly..., but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly" (Romans 2:28-29). Note also that those following religion cannot receive eternal life, because man cannot will himself into being God's son; he must be born of God to be God's son, just like you cannot will yourself to be someone's son in the flesh.

**1:14** In order to redeem man, the Word had to become man. Otherwise, He would not be man's kinsmen redeemer, which is required under God's law (Leviticus 25:47-49). He also was still God as shown by the fact that Israel "beheld His glory." Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ was both fully God and fully man. His being full of grace, shows how God was gracious to redeem Israel, even though they did not deserve it. His being full of truth shows how Israel needed to believe the truth of the gospel of the kingdom in order to be saved. Otherwise, truth will judge them into the lake of fire.

**1:15** John said that Jesus came after him and also was before him. The only way this is possible is if Jesus is God. Jesus made a similar statement in 8:58 saying that "before Abraham was, I AM." The Pharisees' reaction was to take "up stones to cast at Him" (8:59), because they realized He said He was God, since God's name is "I AM" (Exodus 3:14). Therefore, the book of John records Jesus, as God, existing both in the past and in the present. Revelation 4:8 recognizes that He also exists in the future, by saying that He is the "Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

John the Baptist was preparing the way for the Lord (Matthew 3:3). Since the book of John shows Jesus as God (20:31), it makes sense that the first recorded statement by John the Baptist is of Jesus' deity.

**1:16** Grace is getting something good that you do not deserve. 1:10 says that the world did not know the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact, that "He came unto His Own" (1:11), is an extension of God's grace in that the undeserving world received the gift of God coming down to man. Not only did the Lord Jesus Christ come to the world, but He also offered to save the world by dying on a cross. "For by grace are ye saved" (Ephesians 2:8) means that God gives us the "gift [of] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Therefore, "grace for grace" means that God gave grace in sending His Son, and He gave grace for that grace by giving the gift of eternal life to all those who believe. The common interpretation of "grace for grace" is that God gave abundant grace, which is true. However, a more accurate meaning is that God gave eternal life based upon His grace of sending His Son. What this means is that man did absolutely nothing to deserve any good thing he receives from God, because the basis of God's grace of eternal life to man is His grace in sending His Son. The basis is not anything good man has done to earn grace.

**1:17** This verse makes the point that it took God in the flesh to give grace and truth to man. Moses is a great example of faith in God, yet the best God could do through him is to give the law, because Moses had sinned, just like everyone else has. However, Jesus Christ was the perfect man, and so He could bring grace to man by His death on the cross. Israel could receive eternal life in God's kingdom by repenting and being baptized. This gift of grace was not possible with the law, because "the law is holy" (Romans 7:12), "but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). So, the law comes along and declares the perfect standard by which I can receive eternal life, but I fall short of it. Jesus Christ comes along and meets that perfect standard so that God can give the gift of eternal life to all those who believe. This is the truth of the gospel that Jesus Christ brought with the gift of grace. Therefore, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (1:17) means that God's grace is available to Israel by them believing the truth of the gospel.

**1:18** God told Moses, "Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live" (Exodus 33:20). Therefore, "no man hath seen God at any time" (1:18). Granted, Jesus was God in the flesh, but He appeared "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3), as opposed to appearing before man in all His glory. Therefore, John can say that "no man hath seen God at any time," even though Jesus was God in the flesh.

However, the important part of this verse is to recognize that Jesus declared the Father unto Israel. "God is love" (I John 4:8). "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (15:13) Therefore, the way Jesus declared the Father's love to Israel was by proclaiming "grace and truth" to them which was rooted in His death upon the cross.

This verse also tells you where Jesus is at the time of John's writing. Having given His life an atonement for sin, He ascended to heaven and "is in the bosom of the Father."

**1:19** The "John" being referenced here is John the Baptist. John is called "Baptist" 15 times in Matthew through Luke, but he is never called "Baptist" in John. That is probably because the writer of the book of John never refers to himself by name, and so the only "John" mentioned in his book is John the Baptist, making the title of "Baptist" unnecessary.

If you want to know the impact that the truth has on religion, you need look no further than John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. Jesus spent most of His earthly ministry in "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matthew 4:12,15), away from the religious leaders. Yet, people flocked to Him. So, here comes the religious crowd, fighting Him every step of the way and eventually killing Him.

Similarly, John preached the truth in the wilderness, wore camel's hair and a leather girdle, and ate locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:1,4). However, because so many people came to him from Jerusalem, the religious leaders journeyed to the wilderness to meet this freak and ask him who he was. Note that, here in John, because John's focus is on Jesus as God, they ask John if he is the Christ. In Matthew, where the focus is the kingdom, John is the one asking them questions, saying that they need to repent in order to make it into the kingdom (Matthew 3:7-10).

Also, note that the religious leaders are called "the Jews." They are called this over 50 times in the book of John, but they are only called "the Jews" twice in Matthew – Luke (Matthew 28:15 and Luke 7:3). John is showing that the religious leaders speak for the nation, which is why, when they have Jesus crucified, the whole nation has rejected Jesus as their Messiah.

**1:20-21** John said that He was not the Christ, Elijah, or "that prophet." These are the three people prophesied in the Old Testament that the Jewish religious leaders were expecting from God to bring in the kingdom. The Christ would be the Messiah. Elijah was prophesied in Malachi 4:5 to come before the day of the Lord's wrath. "That prophet" is a reference to the prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15,18. These verses say that the Prophet will be raised up "from among their brethren," which means he would be man, but the Prophet would also be like unto the Lord. Therefore, He would be both God and man, which is what the Christ would be also. Therefore, if the Jewish religious leaders had ears to hear, they would have recognized that the Christ and "that prophet" are one and the same. Also, according to Matthew 11:12-14, if Israel would have received the kingdom, John the Baptist would have been Elijah, prophesied to come in Malachi 4:5. However, since they would not receive the kingdom, John was not Elijah because the day of the Lord's wrath would not come until Israel received the kingdom.

**1:22** Now, we see the motivation of the Jewish religious leaders. They did not come to John the Baptist to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins since

the kingdom of God was now at the "at hand" phase. Rather, they came to find out who he is so that they may tell the higher up religious leaders who he is. The top dogs could then, in turn, plan their attack upon God's plan to redeem Israel so that they will continue to rule with Satan in his kingdom. The Jewish religious leaders, then, are not seeking the Lord. Rather, this is a deliberate plot to squash God's plan of redemption.

Similarly today, if you believe the Bible and preach it, very few people will listen to you if you are not the pastor of a church, are not affiliated with a Christian denomination, and do not have a seminary degree. That is because man, rather than God's Word, is the final authority of most people. So, the church down the road could preach lies and you could preach the truth, but people will listen to the lies over the truth because the lying pastor has a seminary degree. Similarly, John the Baptist was discarded as worthless by the Jewish religious leaders because He was some kook in the wilderness. Yet, God Himself gave him his message (John 1:6; Luke 1:80), while the religious leaders rejected God's commandments (Mark 7:9).

**1:23** John the Baptist quotes Isaiah 40:3 to show that he is the one sent by God to prepare the way for the Lord. By telling them this, God is giving Satan's kingdom a warning of just who John the Baptist is. It is as if God is saying, "My plan of redemption starts with John. I dare you, Satan, to try and stop it." At the end of that plan of redemption, Jesus will make a similar proclamation, as He will say to Satan from the cross: "Who will contend with Me? Let us stand together: who is Mine adversary? let him come near to Me" (Isaiah 50:8). This shows the weakness of Satan compared with God.

Also, the context of Isaiah 40:3 shows that God will destroy apostate Israel and exalt believing Israel. ("Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Isaiah 40:4).) If the Jews believed their Bible, the statement by John, that he is preparing the way for the Lord, should cause them to repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom.

**1:25** In the Old Testament, water baptism was part of God's ordination of a priest (Exodus 29:4). Other Jews were not water baptized. What John was doing was that he was baptizing all of believing Israel, because God had declared that the nation of Israel would be a kingdom of priests to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6). Therefore, with the kingdom being at hand, all believing Jews were now priests and in need of water baptism. (Water baptism was not an outward manifestation of an inward work of grace, as many Christians today claim it is.)

However, because Israel was apostate, they did not understand what was going on. Since John was not part of their religious system, they could only conclude that he must think he is the Christ, "that prophet," or Elijah. If John claimed to be any of those, they would have brought him in to be killed for blasphemy. Since he did not claim to be any one of those, they at least try to find out why he is baptizing. However, he will not answer them, because he does not want to give them any reason for arresting him.

The next day, John reveals to the believing remnant why he is baptizing. He says that the reason he is baptizing is to make the Messiah manifest to Israel (1:31). The way that baptism makes the Messiah manifest to Israel is that, upon baptizing Jesus, the Spirit descends from heaven like a dove and abides on Him (1:32). Therefore, there are really two reasons why John is baptizing: 1) So that believing Israel can be a kingdom of priests, and 2) So believing Israel knows Who the Messiah is, from the very beginning of His ministry.

**1:26-27** John said that he was preparing the way for the Lord (1:23). Now, he tells the Pharisees that the Lord is also a man, because He was before John and was also coming after him. From this, the Pharisees should know that the Lord Himself would be the Christ and "that prophet." Of course, they should also know this from scripture. But, we are talking about the people, who, when wise men had travelled two years to find the Christ, they were so hardened in unbelief that they would not even bother to go with them to check it out (Matthew 2:1-8,16)!

**1:27** There is great significance behind John's comment that he was not worthy to unloose the Lord's shoe latchet. In the book of Ruth, Boaz is Ruth's kinsmen redeemer. The story of Ruth is told to us as a type of how the Lord Jesus Christ would be Israel's kinsmen redeemer, as we mentioned in the notes in 1:14. When Boaz redeemed Ruth, he took off his shoe and gave it to the other man there, which was their way of confirming the transaction (Ruth 4:7-8). Therefore, when John says that he is not worthy of even unlatching the Lord's shoe, he is saying that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming to be Israel's kinsmen redeemer. However, he is not just a man doing this, but He is also God. That is why John is not even worthy to unlatch His shoe. In other words, the Christ will be the Lord, which makes John unworthy to have any part whatsoever in Him redeeming His kinsmen, the nation of Israel.

This also goes back to God's promise of a redeemer in Genesis 3:15. There, we are told that the redeemer will bruise Satan's head, and Satan will bruise His heel. With Jesus being the kinsmen redeemer, Satan sees Jesus without His shoe and attacks the bare foot of Jesus. He bruises Jesus' heel, but, in the process, Jesus crushes his head. This is all spiritually speaking, as there is no account of this physically happening. Spiritually, Satan bruised Jesus' heel by crucifying Him on the cross. That same crucifixion also gave the victory to Jesus over Satan, as He conquered death and hell as a result, providing a way for those with faith in what God has told them to have eternal life (I Corinthians 15:54-57).

**1:28** John baptized outside of Jerusalem because Israel needed to go outside of religion in order to be part of God's kingdom. They had to go forth unto the Lord outside of the city, bearing His reproach (Hebrews 13:13).

**1:29-34** Although John was sent by God to prepare the way for the Lord (1:6,23), he does not know who the Lord is until he sees the Spirit descend upon Him while John is baptizing Him. Yet, as he sees Jesus coming, he says "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (v. 29). This tells you that John had

already baptized Jesus prior to this time. Matthew 4:1 says that, after Jesus' baptism, He was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Matthew 4:2 says that He fasted 40 days and 40 nights. After being anointed by the Holy Spirit, Jesus' first order of business was to complete the journey in the wilderness from the Red Sea to Israel without sinning, something that Israel had failed to do under Moses. Therefore, what probably happened was: 1) John baptized Jesus, 2) Jesus was led by the Spirit to the wilderness by the Red Sea, and 3) Jesus began His 40-day pilgrimage from the Red Sea to Israel. Then, toward the end of that pilgrimage, he sees Jesus walking toward him, and he tells the audience that Jesus is the Messiah.

Note that Jesus is called "the Lamb of God." In Exodus 12:3-10, God set up the annual feast of Passover, where a lamb without blemish was slain so that the Lord would "pass over" their sins. God set this up as a type of what the complete Passover Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, would do, as a sacrifice for Israel's sins "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). Just like the Passover lamb, the Lamb of God was also supposed to have been slain on the altar in the temple (Psalm 118:27), but Israel "by wicked hands...crucified and slain" Jesus Christ on a cross (Acts 2:23).

The fact, that John identified Jesus as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (1:29), should have signaled to Israel that their Lord and Messiah has come, but it is only the little flock who see this event, because it happens in Bethabara beyond Jordan (1:28). Therefore, those looking for the Messiah have found Him, while the rest of Israel is still in darkness.

**1:15,27,30** 3 times, John says that Jesus comes after him but is preferred before him. Since he repeats himself, the writer is emphasizing that John the Baptist clearly stated that the Messiah is both fully God and fully man.

**1:33** We should also note that "He that sent me" is God the Father.

**1:35-37** The day before, John pointed out the Lamb of God as He was walking toward John. Now, Jesus gets to where they are, and John, again, proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God. How sad that, after two, successive declarations by John, only two of John's disciples decide to follow Jesus. If Israel had faith in the gospel of the kingdom proclaimed by John the Baptist, the whole nation would have walked into Israel with Jesus and immediately overthrown the Jewish religious leaders, saying unto them, "Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea" (Matthew 21:21). Therefore, when the Jewish religious leaders have Jesus crucified, the nation of Israel as a whole can only blame themselves for allowing it to happen.

**1:38-39** Jesus does not tell the two disciples where He dwells because He is not just walking around and going to His Own house every night. He is walking from the Red Sea to Israel, and He is almost in Israel now. Therefore, Jesus' answer is what He, as a man, knows. He would have to keep walking until it was time to settle in for the night wherever He would end up. He would just walk and see where that would be. This is why He tells them to "come and see" where He dwells. Even during His ministry in Israel, Jesus did not have a house to live in, because

He was going from city to city, preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of Israel. That is why He said: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Matthew 8:20).

We should also note that "come and see" is also an invitation for the lost sheep of the house of Israel to be found, because they will see the Lord through the eyes of faith. Without faith, Israel is blind and will not enter the kingdom, because they will not see Jesus Christ as their Messiah. This invitation to "come and see" is also given four times in Revelation 6:1,3,5,7, corresponding with the four-seal judgments that cover the first half of the tribulation period, showing again that Israel will not see what is going on spiritually, if they do not look at the world through the eyes of faith.

**1:40-41** Andrew's faith is seen here. He was a follower of John the Baptist, and he knew that John was preparing the way for the Messiah. Therefore, when Andrew heard John say that the Messiah was coming their way, he believed and followed Him. He also led Jesus to his brother, Simon.

**1:42** Simon was his name, but Jesus immediately renames him to Cephas, meaning "a stone," which is Aramaic for the Greek "Peter," which is the name he is most often called in the Bible. Jesus calls him "stone," because saved Israel are "lively stones" that are part of the "spiritual house" of Israel with Jesus being the chief corner stone of the building (I Peter 2:5-6). Later, Jesus will promise to build His church upon the Rock that is Christ, and He will make Peter the leader of that church (Matthew 16:18). Thus, Jesus' renaming of Simon at this point is also prophetic. The different name for Simon also helps us out in reading Matthew through John, because, if Jesus calls him "Simon," He is referring to his flesh (Luke 22:31), while Peter is his spiritual name. For example, "Simon" is blessed for his faith and is then called "Peter" in Matthew 16:16-19.

**1:43** Jesus just got back into Israel, and He is already calling His disciples. This shows that, as God, He knows who will stay faithful to Him to the end.

**1:45** In 1:20-21, the Pharisees asked John if he was the Christ, Elijah, or "that prophet." Although the religious leaders had the Old Testament, they followed their own traditions over the scripture. By contrast, Philip knows scripture well enough to identify Jesus as both "that prophet" and the Messiah. The way we know this is that Phillip says Jesus is the one written about "in the law, and the prophets." "That prophet" is a reference to the "Prophet" found in Moses' writings (Deuteronomy 18:18), while the Messiah or Christ comes from the prophets' writings (Daniel 9:25-26). However, Phillip does not recognize the virgin birth, since he calls Jesus, "the son of Joseph."

**1:46** Again, we see the phrase "come and see," signifying that the only way Israel will recognize Jesus as their Messiah is if they have faith in God's Word to them. Looking at the flesh, no one would recognize Jesus as the Messiah because no good thing comes out of Nazareth. Faith in God's Word is the ONLY method by which fallen man can spiritually see Jesus as the Messiah.

**1:43,47** As God, Jesus knows that Philip knows and believes the Old Testament scriptures. He also knows that Nathanael has no guile. Jesus uses that phrase to contrast him with the Jewish religious leaders, who would come to Jesus with guile, in an attempt to trap Him, as seen in Mark 14:1.

**1:48** Nathanael was literally under a fig tree. In the Bible, a fig tree represents religion, since Adam used fig leaves to try to hide his sin from God (Genesis 3:7). What is probably going on here is that Philip was against the religious system of Israel, believing the scriptures instead. He probably recently had shown Nathanael how the Jewish religious system was in contrast to the scriptures, but he was still "under the fig tree," meaning that he was still having a difficult time abandoning Jewish traditions. When Jesus found Philip, Philip went to Nathanael so that he might believe the scriptures and abandon religion. Although Jesus did not go with Philip to see Nathanael, Jesus still saw his meeting with Nathanael, which is a proof that Jesus is God.

**1:49** Since Nathanael came to Jesus with no guile, he immediately saw Him as the Son of God and the King of Israel. As such, Nathanael is a type of the little flock. Many of the little flock go to synagogue and are following the religious system of the Pharisees. However, if they have a believing heart, they will immediately abandon religion when the truth is presented to them.

**1:50** Once Jews believe the gospel of the kingdom, they join the little flock, and Jesus will reveal to them the mysteries of the kingdom (Matthew 13:11). That is what Jesus means when He says, "thou shalt see greater things than these."

**1:51** However, Jesus is not just referring to revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to His little flock, but He is also referring to the little flock actually ruling and reigning in God's eternal kingdom with Jesus as His bride. When Jesus says "hereafter," He is referring to the time when, in that kingdom, Jesus will be ruling the entire universe from the earth. As such, He will have angels ascending to go out to other parts of the universe to do God's will, and He will have angels descending to the earth to report back as to what was accomplished. This is a progressive revelation of what God revealed to Jacob in Genesis 28:11. There, Jacob saw angels ascending and descending on "a ladder" that was "set up on the earth." Jacob correctly identified that place as "the house of God and...the gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:17). What he did not know that Jesus has just now revealed is that that ladder is really the Lord Jesus Christ.

In our current dispensation of the gospel of the grace of God, we are called "the body of Christ" (I Corinthians 12:27), and Christ is our head (Ephesians 4:15). Since Christ will rule the universe from the earth, His head is on the earth. With His head on the earth and His body in the heavenly places, this ladder represents the neck of Christ.

"Verily, verily" means "truly, truly." It is found 25 times in scripture, and all 25 occurrences are in John. That is because Jesus is the Word of God (1:1,14), and



God's Word is truth (17:17). Since John is the writer who shows Jesus as God, only Jesus' words in the book of John are prefaced by "verily, verily."

**2** Jesus does a miracle to show He will bring in God's kingdom to Israel (vs. 1-11). However, He will first cleanse Israel of their wickedness (vs. 12-17). He does this through His death, burial, and resurrection (vs. 18-22), but most of Israel will not believe the gospel in order to enter God's kingdom (vs. 23-25).

**2:1** John lists fewer miracles by Jesus than any other gospel writer does. It may seem weird that turning water into wine would make his cut. After all, some churches have taught against drinking alcohol, and here is Jesus making the wine flow! However, this miracle can be seen as fulfilling John's purpose in writing if we pay attention to what this miracle symbolizes. First, we are told it was "the third day." This symbolizes how Israel has life through Jesus' resurrection on the third day, since Hosea 6:2 says, "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." Second, we are told He is at a marriage. This symbolizes the marriage supper of the Lamb which will take place at the beginning of God's kingdom on earth. Third, we are told that Jesus' mother was there. This symbolizes how Israel will be at the marriage supper of the Lamb. See Revelation 12:1-2,5-6, where Israel is referred to as the mother of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus does not just keep the wedding party going. The miracle of turning water into wine is symbolic of how Jesus will bring Israel to the supper to marry Him and then live in the kingdom with Him forever (Revelation 19:7-9, 21:9, and 22:5).

**2:2** Jesus and His disciples being called to the marriage signify how Jesus and His 12 disciples will be ruling in the kingdom (Matthew 19:28).

**2:3** Not having wine is a picture of Israel not having blessing under God's covenant with them because they had disobeyed the law. Therefore, they were "cursed with a curse" (Malachi 3:9). They would spend eternity in hell if not for the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, imputing God's righteousness to them.

**2:4** This may seem like a strange thing to say to your own mother! What Jesus is really saying is that it is not time for Him to set up the kingdom for Israel. That will take place at His second coming. At His first coming, He came to die for their sins and get them to believe the gospel of the kingdom. His hour to die is at least 3 years away at this point. Then, there is the tribulation period, and then He comes back and sets up His kingdom. By skipping right to the wine, Mary is asking Him to skip His suffering, which He cannot do. Therefore, He says that His hour is not yet come.

**2:5** The servants are symbolic of the believing remnant during the tribulation period (Luke 17:10). If they obey Jesus' commands during the tribulation period, they will reach the lost sheep of the house of Israel with the gospel of the kingdom, such that Israel will be ready to enter into God's kingdom at Jesus' second coming. Thus, Mary's statement symbolizes the faith that saved Israel will have in their Messiah during the tribulation period.

**2:6** Six is the number of man, and the height of man is reached by the Antichrist during the tribulation period, as shown by the number of the name of the beast being 666 (Revelation 13:17-18). Therefore, these six waterpots represent Israel in the tribulation period. “The Jews” are mentioned so that you know that Israel will be under the Jewish religious system during the tribulation period.

**2:7** Jesus tells Israel to fill the waterpots with water. In John 4:13-14, Jesus said that He can give living water that will spring “up into everlasting life.” Therefore, by telling them to fill their waterpots here with water, Jesus is telling Israel to believe the gospel. If so, Jesus will take their belief and transform it into blessing in the kingdom (symbolized here by turning the water into wine). Note that Israel does the work of filling the waterpots, which symbolizes their preaching the gospel of the kingdom during the tribulation period. As a result, Jesus, as God, gives them the reward in the kingdom.

**2:8** Drawing out the water and bearing it to the governor of the feast represents saved Israel standing before God to receive their reward of life in the kingdom (Revelation 20:4). It is at this time that the water (their belief in the gospel of the kingdom) is turned into wine (God’s imputed righteousness).

**2:9** The fact, that the ruler does not know where the wine came from, symbolizes how God forgets the sins of believing Israel (Jeremiah 31:34; Psalm 103:12). All He remembers is their faith. Calling the bridegroom symbolizes how God will call Jesus Christ and compliment Him on His beautiful bride, Israel, who is beautiful because Jesus has made her sins white as snow (Isaiah 1:18) so that she receives God’s righteousness (Revelation 19:8).

**2:10** Note that God is talking to Jesus here. God tells Jesus that “every MAN” puts his best foot forward first, but Jesus, as the perfect man, has put His best foot forward last. In other words, man, in his depravity, only gets more entrenched in his sin as the years pass, which is why Jesus said that Israel must “be converted, and become as little children” in order to “enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). Therefore, man, trying to make it into the kingdom on his own, will never enter in. However, because Jesus lived a perfect life and died for Israel’s sin, Israel can be made whole at the end of their dispensation (symbolized by the good wine being served last), and their last state, in Jesus Christ, is much better than their first state in their own flesh.

**2:11** Thus, Jesus’ first miracle is not just about boozing it up at a wedding. It is a picture of how Jesus will bring in God’s kingdom and the associated blessings with it to Israel even though Israel is currently under the curse for not obeying God’s law covenant with them. Thus, in doing this miracle, Jesus “manifested forth His glory” (2:11) to Israel. The result of this manifestation was that “His disciples believed on Him” (2:11). This shows that the purpose of miracles is so that Israel might believe. It is not just to give free wine to a marriage party. Similarly, when Jesus heals a blind man, He does so to show Israel how He wants to open their spiritual eyes so that they may enter the kingdom. He does not do it so that a man can live with physical sight.

**2:12** The fact, that they “continued there not many days,” symbolizes how the believing remnant will not have to continue on earth many days before Jesus will come and bring them into the kingdom. The 7 years of tribulation may FEEL like many days, but, in view of eternity, it is “but for a moment” (II Corinthians 4:17).

**2:13** Note that it is not the Passover under God’s law that is being celebrated. They are celebrating “the Jews’ passover.” In other words, the Jews are following their religion, rather than God’s law (Mark 7:9). By contrast, Jesus is following God’s law by attending, since all males are required to appear before the Lord three times each year, and one of those times is the Passover (Deuteronomy 16:16 – Passover is part of the feast of unleavened bread).

**2:14-16** Jesus exposes the religion of the Jews. The Jews are extorting the people by saying that their sacrifices are not good enough, even though they bring the sacrifices prescribed under God’s law. The Jewish religion may say something like: “Oh, you can’t bring THAT animal into the temple. God will only accept an animal that has been blessed by the priest. Here is a blessed one that will cost you three times the amount you paid for the one you brought.” Therefore, Jews have made this into a money making scheme for themselves, charging exorbitant prices for animals blessed by the priests. Thus, it is a “den of thieves.” Note that Jesus calls it “My Father’s house.” Religion has turned “My Father’s house” into a den of thieves, such that Jesus will later call it “YOUR house” (Matthew 23:38).

Similarly today, Christianity will say you have to go to their church, be baptized by their leader, and give money to them. You have to buy a study Bible in a modern version and buy “Christian” books to learn what God wants you to do. However, in reality, all you have to do is spend \$1 for a King James Version. Then, instead of going to their churches, read and believe your \$1 Bible, and you will walk in the Spirit a lot more than Christianity ever will. Jesus, though, because He was under the Mosaic law, had to put up with the blasphemy of the Jewish religion.

**2:17** Today, the disciples are often thought of as bumbling idiots. However, this verse shows that they did read their Bibles enough to apply Psalm 69:9 to the Lord Jesus Christ. That is more than can be said for most Christians, who think of the Psalms as devotions that they can twist to satisfy the lusts of their own flesh.

**2:18-19** The signs that Jesus did were to heal the sick and cast out devils. These signs would show believers that “the kingdom of God is come unto you” (Matthew 12:28). However, if someone were to ask for a sign, it shows that they are unbelievers, as Jesus said, “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign” (Matthew 12:39a). Because they are evil, “There shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:39b-40).

In other words, the lost sheep of the house of Israel are given physical signs of the spiritual manifestation of the kingdom (Matthew 10:6-8). But, apostate Israel is only given the sign that the kingdom has come, i.e., they are only given the sign of

resurrection. Now, because Matthew shows Jesus as Israel's king, we see Him there saying that He will be in the earth three days (Matthew 12:40). Because John shows Jesus as God, we see Jesus saying that HE will raise HIMSELF up after three days. As God, He has the power to lay down His Own life, and the power to take it back up again (John 10:18). Thus, the same "sign" is given to unbelievers in both Matthew and John, but Matthew gives man's perspective of the sign, and John gives God's perspective of the sign.

Also, note that Jesus says that THEY will destroy this temple, and HE will raise it up. But, when Jesus is arrested, the religious leaders falsely accuse Him of saying that HE would destroy the temple (Matthew 26:61). This is a classic example of the pride of man in turning "the truth of God into a lie" by changing what God has said (Romans 1:25). This technique is seen all the time in Christian churches and commentaries today.

**2:20-21** Because the religious leaders are apostate, they do not understand that Jesus is talking about physical resurrection. Therefore, John adds a comment to let us know that Jesus was talking about raising up the temple of His body, not about the actual temple building standing in Jerusalem. Mark 14:58 tells us that Jesus said that they would destroy the temple of His body, and Jesus would "build another made without hands." This refers to the glorified, resurrection body that is the new creation for His saints to live forever in.

John often adds comments in his gospel to help the reader understand what is being said, while you do not see that in Matthew through Luke. The reason for this is because John shows Jesus as God, which means that He speaks as God. By contrast, Matthew through Luke show Jesus as a man. Therefore, Jesus' sayings are harder to understand in John than they are in Matthew through Luke.

**2:22** Most of what Jesus told His disciples they did not understand until either during the 40 days Jesus was with them after His resurrection or after the Holy Ghost came upon them. Since the disciples do not believe in His resurrection until after His resurrection (20:9), they do not understand what He means here. This shows that the only way you can understand what God speaks is if you believe what God says.

Note that this verse says that, after Jesus' resurrection, the disciples "believed the scripture" about His resurrection. I Corinthians 15:4 also says that Jesus rose from the dead according to the scriptures. The only two Old-Testament scriptures I know of that give prophecy of Jesus' resurrection are Hosea 6:2 and Psalm 16:10. Hosea 6:2 says, "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up." Psalm 16:10 says, "Thou will not leave My soul in hell," which means Jesus must be resurrected. These two scriptures, then, are probably the ones that the disciples believed.

**2:23-25** Many are believing in Jesus' name due to His miracles. But, believing in His name does not give you eternal life. We see this in Matthew 7:22-23, where Jesus says that "many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not

prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” Many Christian churches today will say that you need to “trust Jesus” for eternal life, but believing in His name or even that He is the Messiah does not give you eternal life. James 2:19 says, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” The issue is that they need to trust the MESSAGE that Jesus gives them in order to have eternal life. “The WORDS that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are LIFE” (6:63).

So, yes, “many believed in His name” (2:23), but they did not believe the gospel of the kingdom that He gave them. Therefore, He “did not commit Himself unto them” (2:24), because He knew that unbelief in His message was in their hearts.

Jesus also knows that, if He commits Himself to them, in terms of giving them the power to heal the sick and cast out devils, rather than using that power to bring in the kingdom, they will use it to profit in the flesh, e.g. Acts 8:18-23. How does He know this? Because He knows what was in man (2:25). What was in man are “evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, [and] foolishness” (Mark 7:21-22), and He will not trust the things of God to these wicked things. Therefore, Jesus does not call the believing masses to perform miracles and preach the gospel of the kingdom.

**3** Israel must believe the gospel of the kingdom in order to receive eternal life (vs. 7, 15, and 36). This means abandoning their religious system (vs. 19-21), and even moving away from John the Baptist (vs. 29-36), the one sent by God to prepare the way for the Messiah.

**3:1** Nicodemus is a type of Israel coming out of the Jewish religious system, believing the gospel, and entering the kingdom. We can see his progression to salvation in the gospel of John. Here, Jesus tells him he must be born again (3:3). In 7:50-52, he questions the righteousness of the Jews’ system. In 19:39-40, we see him caring for Jesus’ body, having believed the gospel and separated Himself from “the Jews.”

**3:2** Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, and he ends up becoming a believer. As such, he is a type of the believing remnant, since they believe in the tribulation period, which is seen as the night (Psalm 30:5; II Peter 3:10).

Nicodemus shows that the Jewish religious leaders all know that the gospel that Jesus taught of “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17) is true because his miracles show that His message comes from God. And, the power of God was ready to heal these religious leaders spiritually (Luke 5:17). Therefore, the religious leaders are without excuse when they reject the gospel and are deserving of “the damnation of hell” (Matthew 23:33).

**3:3** Note Jesus' response. Jesus knows that Nicodemus is sincere, but he is focusing on the miracles, rather than on the message. Therefore, Jesus re-shifts his focus by telling him that a man must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. Being "born again" is a scriptural term that refers ONLY to the nation of Israel. Israel is God's firstborn son (Exodus 4:22), going through God's birth canal of the dry Red Sea. He then gave them His law covenant, but they did not follow it, which gave them the curse of death (Deuteronomy 27:26), making them Satan's lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24-25). Therefore, they must be born again, in order to enter God's kingdom. However, they do not have the strength in themselves to be born again (Isaiah 37:3). They will have to wait until Jesus' second coming, when Jesus causes all believers to be born again by the atoning power of His blood. Therefore, only through Jesus Christ is there strength for ISRAEL to be born again and enter God's kingdom. This is NOT for today. Being born again is for the nation of Israel to enter God's kingdom. Today, we are saved by grace through faith apart from the law covenant (Ephesians 2:8-9), because God did not make the law covenant with us. We are then part of the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:27). We are a new creation in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17), instead of being the same creature born again. Our eternal home is heaven (Philippians 3:20), not God's eternal kingdom on earth.

**3:4** Just like with his mention of the miracles in 3:2, Nicodemus is still focused on the physical here. Therefore, Jesus repeats Himself in 3:5.

**3:5** These verses make it clear that Jesus is referring to a spiritual birth. This birth is for Israel as seen by the fact that He says that their spiritual birth entails being "born of water and of the Spirit." In Israel's program, God had appointed Israel to be a kingdom of priests to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6). Priests are: 1) Washed with water (Exodus 29:4), and 2) Anointed with oil (Exodus 29:7) (a type of the Holy Spirit). When John the Baptist came, he began water baptism for the whole nation to cleanse them from their idolatry (Ezekiel 36:25). After Jesus' ascension, the little flock was to be anointed with oil by the Holy Spirit's coming upon them all (Acts 2:4). This is how the nation would be born again "of water and of the Spirit."

Christians try to apply this to themselves by saying that the birth of water is referring to the natural birth. However, Jesus defines "born again" here. Note that 3:3 and 3:5 are almost identical. The big difference is that 3:3 says you must be "born again," and 3:5 says you must be "born of water and of the Spirit." In other words, by repeating Himself in 3:5, He has just defined "born again" as being "born of water and of the Spirit." Therefore, "born of water" refers to the spiritual, just like being "born of the Spirit" also refers to the spiritual. If not, Jesus would not have mentioned the need to be "born of water," because all men are already born of the flesh.

**3:6** This may be an obvious statement, but it had to be said, because Nicodemus apparently did not understand the difference between the flesh and the spirit (3:7), even though he was "a master of Israel" (3:10). This shows that, because of the

religious leaders' unbelief, they knew nothing of the things of God, in spite of how much scripture they knew.

**3:7** Note the use of the word “ye.” “Ye” is the plural form of “you.” If you do not have a King James Version, you will miss this, because all the “ye”s have been taken out. In 3:2, Nicodemus showed that he spoke for Israel by saying, “WE know.” Thus, the invitation to be born again is also to the entire nation of Israel. At the same time, each Jew had to make his own choice of joining the believing remnant or not. That is why the plural of “ye” is used here, while the singular of “a man” is used in 3:3.

**3:8** This verse is a reference to the little flock during the tribulation period. Everyone born of the Spirit is to go from city to city within Israel, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom. The Spirit may lead them to certain people to proclaim the gospel to. Thus, apostate Israel does not know where they came from or where they are going to. Ecclesiastes 11:5-6 sheds a little light on this, and Acts 8:26-30 is an example of this happening. This will especially be true during God’s eternal kingdom, when the little flock will have their glorified bodies and be able to dematerialize in one city and materialize in another city (Luke 24:31).

**3:10** God started the body of Christ with Paul in Acts 9. Everything related to this current dispensation was kept secret by God until revealed to Paul at that time (Romans 16:25-26). However, all Christian leaders today are either ignorant of this or have chosen not to believe it. Similarly in Jesus’ time, the masters of Israel (3:10) did not know what God was doing. That is because they had allowed Satan, “the god of this world,” to blind them to the truth, due to their unbelief (II Corinthians 4:4).

**3:11** Nicodemus was “a man of the Pharisees” (3:1). Therefore, Jesus is speaking to the Jewish religious leaders in saying that they, and, consequently, the nation of Israel as a whole, have rejected the gospel of the kingdom and God’s law covenant in favor of their own religious traditions (Mark 7:9).

**3:12** This verse helps explain why Jesus would not reveal the mysteries of the kingdom to the religious leaders (Matthew 13:11). Jesus has told Nicodemus how they need to be born again to enter God’s kingdom and that the little flock will be proclaiming God’s kingdom during the tribulation period. Yet, the religious leaders cannot understand these things because they do not have faith in God. Since these are earthly things, the religious leaders certainly would be unable to understand the mysteries of the kingdom which speaks of those heavenly things of New Jerusalem that will come down on earth after the tribulation period is over.

**3:13** This sure is a difficult verse to understand. The “Son of man” is Jesus. He came down from heaven, but He will not ascend up to heaven until 40 days after His resurrection. Yet, the verse also says that the Son of man is in heaven right then. How can He be in heaven and on earth at the same time? Perhaps a clue is given to us in Philippians 3:20-21, which says that, from our position in heaven, we look for the Lord Jesus Christ to come to earth and give us glorified bodies. So,

positionally speaking, because we have already received the atonement (Romans 5:11), we are already seated in heavenly places, but we are still physically located on the earth.

So, perhaps Jesus is saying that, by coming down to the earth, He would present His body as a sacrifice for sins. Being outside of time, God sees Him as already having done this, and so, positionally speaking, He has already ascended to heaven even though, physically speaking, He is still on the earth.

The point of this verse, then, is that Jesus, as the Son of man, knows both of earthly and of heavenly things, because He is in both places at the same time, which makes Him the perfect person to explain sound doctrine to Israel, but He can only explain earthly things at this time, because of the unbelief of Israel.

**3:14** Jesus is speaking of His crucifixion. In Numbers 21:9, Moses lifted up a brass serpent upon a pole. When Israel looked at it, they were saved. If they did not look to the brass serpent, the plague would hit them and they would be killed. God set this up as a type of the Lord dying on a cross. Brass is the metal of judgment in the Bible. Thus, Israel looked to the brass serpent, and their sin was judged. So, too, Jesus would have to die on a cross and Israel would have to be saved by that death in order to avoid death themselves in the lake of fire. In other words, Jesus has already told Nicodemus of his need to be born again to enter God's kingdom. Isaiah 37:3 says there is no strength for the children to be born again. Jesus is saying that that strength for them to be born again will come forth as a result of Jesus' death on the cross.

Although it is easy for us to see this today, Jesus never specifically mentions that He would die on a cross. That is because, if Satan and his forces knew that this was God's plan, they would not have crucified Him (I Corinthians 2:8). Therefore, Jesus just says that "the Son of man [must] be lifted up" (3:14).

**3:15-16** The belief that they were to have in the Messiah was NOT to trust in His death as atonement for their sins. Rather, they were to believe what He said, which was to "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17).

Jesus came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel only (Matthew 15:24), and He gave His life a ransom for the many in Israel who would believe the gospel of the kingdom (Isaiah 53:11). Although Jesus' sacrifice was for Israel, it is God's love for the whole world that He sent Jesus to be the sacrifice. This is because Israel was to be a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:6) to the whole world so that all nations may be saved through Israel (Genesis 12:1-3). Thus, God so loved the world by sending Jesus to save Israel so that they, in turn, would preach the gospel of the kingdom to the rest of the world. Believing in Him means believing the gospel of the kingdom message He proclaimed. We know this because the 12 apostles were preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Luke 9:6) two years before they even knew Jesus was going to die (Matthew 16:21). It does not mean believing in His shed blood as atonement for sins, as Paul tells us today in the dispensation of the grace of God.



Keep in mind what we learned in 2:23-25 that just believing in His name does not give a person eternal life. As I mentioned there, you must believe the words of eternal life, rather than merely believing in Jesus' name. Therefore, when 3:16 says that you have to believe in Him to receive everlasting life, it means to believe His message, which would be the gospel of the kingdom. It does not mean to believe that He merely existed.

Note also the conditional nature of the gospel of the kingdom. If they believe the gospel, they "SHOULD not perish," but they will perish if they take the mark of the beast during the tribulation period (Revelation 14:9-10). Contrast this with today's dispensation of grace where we have already received the atonement (Romans 5:11) and have already been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption, i.e., the rapture (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Whenever we preach the mystery and say that Jesus was only saving Israel while He was on earth, John 3:16 is inevitably brought up as the reason why this is not true. However, Gentile salvation is not the mystery. Isaiah 42:6 says that the Messiah was to be "a light of the Gentiles," and Luke 2:32 quotes this to show that Jesus is that light. Therefore, since Jesus came to save the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24) who would then be a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:5-6) to the Gentiles, God brings salvation to the entire world in Israel's program by giving Jesus as the atonement for their sins. This is completely within the prophetic program, and so John 3:16 does not explain away the mystery revealed to Paul in Acts 9.

**3:17** This verse makes it clear that Jesus' first coming was about saving the world. However, the world should not think that, just because God sent His Son to save the world, that all will be saved. God was "well pleased" with Jesus (Matthew 3:17), and it is impossible to please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, God will not be well pleased with you unless you have faith in the gospel. Jesus' first coming was about saving the world, but His second coming will be about condemning those without faith in what God has told them to believe (Revelation 19:15).

**3:18** Again, note the conditional nature of the salvation found in the gospel of the kingdom. If they believe the gospel, they are not saved yet because they have to endure unto the end (Matthew 24:13). They have just taken that first step of not being condemned because of unbelief. Time will tell if they maintain that belief during the tribulation period. That is what is meant by "believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (3:18). As we have already mentioned, just believing in Jesus' name does not give you eternal life. However, halfway through the tribulation period, the Antichrist will tell the world to place their faith in his name by taking the mark (666) that is the number of his name (Revelation 13:16-18). Therefore, what is meant in 3:18 is that the way to be saved from hell is to believe the gospel of the kingdom and continue to believe until the end of the tribulation period that Jesus is the Christ. If they choose to take the mark of the beast

instead, then they have faith in the Antichrist's name, not the Christ's name, and so they are condemned already (Revelation 14:9-11).

**3:19-21** Jesus is still speaking to Nicodemus with a message to the Jewish religious leaders. Jesus is the true light, and He has come to Israel with the gospel. However, because the religious leaders love their evil deeds above what God has told them, they have rejected the gospel of the kingdom. As a result of Jesus' coming, there will now be a division in Israel. Those, believing God's law covenant with them, are those who "doeth truth." They will come to the light by believing the gospel and will then enter the kingdom. By contrast, the religious leaders are following the traditions of the fathers so that they continue doing their evil deeds. Nicodemus, then, as well as the other religious leaders and all of Israel for that matter, has a choice to make. Will he come to the light of the gospel by changing his mind and believing God's law covenant with Israel, or will he continue in the traditions of the fathers, not believe the gospel, and be cast into the lake of fire as a result?

**3:22-24** This is the only time in the gospels that we are told of Jesus and John the Baptist working together. Note how many people are coming and getting baptized because John baptizes in a place where there is much water. Matthew 3:5-6 confirms this. However, we are not to get our hopes up because 2:23-25 tells us that, because of what is inside man, even those baptized may fail to continue to believe the gospel over the religion of the Pharisees and will not make it into God's kingdom. We see, from Matthew 9:14, that it appears that many of those baptized by John do end up aligning themselves with the Pharisees.

**3:25** This verse tells us that religion has already crept into those believing the gospel of the kingdom. Rather than concentrating on believing the gospel of the kingdom, following the Messiah, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom to Israel, John's disciples are still with John and are disputing a religious point with the Pharisees. Thus, we see them already beginning to fall away from the gospel.

**3:26-30** Note how Israel is following man. In verse 25, we see the Pharisees trying to take some of John's disciples and convert them back to the Jews' religion. In verse 26, we see John's disciples complaining about Jesus taking followers who would ordinarily follow John. John tells them, as he had before, that he wants people to follow the Messiah, not him. This is not about who can build the biggest following. It is about bringing in God's kingdom. John prepared the way for the Messiah. Now that the Messiah is here, John will fade off the scene while the Messiah will be more prominent. Instead of trying to get John to try to get his disciples away from Jesus, John's disciples should abandon John and start following the Messiah, just like the two disciples did when John said, "Behold the Lamb of God" (1:35-37). Sadly, many of John's disciples will go back to religion, as seen by the fact that, on the day of Pentecost, there are only 120 believers in Jerusalem (Acts 1:15).

Jesus is the bridegroom, and Israel is His bride. The more Jews who join saved Israel in believing the gospel and entering the kingdom, the better.

**3:31** John says that Jesus should be followed instead of John because Jesus is God. John is just a man.

**3:32-34** Now, John gives the reason why God sent a forerunner before Jesus. Jesus speaks of the things of God's kingdom, which are heavenly things. Because the Jews are men, they cannot receive what Jesus says because they cannot understand them. Therefore, God sent John (1:6), a man, to speak the words of God. The Jews could receive John's testimony because he was a man. They could hear and believe the gospel from him. Then, their spirits would be alive, such that, when he said "Behold, the Lamb of God," they could follow Jesus. Those believers would then be led by Jesus into the things of God.

For example, God revealed to Peter that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16-17), and God would have revealed this same thing to all believing Jews. Then, the believing Jews could listen to Jesus as He revealed the Father to them, because they would know that Jesus knew what He was talking about since He is the Son of God. But, no man could receive Jesus' testimony in themselves. They could only receive it from the Father revealing to them the heavenly things He spoke about. Thus, John is saying that he is fine with people going to Jesus, because that was the purpose of his ministry—to get them to Christ. Therefore, he is joyful to see Jesus' ministry start (3:29).

**3:35** The Father putting all things into the Son's hand means that He has put the fate of Israel's program into His hand. In order for the earth to be reconciled back to God, the Son has to redeem Israel and Israel has to be willing to be redeemed. Thus, Jesus preaches the gospel of the kingdom so that Israel may be saved, and He will offer Himself as the ultimate sin offering to redeem them.

**3:36** How Israel responds to Jesus determines their eternal destiny. If they believe the gospel of the kingdom, they have eternal life. That gospel is to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Repentance means changing their mind, which means abandoning the Jewish religious system and embracing God's law covenant with them. If they do not do this, they will receive God's wrath, which means eternal damnation in the lake of fire.

**4** The farther away someone is from a religion that supports itself with scripture taken out of context and changed verses, the more likely that person is to believe the gospel. The Samaritans, who worship a golden calf (v. 20 and I Kings 12:28), believe the gospel by Jesus' speaking it to them (v. 41). Jews in a Gentile area believe the gospel only by Jesus performing a miracle (v. 48). Jews in the heart of the Jewish religion do not believe at all and try to kill Jesus (v. 44 and Luke 4:28-30).

**4:1-3** Note how verse 1 says that "the Lord knew...that Jesus made." "The Lord" and "Jesus" are the same person. However, it is said this way to distinguish that Jesus, as Lord, knew what the Pharisees had heard. Using His knowledge as God,

Jesus, the man, then left Judaea. John the Baptist had already been cast into prison (Matthew 4:12). Since Jesus "made and baptized more disciples than John" (4:1), the Pharisees would try to kill Jesus, knowing that He had taken many of their followers away from them. Therefore, Jesus goes from Jerusalem, which is their center of power, and has His ministry in Galilee. Although Galilee was part of Israel, many Jews there were not following the Pharisees' religion, such that it was known as "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matthew 4:15). As such, Jesus could minister to Jews without worrying about the Pharisees trying to kill Him before His hour for crucifixion comes. It is in Galilee that Jesus spends most of His earthly ministry. He is there from Matthew 4:12 through the end of Matthew 18.

**4:2** Jesus has His disciples baptize believers, not because baptism was somehow beneath Him, but because the disciples would be the leaders of the believing remnant once Jesus ascended to the Father. Acts 2:41 says that they baptized 3,000 souls in one day. Therefore, they needed the practice here to get efficient at it!

In I Corinthians 1:17, Paul says, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." Christians, who do not rightly divide the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15) and think that you must be water baptized to be saved today (Acts 2:38), will use 4:2 to say that the reason Paul did not baptize people was because he had people baptizing for him, as Jesus did. However, rather than proving water baptism by Paul, 4:1-2 actually disproves it. 4:1 says that "Jesus...baptized," and then 4:2 gives the parenthetical technicality that it was really Jesus' disciples who did the baptizing. Therefore, if Paul had people baptize for him, I Corinthians 1:17 would say that "Christ sent me to baptize," and then there would be a parenthetical note that others did the baptizing for him. The fact, that I Corinthians 1:17 says that "Christ sent me not to baptize," shows that Paul did not have new converts baptized, and it also shows that water baptism is not part of Paul's gospel.

**4:4** In addition to Galilee, another region of the Jews, where the Pharisees were not ruling, was Samaria. Since Jesus was sent "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24) and Samaria was part of Israel, Jesus went through Samaria. That is why "He must needs go through Samaria," even though the Pharisees and all "good" Jews would have taken the longer route to Galilee that went around Samaria. Samaria was the capital of the 10, northern tribes of Israel. Jews did not associate themselves with Samaritans, as 4:9 says, even though they were part of Israel. In fact, in 8:48, we see that the Jewish religious leaders called Jesus a "Samaritan" as an insult. Therefore, the Pharisees must have thought Jesus was not a real Jew, just because He travelled through Samaria.

**4:5** This verse tells you that Samaria was indeed a part of Israel. Thus, Jesus was sent to them, too.

**4:6-7** The sixth hour was noon. Women would come to the well to draw water much earlier in the day. The fact, that this woman comes so late when it is hotter, shows that she is not liked by the other Samaritan women. As the story goes on, Jesus never does get a drink of water, and, when His disciples offer Him food to

eat, He refuses (4:31-32). Therefore, although Jesus sits down because He is "wearied with His journey," He is more concerned with reaching the lost sheep of Israel than He is with eating and drinking. Also, the fact that it is the hot part of the day and there is not much water to be had (4:11) is a picture of the dry, spiritual condition of the Samaritans.

**4:7-9** Because Jews had nothing to do with Samaritans, the woman is surprised that Jesus even talks to her.

**4:8** Jesus was busy doing the Father's will, while the disciples were taking care of their own physical wants. Therefore, Jesus will later give them the instruction to reap the spiritual harvest, rather than taking care of their own physical concerns (4:31-38).

**4:10** God says, in Jeremiah 2:13, that He is "the fountain of living waters." This refers to the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God" (Revelation 22:1) in God's kingdom on earth. 7:38-39 tells us that this "living water" refers to the Holy Spirit, Who God will "pour out...upon all flesh" after Jesus' ascension (Acts 2:16-18). In other words, if this woman knew that Jesus is the Messiah, she would have asked Him for "the gift of God," which is eternal life (Romans 6:23) and would receive the gift of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. But, because Samaria is involved in religion (4:20), she has no clue, as seen by her addressing Jesus as "sir" in 4:11. Nevertheless, Jesus, as God, knows that she is one of the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24), and so "He must needs go through Samaria" (4:4), since He is seeking to save that which is lost (Luke 19:10).

**4:11-12** The woman knows that, by claiming to have living water, Jesus is saying that He is greater than Jacob, yet she has no problem with this. Contrast this with the Pharisees, who, when Jesus says He is greater than Abraham, accuse Him of being possessed with a devil (8:52-53). This shows the heart of the woman (belief) versus the heart of the Jewish religious leaders (unbelief).

It is also significant that many people are drinking from Jacob's (Israel's) well, because Israel will be a kingdom of priests to the Gentiles in God's millennial kingdom on earth.

**4:13-14** Jesus refers to Israel as being that kingdom of priests here. Israel was to go to God, "the fountain of living waters" (Jeremiah 2:13) to receive eternal life. Then, in God's millennial kingdom on earth, they would become that fountain of living waters to share everlasting life with the Gentiles (Isaiah 61:6 and Zechariah 8:23). This will be accomplished with the New Covenant when God puts His Spirit within them to cause them to obey God's law (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

**4:15-16** The fact, that the woman says, "neither come hither to draw," shows that she does not fully understand what Jesus has said to her. However, she has still asked Him for the water of everlasting life, which Jesus is willing to give to her. Nevertheless, "the head of the woman is the man" (I Corinthians 11:3). Since she is

under the law of Moses, which says that such a decision could be allowed or disallowed by her husband (Numbers 30:6-8), Jesus tells her to bring her husband to Him, in accordance with the law.

However, Jesus, as God, knows that she does not have a husband, and so what He is really doing is getting her to recognize that she is a sinner in need of God's righteousness.

**4:17-18** Now, we find out why the woman comes to the well in the heat of the day. The fact, that she has had five husbands, tells us that she is a man stealer. Therefore, other women do not like her, which is why she has to come to the well in the heat of the day, after all the other women have gotten their water for the day. This adulterer, then, is a type of the nation of Israel. Israel's husband should have been the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead, Israel had abandoned Him by going after other gods and marrying herself to them (Judges 2:17), such that "according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah" (Jeremiah 2:28).

**4:19** Since Jesus has told her something that an ordinary man would not know, she now thinks He is a prophet.

**4:20** For Israel, God had chosen a specific place to put His name (Deuteronomy 12:14,18; 14:23; 15:20, etc.), and that place ended up being Jerusalem, which was in Judah. When Israel split from Judah, Jeroboam, king of Israel, set up two golden calves to worship in Israel so that Israel would not go to Jerusalem to worship (I Kings 12:28). Later on, Israel conquered the city of Samaria, made it the capital of the northern kingdom, and set up a house of Baal there (I Kings 16:23-32). Therefore, the northern tribes of Israel went to "worship God" in Samaria, while the southern tribes of Judah went to "worship God" in Jerusalem. Both kingdoms claimed to have God in their kingdom, and so each kingdom claimed that the other was not worshipping God, and they were both right, because neither kingdom was worshipping God! But, this debate is why the Samaritan woman asks her question here. Note that she does not point out that they are worshipping different gods. To her, the place of worship is the important thing, not the god worshipped, just like the temple buildings are important to Jesus' disciples, rather than the god in those buildings (Matthew 24:1).

**4:21-23** First, Jesus tells the woman that the location of worship does not matter, because all locations will be destroyed at the end of the tribulation period. Thus, the worship location is irrelevant. (This is the same response that Jesus gives to His disciples in Matthew 24:2.)

Second, in 4:22, Jesus tells her about the difference between who is worshipped. As with Nicodemus in 3:7, Jesus uses the term "ye," which means He is referring to a group of people. Here, He is not just referring to Samaritans, but He is also referring to all of apostate Israel, including those in Judah. We know this from 4:21, because the "ye" refers to a group of people, who worships both in Samaria and in Jerusalem. The "we" of this verse, then, refers to the believing remnant of Israel, because He says that salvation comes from the "we" group, and those would

have to be believing Jews in this context.

Note that the middle wall of partition is still up in John, because Jesus says that "salvation is of the Jews." Jesus was on earth to redeem the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24) so that they could go as a kingdom of priests to the rest of the world (Exodus 19:6) so that all nations may be saved (Genesis 12:3). Thus, this woman needs to come to the God of the Jews in order to make it into God's kingdom. If a Gentile, at this time, wanted to be saved, he had to come to the Jews. By contrast, today, God is no respecter of persons, offering the free gift of "salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16).

Third, Jesus points out that true worship is not coming to a building with a sacrifice or a prayer. "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (4:23). Jesus prefaces this with the statement: "the hour cometh, and now is" (4:23). The reason for this is because it took the coming of the Holy Spirit in order for the Father to be worshipped in spirit. Jesus already had the Holy Spirit, and so the hour "now is" for Him, while "the hour cometh" in Acts 2 for the believing remnant of Israel.

Furthermore, the Jews in Judah were not worshipping the Father, because they followed the traditions of their fathers, rather than believing the truth of God's Word to them. Thus, they are worshipping in lies, not in the truth. Also, they are only worshipping as a way to ease their guilty consciences for their evil deeds. Therefore, their spirits are still worshipping Satan. Jesus says that they must change their minds and go back to following God's law covenant with them. If they do, they will be worshipping in spirit and in truth, once the Holy Spirit comes. Thus, the warning that worshipping God in spirit and in truth is the only thing acceptable to God for Israel to enter God's eternal kingdom on earth.

**4:24** Jesus reiterates this point with verse 24, saying that mere lip service does not cut it with God. Christians badly twist this verse to say that we have to feel God by singing worship choruses. Otherwise, we are not worshipping Him in spirit. What this verse is actually saying is that true worship of God is believing His Word and serving Him based on that. In today's dispensation of grace, this means reading God's Word to understand it in light of the new information given in Paul's epistles. Then, allowing the Holy Spirit to apply the truths of God's Word through us through praying the Word (Ephesians 6:17-18 and Romans 8:26).

Worship is ascribing worth to God, and we ascribe worth to God by having faith in what He has said to us. In other words, we value God's Word such that we let it work through our lives. Since God has magnified His Word above all His name (Psalm 138:2), our magnifying His Word, to the point of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1) for His Word to work effectually through us (I Thessalonians 2:13), is true worship of God. That is why God is only pleased with us if we have faith in what He has told us (Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, Jacob is said to have worshipped God by simply proclaiming God's Word to His sons (Hebrews 11:21).

**4:25-26** The woman's response is that she will wait to hear from the Messiah about what she should do to enter the kingdom. She was probably looking for a regally dressed person to be the Messiah. Yet, when Jesus says that He is the Messiah, she believes it (4:28-29). This is far better than the religious leaders who rejected God's offer to heal them from their sinful state (Luke 5:17).

**4:27** This is the reaction of religion. The religious leaders criticized Jesus for talking to publicans and sinners, but Jesus said that those are the very people who need God's righteousness (Matthew 9:12). The disciples marvel that Jesus would talk to this Samaritan woman, which shows that they are still analyzing everything through the glasses of the Jewish religion.

**4:28-29** Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). This woman, by leaving behind her waterpot, shows that she has abandoned her religion of getting the water on her own efforts, and has embraced receiving the free gift of living water from Jesus Christ. She immediately puts her hand to the plow by leading the men in the city to the Christ.

**4:29-30** The Samaritans must, like this woman, have been waiting for the Messiah to appear. Otherwise, they would not have followed this woman, who had had five husbands and was living with another man. They heed Jesus' call to "come and see" (1:39,46). Their going "out of the city" to Jesus symbolizes how Israel had to come out of their religion in order to believe the gospel and enter God's kingdom (See also Hebrews 13:11-14).

**4:31-34** Again, we see the disciples focused on physical things, while Jesus is focused on spiritual things. Jesus is weary from His journey (4:6) and could use some physical food. However, He knows that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Jesus recognizes that spiritually hungry people are coming to Him, and He does not want to miss out on the opportunity to reach the lost sheep of the house of Israel with the gospel. Therefore, He forgoes physical food so that His disciples may learn that spiritual food needs to be taken first. Feeding these spiritually hungry people is part of Jesus' finishing the work of God the Father.

**4:35-36** Jesus tries to get the disciples to focus on the spiritual. There are many lost sheep of the house of Israel who need to believe the gospel so that they may enter God's kingdom. No one will give them the gospel except the little flock because the rest of Israel is caught up in the Pharisees' religion. And, the time to reach them is now since "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). Therefore, instead of focusing on the physical, Jesus' disciples need to be preaching the gospel and doing the signs of the kingdom right then so that more lost sheep of Israel will join the little flock. The wages the little flock will receive consist of positions of authority they will occupy in God's kingdom. For example, the faithful servant during the tribulation period in Luke 19:17 is given authority over ten cities.



**4:37-38** The phrase "one soweth, and another reapeth" shows that evangelism during the tribulation period is a group effort by the little flock. For example, John the Baptist had sown seeds of the gospel in Israel. A member of the little flock could then come along and do a miracle that convinces that person that the gospel is true. Therefore, one man sows, another man reaps, and God gives the increase (I Corinthians 3:6). Because of the unbelief in Israel, many will reject the gospel, which means that the sowing will be done in tears. However, there are people who will be saved, which means that the reaping will be done in joy in the kingdom (Psalm 126:5-6).

**4:39-42** First, the testimony of the woman causes people to believe (4:39). Then, the testimony of Jesus Christ causes more Samaritans to believe (4:41). This is why "He must needs go through Samaria" to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

**4:44** By contrast, Jesus has both spoken God's Word and performed signs of the kingdom for His Own people, and they still do not believe in Him. Therefore, the religious people, who seem to know God and their Bibles (Pharisees), will not make it into God's kingdom, while dirty, rotten sinners (Samaritans) will make it in. That is because the religious people trust in religion to save them, while the dirty, rotten sinners trust in God to save them.

**4:43-45** Jesus, being of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5), is not accepted by those in Judah (4:44). Therefore, Jesus goes from Samaria to Galilee to minister. Galilee is known as "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matthew 4:15), because the Galilaeans are not devout, religious Jews. So, the Jewish religious leaders have rejected both the Samaritans and the Galilaeans, as being unsaved. Yet, we already saw the Samaritans confess that Jesus is "the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (4:42). Now, we will see the Galilaeans receive Him, as well (4:45).

**4:46-47** The nobleman's son being at the point of death is a sign of the condition of the nation of Israel. They have abandoned God and His law covenant with them in favor of religion and the worship of other gods. As a result, they are spiritually "at the point of death."

**4:48** This verse clearly explains why Jesus performed miracles at His first coming. Jesus healed the sick and cast out devils for the SOLE purpose of having Israel believe the gospel of repent and be baptized so that they would abandon their religion and go back to the law covenant, i.e., repent, in order to have eternal life in God's kingdom. Because the Jews require a sign, He performed miracles (I Corinthians 1:22). Contrary to popular, Christian belief today, Jesus really does not care if someone is healed physically or not. Even if a healing extends a person's life by 60 years, as it probably did in this case, that person will still die, just as if he was never healed in the first place. A person's eternal destination is what matters to God. Changing people's eternal destination from death to life is ALL that Jesus cared about when performing miracles. He healed them physically so that they would see what He wanted to do for them spiritually.

**4:49** The nobleman's response is the response of most people. He is concerned with the physical well-being of his son, when he should have been more concerned with his family's eternal destination. How many today ask for prayer for a physical ailment to be healed compared with a request for someone to be saved or be edified in the truth of God's Word? So many Christians today are disappointed when God does not bring physical healing to them or to their loved ones, and they completely ignore the complete, spiritual healing that God has available for them in His Word.

**4:50** Fortunately, the nobleman does believe Jesus when He says that his son has been healed, and His whole house believes the gospel of the kingdom, as a result (4:53).

**4:51-53** Jesus' healing of the son is a picture of how He, as God, is ready to heal the nation of Israel from their spiritual death. All they need to do is repent and be baptized. The nobleman and his whole house join the little flock, believing the gospel after they see that Jesus healed the nobleman's son. This was the whole purpose for Jesus' healing of him. Jesus did not care if the boy died physically, but He did care if the boy remained spiritually dead. Therefore, Jesus healed people physically in hopes that they would also accept His spiritual healing of them.

**5** Jesus heals a man as proof that Israel is steeped in religion, but Jesus has the words of eternal life that can bring Israel out of religion (vs. 1-15). He then tells Israel that they must believe Him to have eternal life (vs. 19-29), and He has five witnesses proving His words are true (vs. 30-47), even though only two or three are really needed (Matthew 18:16).

**5:1** Note the reference to "a feast of the Jews." It used to be a feast of the Lord, as prescribed by God in Leviticus 23. The Jews had taken that feast and made it into a religious observance, such that God now calls it "a feast of the Jews."

**5:2-4** These verses tell us how bad religion had gotten in Jerusalem. "A great multitude" of sick people waited for an angel to heal them, when they should have been trusting in God's Word and waiting for the Messiah to redeem the nation of Israel so that they may enter God's kingdom. Also, if they are able to lay around and wait for a healing, they could have used that time to study God's Word and start leading others into the kingdom as well, instead of just lying around and having a pity party. Believing the gospel and leading others into the kingdom is FAR more important than being healed of a physical infirmity! Moreover, the angel, that healed one person per year, was probably a devil, since God would have not been interested in getting a bunch of sick people to focus on one person per year being physically healed, when they could have all been spiritually healed in an instant. Israel's following of the healing by the devil, then, is a type of how apostate Israel will pledge their allegiance to the Antichrist in the tribulation period.

Therefore, this picture of "a great multitude" of sick folk is a picture of the spiritual condition of Israel. They were all spiritually sick, and they were trusting in their religion to bring them spiritual healing, when their Messiah was right in front of their face, offering them eternal life, and they were too spiritually blind, halt, and

withered to recognize Him as such. Also, imagine the funny scene that must have taken place when the angel troubled the water. Being blind, halt, and withered, these people would have had a very difficult time getting down to the water. This is a picture of how Israel could not enter God's kingdom based upon their works. They could only enter the kingdom through belief in the gospel of the kingdom.

**5:5** This man, having an infirmity for 38 years, is a picture of the nation of Israel. Due to their unbelief, they wasted precisely 38 years in the wilderness before they entered the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 2:14). Similarly, the people alive during Jesus' earthly ministry will not enter the Promised Land due to their unbelief, except for the believing remnant, as represented by Joshua and Caleb, the believing remnant who made it into the Promised Land after 38 years (Numbers 32:11-12).

**5:6-9** If you picture the scene of 5:3-4, the events of 5:6-9 seem strange. "A great multitude" of people have been lying there "blind, halt, withered" in that condition for years, but Jesus only offers to heal one man. Why did Jesus just offer to heal one man? Why do we not hear a mention of any other conversation going on here? After all, none of these people were deaf. If I was in their condition and I heard someone offering to heal someone, I would have been jumping over that guy, fighting to be the one healed, much like they did when the waters were troubled once per year.

It appears, then, that, out of "a great multitude" of people, not a single person has faith that Jesus can heal them, such that no one even responds to His offer of healing! Even the one He talks to does not have faith, for he complains that no one is there to put him in the water. Note how he is trusting in man to help him, when he only needs God. Jesus heals him in spite of his resistance. This shows the stronghold of religion over the nation of Israel. Physically hurting individuals will not even take a chance that Jesus can heal them. If this is true physically, how much more is it true spiritually! Spiritually speaking, Jesus stands ready to heal the nation, and the entire nation needs God's imputed righteousness. He comes to the nation, just like He came to this man, and offers them spiritual healing ("Wilt thou be made whole?"). Even so, only a remnant believe His offer, while the rest continue in their sins and will not enter God's kingdom, just like the great multitude remains by the pool unhealed, in the same condition they were in before the Messiah arrived.

**5:9-11** You can also see the stronghold of religion on the Jews by the fact that, even the man who was healed remains bound to religion. He is immediately scolded by religion for carrying his bed. His response is much like Adam's when confronted with his sin. Adam said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Genesis 3:12). The former lame man said, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk" (5:11). Therefore, instead of proclaiming the good news of his healing, the man asks like he did something wrong and then proceeds to blame Jesus for causing him to break a religious law! As such, this man represents the spiritual condition of the nation. Jesus has healed him physically, and he will not let Jesus heal him

spiritually. Many of those healed in Israel will not believe the gospel of the kingdom, because they trust the religious experts over God Himself!

**5:12** Note how the religious leaders are very careful not to give credit to God or to Jesus for the healing. They do not ask, "Who healed thee?" But, they ask, "What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?" They are focused on a religious tradition, rather than on the miracle of God!

**5:13** Religion was so bad in Jerusalem that Jesus miraculously transported Himself from the pool. The reaction by those around needed healing should have been to ask for healing for themselves. Instead, their reaction probably would have been to try to kill Him. The religious leaders, who were supposed to have led Israel to their Messiah, should have announced to all at the feast (5:1) to listen to their Messiah, because He was now in their midst. Instead, they want Him dead. Thus, what religion does is it masks the sin problem that man has such that man does not think he has a problem such that, when the real solution to the problem is presented, i.e., God's solution, it is soundly rejected to the point of not only rejecting the message but also trying to keep all people from ever hearing the solution, lest they abandon their money making religion.

**5:14** Christians twist this verse to say that God punishes people when they sin by inflicting them with diseases. The context shows this is simply not true. Jesus was trying to get Israel out of their religion. This man was trusting in religion to heal him, Jesus heals him anyway, and the man goes back to religion by going into the temple. The warning Jesus gives is that he has already been made whole. Do not go back to trusting in religion. Otherwise, a worse thing will come upon him, meaning that he will spend eternity in the lake of fire, which is much worse than being lame in this life. Therefore, even after the man is healed, which plainly showed him to trust in God and not in religion, Jesus STILL has to go back to him to warn him that religion will cost him his soul.

**5:15** Even after this warning, the man still does not listen. He goes back to religion. He ought to know that the Jewish religious leaders are bad news, because they did not care diddly-squat about his healing. Yet, he goes to them and tells on Jesus to get Jesus in trouble for daring to heal the man! It is as if he tells them, "God is in our midst. Better get rid of Him!"

**5:16** The Jewish religious leaders show, once again, that they do not want the Messiah around. They now have a technicality under their own traditions that they can use to justify trying to kill Jesus. Jesus "worked" on the Sabbath by healing a man. Jesus had already taught them that they were hypocrites for doing this, because they will help animals on the sabbath, but they will not help humans (Luke 13:15)! Their attitude should not be surprising, because they will do the works of their father, the devil (John 8:44).

**5:17-18** "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27). This means that God made the sabbath so that man would be closer to God, yet the Pharisees have turned it around to try to limit man's reconciliation back to

God through Jesus Christ, by trying to stop Him from doing the Father's work on the sabbath.

The second charge worthy of death, according to the Pharisees, is that Jesus has committed blasphemy by making Himself equal with God by saying that God is His Father. That is something worthy of death under God's law, but only if it is not true. He has already demonstrated to them that He is God; therefore, again, the Pharisees are not obeying the law by trying to kill Jesus.

We should also note Jesus' argument in 10:34-36 that God called Israel's judges "gods" in Psalm 82:6. The rest of the verse says, "all of you are children of the most High." Since Jesus came from the Father, He speaks the truth when He calls Himself the Son of God.

Also, Psalm 89:26 says that the Messiah will call God His Father. Therefore, since Jesus calls God His Father and He is not guilty of committing any sin, Jesus' proclamation is another proof that He is their Messiah. Instead, the Pharisees turn His proof into another excuse to try to kill Him.

**5:19-47** The point of Jesus' talk, here, is to tell Israel that they must believe the gospel of the kingdom in order to have eternal life in God's kingdom (vs. 19-29), and that the evidence shows that Jesus' words are true, as opposed to the lies that the Pharisees are telling Israel (vs. 30-47).

**5:19** Jesus essentially tells the Pharisees that the reason He healed a man on the sabbath is because God the Father has been doing that for the nation of Israel all along. In other words, Jews, in need of spiritual healing, could come to the temple on the sabbath and believe God's words spoken to them there, in order to have eternal life. Therefore, Jesus is just doing what He has seen His Father do the whole time. This shows that the purpose behind Jesus' physical healing of the lame man is really spiritual, because God had not been physically healing Israel all the time, but He had been spiritually healing all in Israel who were willing to be healed. These spiritual healings generally happened on the sabbath, as that was their "church" day. This explains the primary reason why Jesus did so many of His healings on the sabbath. It was not to show the Pharisees how petty their traditions are, although that was a reason. The primary reason was to show the nation of Israel that Jesus is God come in the flesh to heal them spiritually, just like God had been doing all along, but not in the flesh. By coming and seeing their Messiah, they were more likely to accept God's spiritual healing for them than if He did not show up at all in the flesh.

**5:20-22** The greater works that God will do will be to raise saved Israel from the dead, give them a new, glorified body, and give them eternal life in His kingdom. The physical and spiritual healings He gave them at His first coming were only a foretaste of the physical and spiritual healings they would receive at His second coming, but they must believe the gospel of the kingdom first. Otherwise, they will be judged by the Son into the lake of fire.

Do not think that individual predestination is true just because 5:21 says that “the Son quickeneth whom He will.” “The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9), and “without faith it is impossible to please” God (Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, the Son’s will is to quicken all who have faith in the gospel of the kingdom. He does not predestinate some to believe and some not to believe. Jesus states this clearly in 5:30, where He says, “I can of Mine Own Self do nothing: as I hear, I judge.” If He hears faith, the person receives eternal life. If He hears unbelief, the person gets eternal damnation.

**5:22** Since the book of John shows Jesus as God, statements such as, “I and My Father are one” (10:30) are found exclusively in John. Because Jesus is God and the Father is God and both are one with the Holy Spirit (I John 5:7), Jesus does exactly what the Father does. The difference is that He can accomplish more, because He is in the flesh. As such, He is the only one qualified to judge man. That is why Colossians 2:9 says, “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” The Pharisees look at Jesus and see a mere man, but Jesus is telling them, here, that He is God in the flesh, enabling them to experience the fulness of God in the kingdom if they only would believe. Unfortunately, unbelievers will experience the fulness of God by being cast into the lake of fire.

**5:24** Again, Jesus gives the warning to the religious leaders that they need to abandon their religion, trust in God's law covenant with Israel, and be water baptized in order to receive eternal life. Otherwise, they will die.

**5:25** “The hour is coming” refers to the coming time of Jesus' second coming when He will raise saved Israel from the grave to live eternally with Him in God's kingdom (5:28). “Now is” means that, with Jesus there, Jews now have the opportunity to believe the gospel and pass from spiritual death to spiritual life (5:24). Therefore, “the hour is coming” for them to receive physical, eternal life, but “the hour ... now is” for them to receive spiritual, eternal life.

**5:26-27** Since the Son has life in Himself and is the judge of all men, He has the ability to give life to those who believe the gospel of the kingdom. The reason God the Son will judge the world, rather than God the Father, is because the Son is the God-man. God the Father is only a Spirit (John 4:24); He does not have a body. God the Son is the only One Who can stand as God and judge man, because He is the only One Who is both God and man.

**5:29** “Done good” and “done evil” are not in terms of human good and human evil, because all have done both. Rather, those, who have “done good,” are those who believe the gospel of the kingdom. That is how they do good and receive eternal life. Those who have “done evil” are those who reject the gospel and try to make it into God’s kingdom based upon their own merits.

**5:30** This is a good verse to share with those who say, “How can a loving God send people to hell?” and with those who believe in individual predestination. Jesus says: “I can of Mine Own Self do nothing.” In other words, Jesus does not send people to hell. People either believe the gospel they have been given, or they

do not. It is up to each individual to choose if he will receive eternal life or death. Jesus says, “as I hear, I judge.” He does not say, “as I force people to be with Me or not, I judge.”

**5:31** Deuteronomy 19:15 says that it takes two or three witnesses to establish a matter. Jesus will now say that He has five witnesses to prove that He is doing the Father’s work. Therefore, they should believe Him in order to have eternal life. The five witnesses are: 1) John the Baptist (vs. 32-35), 2) Jesus’ works (v. 36), 3) The Father (vs. 37-38), 4) The Scriptures (v. 39), and 5) Moses (v. 46).

**5:32-35** John the Baptist is the first witness that Jesus is one with the Father and is doing His work. “For a season,” Israel rejoiced in him, but they have now rejected him.

**5:34** Jesus is not following man’s words, and the implication is that Israel should not either, because men, in the person of the religious leaders, are leading them astray. Rather, they should be listening to the words of God, which come through Jesus, as witnessed by John the Baptist, Jesus’ works, the Father, the Scriptures, and Moses, rather than listening to the lies of the Pharisees.

Jesus does not receive testimony from man (5:34), because He knows the wickedness that is inside man (2:24-25). Similarly today, we should receive God’s testimony only, which is only found in God’s Word. However, just like Jesus had witnesses that what He was saying was true, we also can hear God’s Word from men, but we must always search the scriptures to make sure they are accurately speaking the truth (Acts 17:11).

**5:35** John was a burning light in the sense of speaking of God’s fiery judgment upon Israel if they did not believe the gospel (Matthew 3:12). He was a shining light in that he pointed Israel to God and eternal life through the gospel. Therefore, He used God’s Word as a light unto their path (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 4:18).

**5:36** Because John was just a man, Jesus’ works are a greater witness than John. Since He was to finish the Father’s works, Jesus’ works, in this context, would be the things of Daniel 9:24: “make an end of sins” and “make reconciliation for iniquity.” To get Israel to believe, He cast out devils and healed the sick, both proving that the gospel He gave is true. Therefore, His works are to bring salvation to Israel by preaching the gospel, performing the signs of the kingdom, living a sinless life, and dying for their sins.

**5:37-38** Jesus says that they have not heard the Father’s “voice at any time,” yet the Father did speak from heaven at Jesus’ baptism saying, “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). What Jesus means is that, while they may have heard the Father’s audible voice, their spirit inside them did not hear His voice because they “have not His Word abiding in” them. In other words, hearing the voice of God involves believing the words that will bring them eternal life in God’s kingdom. His sheep know His voice (10:4), but unbelievers do not hear His voice. Therefore, although the Father is the third witness that Jesus is one

with the Father, the Pharisees do not know this, because they cannot hear the Father's voice, due to their unbelief.

**5:39-41** Note carefully that Jesus says that they "THINK they have eternal life from the scripture," but they do not. The reason is because reading and quoting scripture is not what gives you life. Jesus Christ gives you life. The scriptures are given to testify of Jesus Christ (the fourth witness that Jesus is of the Father) so that they would believe His message and have life. Instead, they twist scripture to fit their traditions, missing the Christ altogether. If they would believe the scripture, they would see the Christ and believe His message, which is why Jesus is called "the Word" (1:1). Then, they would have eternal life. However, because they have rejected Christ, they have rejected God's Word and eternal life, even though they say they have eternal life because they use scripture in their religion. The reason they do this is so they can continue to live by the lusts of their flesh and still receive honor from men. This is exactly what is going on in Christianity today. Because Jesus receives honor from His Father and not from men (5:41), He believes the Word and gives it to them that they might have life.

**5:42** If the Pharisees searched the scriptures (5:39), they would learn that God had promised to send a Messiah and that that Messiah was Jesus Christ. They would then believe His message of the gospel of the kingdom and receive eternal life. They would then have God's love within them. Since the Pharisees have not even done the first step, they do not have God's love.

Similarly today, Christianity will deny the truth of fundamental doctrines for today's dispensation, because they have not believed Paul's gospel. We can then conclude that God's love is not in them, as well. They will say, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1), but God's Word is judging them, not us. Furthermore, they do not even have the ability to understand what Matthew 7:1 means, since they do not have God's love. As such, we should not accept Biblical rebuke from unbelievers. Jesus did not.

**5:43** Israel did not receive the Christ, but the other they will receive, who comes in his own name, is the Antichrist. When he comes, Israel will make a covenant with him for 7 years (Daniel 9:27), which is the tribulation period. So, why would they receive someone as the Christ, coming in his own name, when they would not receive Jesus Christ, coming in the Father's name? Because they do not have God's love. The Antichrist will use scripture in his apostate religion, just like the Pharisees were doing. Therefore, the Pharisees will receive him. Jesus, however, used scripture in the Father's name. Since the Pharisees are of the devil (8:44), they did not receive Jesus.

**5:44** Paul said that people, who compare "themselves among themselves, are not wise" (II Corinthians 10:12). Instead, we should use the measure of God found in His Word (II Corinthians 10:13). Similarly, because the Pharisees are unbelievers without the love of God, they compare themselves among themselves and give honor to the ones who do better than the others. Since they are looking for honor from man, rather than from God, they will never believe and receive eternal life.



Therefore, they are not wise in what they do.

**5:45-47** The Pharisees supposedly trusted in the law of Moses. Therefore, Jesus brings up that they are really trusting in the traditions of the fathers, because Moses prophesied of the Messiah (Deuteronomy 18:15,18-19) (the fifth witness that Jesus is of the Father), yet they do not believe in Him.

**6** The multitudes follow Jesus for His miracles (v. 2) and for physical food (v. 26). Because of this, when He speaks the words that will give them eternal life (vs. 27-58), they abandon Him forever (v. 66). This shows how only a little flock will endure unto the end of the tribulation period and enter into God's kingdom (vs. 67-69).

**6:2** This great multitude is not the type that will endure unto the end of the tribulation period in order to enter God's kingdom. We know this because they are following Jesus "because they saw His miracles." This is in contrast to the Samaritans who believed because: 1) Of the testimony of the woman (John 4:39), and 2) "Many more believed because of His Own Word" (John 4:41). Believing the gospel of the kingdom is what saves Israel, not following Jesus for the physical miracles He did.

**6:3-6** This is a picture of God's coming kingdom. A mountain pictures a kingdom, e.g., Revelation 17:9-10. Therefore, seeing Jesus on a mountain, sitting with His disciples, pictures that coming kingdom of God, as does the great multitude of people coming to the kingdom to be fed by God. The real "bread" they will receive in the kingdom is God's Word. Therefore, Jesus asks His disciples about feeding these people, as a way to test the disciples. When they are in God's kingdom, they will remember this and give the proper response of feeding them with God's Word then.

Note that, in the middle of these verses, we are told that "the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh" (6:4). Jesus Christ is the true Passover (I Corinthians 5:7). If they had been coming to Him for life, He would have given it to them. But, since they were only interested in celebrating "a feast of the Jews," they will forsake Him when He gives them the words of life (6:66).

**6:7-9** Jesus knows that those following Him are only doing so for the physical miracles (6:2). Therefore, although there is a great multitude there, He is really only concerned about building up His disciples with sound doctrine. The disciples have shown that they are still focused on the physical, rather than the spiritual. Therefore, Jesus will do the miracle of feeding the 5,000 to show that they need not worry about the physical (6:10-13). He will then give them doctrine to help them grow spiritually (6:26-65).

**6:10-11** The disciples will be doing this during the tribulation period. The little flock will not have food because they have not taken the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:16-17). Therefore, the disciples will sit them down, ask their Father for provision, and then distribute food to meet the needs of the people. They will

also be doing this spiritually in God's kingdom, which is the focus of John's account of the story. The Gentiles will come to Jerusalem to be spiritually fed (Isaiah 2:2-3), and Israel will give them living bread come down from heaven (6:51).

Note that 6:10 says that "there was much grass in the place." Psalm 23:2 says, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Thus, a picture of rest in spite of the tribulation of the Antichrist's kingdom.

**6:12** Since Jesus made food out of nothing, why would He be concerned that all fragments be gathered up so "that nothing be lost?" It is because the food is a picture of saved Jews in the kingdom. Just before the cross, Jesus told the Father regarding His disciples, "I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost" (17:12). Similarly, then, here, Jesus tells the disciples to make sure none of believing Israel is lost.

**6:13** The twelve baskets remaining represent the 12 tribes of Israel in the millennial kingdom. It is up to the believing remnant to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of Israel during the tribulation period so that all Israel is saved (Romans 11:26).

**6:14** "That prophet" is the God-man that God would send, according to Deuteronomy 18:15,18-19. That passage says that Israel is supposed to "hearken unto [God's] words which He shall speak in My name." Therefore, when the men see the miracle that Jesus did and recognize Him as "that prophet," they know that they should hearken to His words. This is important because, soon, many of His disciples will go back and not walk with Him any more based on His words (6:66). These people are offended by His words and abandon the idea that He is "that prophet." The 12 disciples, though, will stick with Him (6:67-69). 6:14, then, sets the stage for the events in 6:22-71.

**6:15** Although the people saw Jesus as their Messiah, they did not understand that the purpose of the Messiah's first coming was to suffer. His glory would only come in His second coming (I Peter 1:11). Israel was looking for their Messiah to deliver them from Roman oppression. Therefore, they skipped right to the glory part, trying to force Jesus to become king. They should have known that, since He is God, He did not need their help in becoming king. If it was time for Him to become king, He could make Himself king. (This is pictured by Him coming to the mountain alone (A mountain is a type of a kingdom in the Bible).) Since it was not time yet, Jesus got away from them.

**6:16** The sea is a type of Satan's realm (Revelation 13:1, 17:1), and night is a type of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:29). Therefore, the disciples' going to the sea at even while Jesus is still on the mountain, pictures how the disciples will feel like they have to go through the tribulation period all alone.

**6:17** The fact, that Jesus was not with His disciples, is a picture of how the little flock will go through the tribulation period with the only thing they have from God being His Word. But, since Jesus is the Word (1:1), He is actually "with [them]"

always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). Therefore, the way that the believing remnant will endure unto the end of the tribulation period and be saved (Matthew 24:13) is by having faith in God’s Word to them.

**6:18** The rising sea is a picture of how the tribulation period gets worse halfway through, due to the “great wind” of the spirit of the devil, raising the Antichrist and the false prophet from the dead (Revelation 13:1-4,11-14) to form the unholy Trinity. Jesus confirms this by saying that the first half of the tribulation period is “the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:8), while the second half is “great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:21).

**6:19** Jesus will come at the end of the tribulation period to save His little flock. The sea is a picture of Satan’s kingdom, and Jesus’ walking upon the sea, then, shows how Jesus will have no trouble getting through Satan’s kingdom to rescue His little flock. This is something only God can do, just like only the supernatural power of God can cause someone to walk upon the sea.

**6:20** Jesus says, “It is I;” He does not say, “It is Jesus.” That is because His sheep “know His voice” (10:4). Only those, with the spiritual ears to hear Jesus’ call to the marriage supper of the Lamb, will partake in His gift of eternal life to them.

**6:21** The fact, that “immediately the ship was at the land,” is a picture of how Jesus will immediately defeat the Antichrist and his kingdom and bring in God’s kingdom. It will not be a struggle for God.

**6:22-26** By looking at the reason why Jesus is being followed, we see the gradual yielding to the flesh by Israel. In 4:41, the Samaritans believe Jesus because of His Own Word. Believing the gospel is the only way Israel will make it into God’s kingdom (3:5). In 6:2, people are following Jesus because of His miracles. Now, in 6:22-26, He is not even being followed because of that. He is being followed “not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.” Therefore, He will speak in 6:27-58 to try to re-shift their focus on believing God’s Word, rather than following Him for miracles or food.

**6:22-23** Note how the disciples and Jesus were going in the opposite direction of everyone else. So it will be in the tribulation period. Apostate Israel will join themselves with the Antichrist and follow him, but the believing remnant will follow God and His Word.

**6:27** Immediately, Jesus tries to get the multitude’s focus off of the physical and on to the spiritual. They should be seeking to enter God’s kingdom instead of looking for some miraculous feeding with food and water.

Note also that Jesus says that the Father has sealed Him, which means, in this context, that Jesus’ faith in the Father has made Him the Christ. Halfway through the tribulation period, God will seal 144,000 Jews (Revelation 7:3-8). Therefore, the crowd can also be sealed by God to make it into God’s kingdom, if they have

faith in the gospel of the kingdom, which is the “meat” that Jesus wants to give them.

**6:28-29** Jesus says that He wants to GIVE them eternal life (6:27), and they want to DO mighty works for God instead (6:28). This is how Christianity is today. They, in their pride, want to do great works for God, when all they are called to do is believe God’s Word. Similarly, this multitude cannot do anything for God. They simply need to trust in what God can do for them.

**6:30** The Samaritans believed Jesus was the Messiah based solely on His words to them. This multitude of Israelites has already experienced Jesus’ feeding all 5,000 of them with just five loaves and two, small fish (6:9-10), and they STILL ask for a sign! Jesus said that “an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign” (Matthew 12:39). Therefore, they will not believe if He gives them a sign. So, instead, He explains the spiritual truths behind the physical miracle that He has already performed.

**6:32-33** First, Jesus makes it clear that the bread that Israel received in the wilderness came from the Father, not from Moses. This is important because now the Father has given them the true bread from heaven, which is the Messiah. If they think that Moses gave them the bread, then they will expect Jesus to give them the bread now. But, if they identify the Father as the One Who gave them the bread, they will be able to identify that the true bread is the Messiah. The bread in the wilderness was physical bread from heaven, which was a type of the Messiah to come, who is the spiritual bread from heaven, because the Messiah will give them spiritual life, if they partake of Him by believing His gospel.

**6:35-36** By believing on the words of the gospel of the kingdom that Jesus gave them, they would have eternal life in the kingdom. As such, they would never hunger or thirst. Their problem is that they do not believe.

**6:37** “All that the Father giveth Me” is a reference to all those who come to Jesus by faith, abandoning the religion of the Pharisees. Jesus said to His Father in 17:12 that “those that Thou gavest Me I have kept.” Thus, those in Israel, who believe the gospel of the kingdom, are those that the Father has given Him, and He will keep those safe from Satan, not just until the cross, but until the end of the tribulation period, provided they continue to trust in God and His Word (6:39). Since this multitude of people was not given to Jesus by the Father, they are unbelievers.

**6:39** The reason that “it” is used here is that Jesus is referring to the corporate bride of Christ, rather than individual members. This would be part of “that holy thing” that started with Jesus’ birth (Luke 1:35).

**6:40** So, 6:39 says that Jesus will “raise IT up again at the last day”, referring to the corporate bride of Christ. Now, Jesus says that all individual Jews have the opportunity to be part of the bride of Christ. Therefore, He now says, “I will raise HIM [that believes] up at the last day.” Satan’s kingdom will be at its strongest

during the tribulation period, yet it is no match for God, as God will keep His little flock safe until Jesus' second coming to set up God's kingdom on earth.

**6:41-42** Wherever God's Word is taught, Satan will be there to attack it. Such is the case here. Satan has his people, the Jewish religious leaders, try to cast doubt upon the credibility of Jesus' words to Israel by saying He cannot be God since He is "the son of Joseph." Yet, they are not correct. Jesus is not the son of Joseph. He was "(as was supposed) the son of Joseph" (Luke 3:23), but He is really "the son of God" (Luke 3:38). Therefore, He HAS to be "the bread which came down from heaven" (6:41).

**6:44** This verse does not support the idea of predestination. Jesus is saying that the only way into the kingdom is to believe the gospel, and it is not just something you can say or something you are born into. Rather, they must abandon their religion, be water baptized, and believe God will bring them into the kingdom. This is something they will only commit to if they yield to the Father's leading them to do so. It is not predestinated individuals, who are drawn by the Father, but it is "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" because God says "Come" (Revelation 22:17).

In the case of the Jews in Jesus' audience, since "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven" (6:32) and Jesus is that bread (6:35), then they all have the opportunity to be saved. In other words, the Father offers to draw all Jews unto Jesus, but these people do not believe (6:36). Therefore, they do not see Jesus as being of the Father (6:42). Therefore, they are not drawn of the Father (6:44).

**6:45** Jesus quotes Isaiah 54:13, which Jeremiah 31:34 tells us finds its ultimate fulfillment in the new covenant in God's kingdom. However, Israel could be taught of the Father in Jesus' day by simply believing the Old Testament scripture. That is how the Father would draw them to Jesus, and how they would know that Jesus is the Messiah. They need to stop looking to the Jewish religious leaders and start looking to God the Father through His Word. They would then believe the words of the gospel of the kingdom that Jesus has said to them and be saved.

**6:46-48** The reasons, that believers would come unto Jesus, are because: 1) He has seen the Father, and 2) He was sent from the Father as the bread of life. Therefore, Jesus has the words of eternal life, and they can go to no one else for eternal life (6:68).

**6:49-50** Jesus is not saying that believers will not physically die, but they will be raised to everlasting life at Jesus' second coming. Their fathers died spiritually because they did not eat of the bread of life. In other words, they did not believe God's words to them. Thus, they will not receive everlasting life. If they had believed God's words to them, they would still be physically dead, but they would be raised from the dead at the last day (6:39). As such, they do not die spiritually.

**6:51-52** The way that Jesus would give His flesh for them to eat would be by dying on the cross. The way they would eat of His flesh would be to believe the

gospel of the kingdom.

**6:53-54** At the same time, I do believe Jesus is referring to them literally eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Jesus is “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (1:29). He is the complete Passover Lamb, sacrificed for their sins. In talking about the Passover, Deuteronomy 16:7 says that they were to “roast and eat it in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose.” As such, if Israel, by faith, had taken Jesus as the complete Passover Lamb, they would have bound Him upon the altar in the temple (Psalm 118:27) and ate of His flesh, just as Jesus is commanding them here. Since they did not do this, Jesus had His disciples eat of His flesh and drink of His blood in the evening before His crucifixion (Luke 22:15-20). The rest of believing Israel will do so at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Here, in 6:53-54, Jesus is calling the nation to believe the gospel of the kingdom. If they do believe, they will sacrifice Him as the Passover Lamb, eat and drink of the Passover Lamb, and then be a kingdom of priests to reach the Gentiles with the gospel to bring God’s kingdom to earth (“Thy kingdom come” (Luke 11:2).). They had tried to force Jesus to be their king (6:15). In essence, Jesus is saying, “if you want Me to be your king, you must eat of my sacrifice for your sins.”

I realize that most Christians take issue with what I just said, but that is what the text is saying. The main objection is that Jesus is not speaking literally. But, how do you know that? God says, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:9). We cannot use our natural minds to understand scripture (I Corinthians 2:14). Therefore, we cannot say that something is not literal just because it does not make sense to us. If we were to do that, we certainly would have to say that the virgin birth is not to be taken literally, but it HAS to be literal in order for Christ to die for our sins. Also, Jesus’ words make it clear that He is speaking literally. In 6:51, Jesus says He will give His flesh to eat. Then, in 6:52, the Jews ask, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” If meant to be symbolic, Jesus would have responded with, “You eat My flesh by believing My words.” Instead, in 6:53-56, Jesus repeats three times that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood in order to have life. He also says that His flesh and blood are meat and drink indeed. Since Jesus has said four times that they must eat His flesh and three times that they must drink His blood, we should conclude that they were to do just that.

Another objection is that this is cannibalism. However, Jesus is called the “Lamb” 28 times in the book of Revelation. When the elder tells John in Revelation 5:5 that “the LION of the tribe of Juda” will open the book, John says that He sees Jesus as “a Lamb as it had been slain” (Revelation 5:6). Since Christ is “our passover” Lamb (I Corinthians 5:7), when saved Israel eats His flesh and drinks His blood, they will be eating and drinking of a Lamb—not of a man.

Another objection is that the Bible forbids the drinking of blood. Leviticus 17:11 says that the life is in the blood. That is why they were not to drink of the blood of animals. However, because Jesus has never sinned, He has eternal life in His

blood. Therefore, by giving them His blood to drink, they, too, would have eternal life. That is why eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood are so important. They do not have life in God without holy blood in them. This would have taken place at His sacrifice as the Passover Lamb in the temple. However, since they did not believe, it will take place at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (If they are not eating and drinking of the Lamb at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, then what are they eating and drinking there? Jesus says in Luke 14:15, “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.” He is blessed because he is eating of the true bread—Jesus’ flesh—in order to have eternal life.) Jesus is trying to get Israel’s focus off of miracles and get them to focus on His words, because, only by believing His words, will the nation carry out God’s plan for the Passover Lamb.

Finally, since Jesus is the Passover and Israel was required to eat of the Passover, which was “a shadow of things to come” (Colossians 2:17), when the real Passover is there—Jesus Christ—they must eat of Him, also, or else eating of the lamb would not have been required in the pattern.

**6:56-57** These verses explain that eating His flesh and drinking His blood are the way that saved Israel will dwell in Jesus and also dwell in the Father, since Jesus dwells in the Father. The reason why this is not required for us today, in the dispensation of grace, is that we were never placed under the law covenant and were never required to eat the passover. Therefore, we partake of the Lord’s Supper (I Corinthians 11:20), rather than the passover (Luke 22:15).

**6:60** Note that it was Jesus’ disciples, who had a hard time receiving this saying. Jesus is about to lose many of His disciples because He has just told them they must eat His flesh and drink His blood. If He did not mean this literally, He would have at least explained this to His disciples, but He provides no such disclaimer.

**6:61-62** The reason His disciples were offended was because they believe He will overthrow the Romans and rule the world right then. If they have to eat His flesh and drink His blood, then He must die, which gets rid of their grandiose ideas of God’s kingdom starting right then. Jesus then tells them that, not only will He die, but He will also leave the earth and go back to heaven without establishing the kingdom. Therefore, they need to believe He will die for their sins. Otherwise, when He is arrested and crucified, they will stop following Him then.

**6:63** Giving the people physical food only profits them if it leads to their spiritual salvation through believing the gospel. He has already fed them physically as a sign of this. Now, they need to believe in order to have eternal life.

**6:64** Because Jesus knew from the beginning, who would not believe and who would betray Him, He made sure that the 12 disciples He chose were 11 believers plus the betrayer (6:70). As we see from 6:67-69, the 12 stay with Jesus, even when many of His disciples leave Him here (6:66).

**6:66** This is the 666 verse of Jesus’ ministry. The message of 666 is that many of Jesus’ disciples were offended by Him, stopped believing the gospel, and would not

walk with Him again. This is not a coincidence, as the Great Tribulation period will be signified by the Antichrist, and the number of his name is 666 (Revelation 13:16-18). All those, taking his mark or worshipping his image, will be in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11), out of the presence of God forever. Therefore, 666 represents apostasy, both here and in the Great Tribulation period.

**6:67-71** 11 of the 12 disciples believe the gospel of the kingdom, and that Jesus is “that Prophet” (6:14), the Messiah, and the Son of God (6:69). (The other one, Judas Iscariot, stays for the money, since he steals from the treasury (12:4-6).) Therefore, although many of His disciples turn away from Him here, the 12 stick with Him. As such, they are a picture of the little flock. Many believers will be offended in Jesus when they are forced to worship the image of the beast or be killed (Revelation 13:15), but some will endure unto the end and be saved (Matthew 24:13), believing God’s Word when all the world around them tells them not to. Jesus’ note about Judas Iscariot being of the devil shows how the little flock must watch in their midst for wolves in sheep’s clothing (Matthew 7:15), because even the Antichrist will be a Jew (Daniel 11:37-38). As such, many in Israel will follow him, but those, who believe God’s Word and follow it, will know the difference and not follow him.

**6:68-69** This is the heart of a believer. There are many things of God that we will not learn in this life. However, if we have faith in God, we will continue to read God’s Word and believe it throughout our lives, knowing that, although we may not understand it all, God’s Word ALONE contains the words of life.

**7** Jesus goes to Jerusalem for the eight-day feast of tabernacles where all the devout Jews will be. He speaks in the temple (v. 14) and on the last day of the feast (v. 37). He invites Israel to come unto Him and receive eternal life (vs. 37-38). Israel rejects His invitation with every man going unto his own house (v. 53).

**7:1** Jesus will not leave Galilee for Jerusalem until His hour comes to be crucified, except for the three feasts per year, for which God's law requires all men to appear in the temple at Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 16:16).

**7:3-5** Jesus was the Son of God, and He did countless miracles. Yet, His Own brothers did not believe in Him. By what they say, it seems that they have not even seen Him perform a miracle! What probably happened was that Jesus went to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and performed miracles for them so that they might believe the gospel of the kingdom. Jesus did not perform these miracles until He began His earthly ministry, which means He did not perform any miracles while He was growing up. He also did not perform miracles for show. Since His brothers did not seek the Christ, they did not see any of His miracles. However, I am sure they heard of many of His miracles, but they refused to believe. Instead, they mock Him, telling Him to "shew Thyself to the world," and go to the feast so that "Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest." The fact, that Jesus did not seek His Own recognition, even though all men seek their own (Philippians 2:21), shows that He truly was God.



**7:6** When Jesus says, "My time is not yet come," He means that His time to be crucified is not yet come. Therefore, He does not need to go to Jerusalem just yet. When He tells His brothers that "your time is always ready," He is referring to their time to believe the gospel of the kingdom. God is always ready for them to believe.

**7:7** All unbelievers are of the world, following "the course of this world" (Ephesians 2:2). Since Jesus' brothers were unbelievers, the world could not hate them. However, because Jesus was not of the world, the world hated Him (15:19).

**7:7-11** 7:2 calls this feast, "the Jews' feast," showing that it was no longer God's feast anymore, because the Jewish religious leaders had turned it into a religious observance. However, God's law still required male Jews to go to the feast. Jesus would not go up to the feast with His brothers because everyone would see Him and then the Jewish religious leaders would try to kill Him (7:7,11). Therefore, He waits for everyone else to go. Then, He goes by Himself in secret so that, when the Jewish religious leaders try to find Him to kill Him, they will not know where He is. How sad that Jesus' life is at risk at the hands of the Jewish religious leaders when He obeys God's law, which the leaders were supposed to uphold!

**7:12** The religious leaders want to kill Jesus. The common Jews think He is either a good man or a deceiver. Either way, they do not think He is their Messiah. That is significant because, since these men are in Jerusalem for the feast, these are the most devout Jews of the nation. Therefore, we see that the whole nation of Israel has rejected their Messiah. Still today, the Jews have not accepted Jesus as their Messiah.

Note how man gets things backward. Man's heart deceives him (Jeremiah 17:9) into thinking that the truth is the lie and the lie is the truth (Isaiah 5:20). Therefore, when they hear the truth from Jesus, they think He is a deceiver (8:45), when it is the religious leaders, who are the deceivers.

**7:13** Even if a Jew actually believed Jesus, he would not say so, lest some religious leader correct him. It is no wonder, then, that the whole nation is apostate. Similarly today, Christianity teaches lies to its adherents. Even if a Christian catches a lie, he probably will not be willing to say anything, lest he be labeled a heretic and be ex-communicated.

**7:14** Jesus knows that the religious leaders want to kill Him, but He also knows that He will be safe if He teaches with all the people around Him. Therefore, He waits until the middle of the feast before showing up and then uses the feast as an opportunity to teach the truth. Thus, He obeys God's command to show up for the feast, He teaches the truth when He has the chance, and He does not get killed in the process.

**7:15** Christian leaders will ask the same question of you if you start teaching God's Word. A seminary degree does not help you teach God's Word (II Corinthians 3:1). Having the indwelling Holy Spirit and having Him reveal the deep things of God to you does (I Corinthians 2:9-10). Similarly, the Pharisees said they had the

authority to teach God's law in the temple because they had their credentials from their leaders. They claimed to be “doctors of the law” (Luke 5:17), but they really taught “for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mark 7:7). Jesus has no degree, but He does have God's Word and He teaches that. Therefore, the way Jesus knows God's Word is that, as man, He has studied God's Word (Isaiah 50:4), and, as God, He wrote God's Word. He does not need to go to their seminary to learn God's Word. In fact, going to their seminary would damage Him, because they teach against God's Word.

**7:16** Jesus says He does not have to learn at a seminary, because He is teaching God's doctrine, not man's doctrine. Therefore, He only need to study God's Word. Because we have the indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) to teach us God's Word today (I Corinthians 2:9-16), we can do the same.

**7:17** This is what all the Jews should be doing all along. They should not study man's theology and teach that to people. The Jews should be studying God's Word. If they did, they could compare what Jesus says to what God says in His Word (Acts 17:11). They would then recognize Him as their Messiah and follow Him, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom to the lost. Instead, they believe what man tells them. Therefore, they accuse Jesus of teaching bad doctrine and end up crucifying Him.

**7:18** This is why the Jewish religious leaders teach the traditions of the fathers. If they taught God's Word, they would be glorifying God. Since they want to glorify themselves (Matthew 23:5-7), they teach man's doctrine. So, too, today, people glorify themselves and organizations, rather than glorifying God, by teaching man's doctrine rather than God's doctrine.

**7:19** In 8:7, Jesus tells the Pharisees, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.” The idea is that, while the religious leaders could kill someone for violating a law where the punishment is capital, the leaders have to be guiltless in the matter in order to do so. In 7:14, Jesus taught the law in the temple. Here, in 7:19, Jesus says that, since He keeps the law and they do not keep the law, they have no right to kill Him for teaching the law.

**7:20** Today, whenever someone stands for the truth of God's Word, Christianity will call that person names to try to discredit the messenger. So, too, Jesus speaks the truth, and the religious leaders accuse Him of having a devil.

**7:21** The "one work" that Jesus did was to heal a man on the sabbath (7:23), which is recorded in chapter 5.

**7:22-23** God said that a male child is to be circumcised on the eighth day (Leviticus 12:3). The uncircumcised male is cut off from being in God's kingdom because he broke God's covenant (Genesis 17:14). Therefore, if the eighth day fell on the sabbath, the Jews would still circumcise him. Similarly, Jesus did miracles on the sabbath so that Israel may believe the gospel. If they do not believe, they will be cut off from being in God's kingdom. Therefore, by healing on the sabbath,

Jesus is accomplishing the same thing that the Jews were trying to accomplish by circumcising on the sabbath. Therefore, they should not be trying to kill Jesus.

In 7:21, Jesus says that the Jews marveled at His healing of the man in chapter 5. The reason they marveled was because it was a supernatural event. In 7:22, Jesus says “therefore” the law of circumcision was given. What this means is that God gave Israel circumcision so that they would not marvel over supernatural events. In other words, physical circumcision was given as a sign of the spiritual circumcision that God wanted to accomplish in Israel, as Deuteronomy 10:16 says, “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart.” If Israel had learned the lesson of the law, they would have believed the gospel of the kingdom, which would have given them spiritual life. Then, they would not marvel over the physical miracle of making the lame man walk.

**7:24** Unbelievers like to tell Christians that they are not supposed to judge, because Matthew 7:1 says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." However, that verse is really telling believing Israel not to take their position of authority in God's kingdom (Matthew 19:28) to judge people before God's kingdom comes to the earth. They can still judge whether or not something or someone is right or wrong.

That is why, here, in 7:24, Jesus tells people that they are supposed to judge; they are supposed to judge righteous judgment. The way you judge righteous judgment is by comparing a matter with God's Word. Therefore, when people say the Bible says not to judge, you can say that the Bible actually says to judge based on what the Bible says. The Jews were judging based upon their tradition, which goes by appearance. Righteous judgment involves judging based upon the heart. Because they judged on appearance, they could kill Jesus without being guilty under their traditions (Matthew 26:65-66), while supposedly obeying the law because they did not enter the judgment hall (18:28). Judging by appearance leads to crucifying their Messiah!

Jesus sets the example of what judging righteous judgment looks like. First, He recognizes that He is not in an authoritative position to judge, because He will not do this until His second coming. He recognizes this even though the Father has made the Son judge over all (5:22). This is seen in His question in Luke 12:14: “Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?” Second, He does recognize that He can use God's Word to judge or ascertain God's perspective on a matter. We see this in Matthew 23, where He calls the Jewish religious leaders: “hypocrites” (v. 13), “blind guides” (v. 16), “fools” (v. 17), “serpents” (v. 33), and “vipers” (v. 33) and says that they cannot escape the damnation of hell (v. 33). He is not judging them to hell, but He is comparing their beliefs with the Word of God to determine that they will “in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20).

Therefore, when someone tells you, “You have no right to judge me; ‘judge not, that ye be not judged,’” you can point them to the “righteous judgment” verse of 7:24 and explain that you have every right to explain how their unbelief in the gospel will cause them to go to hell. In fact, it is your duty, as an ambassador of Christ, to beseech these unbelievers to be reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5:20).

**7:25-26** In 7:20, the religious leaders accused Jesus of having a devil by suggesting that they were trying to kill Him. Yet, here, in 7:25, even common Jews know that the religious leaders are trying to kill Jesus. This shows that the religious leaders are a bunch of liars.

These verses also show that the common Jews know that the religious leaders are corrupt. They surmise that, because Jesus has claimed to be the Christ and the religious leaders have been unable to kill Him, then He must be the Christ. This shows that they recognize that, when the Christ comes, He will be rejected by the religious leaders (Isaiah 53:2-7).

**7:27** At the same time, the common Jews believe in a false doctrine about the Christ. They say that no one will know from whence the Christ comes. However, Isaiah 7:14 says that the Christ will be Immanuel or “God with us,” because He is born of a virgin. Therefore, they know that the Christ will come from God. They will also know the physical location He will come from, since Micah 5:2 says that the Christ will come from Bethlehem. Therefore, this false doctrine is keeping the common Jews from believing that Jesus is the Messiah, which is why Jesus will now address this issue in 7:28.

**7:28** Their comments, in 7:25-27, were spoken among themselves, not to Jesus. Jesus shows that He is God by addressing these comments that a mere man could not hear. Based upon the Old Testament scripture mentioned and what Jesus says and does, the Jews know that He is the Christ, and that He has come from God. They just refuse to believe it because of their pride.

**7:29-30** The Jews know that Jesus is saying, in 7:29, that He comes from the Father, or else they would not have tried to arrest Him in 7:30. The Pharisees say that the reason they are trying to kill Jesus is because He “being a man, makest [Himself] God” (10:33). Yet, 7:30 says that they are not able to arrest Him because it was not time for Him to be crucified. The fact, that no man could grab Him, is proof, in itself, that He should not be grabbed in the first place, because He must be God, since they cannot even capture Him (10:18)!

**7:31-32** The common Jews still do not recognize that Jesus is God, but many of them do believe that He is the Christ (7:31). In 7:30, the Pharisees were supernaturally kept from grabbing Jesus to kill Him. This is obvious since Jesus continued to stand there and teach the crowd (7:33)! However, instead of recognizing this and believing that He is the Christ, the Pharisees continue in their hard hearts. Once they hear that the common Jews are believing in Christ, they become more indignant, rationalizing that they just had slippery fingers, instead of recognizing that God Himself kept them from capturing Jesus. Therefore, they get the trained officers to try to take Jesus, but they will also be unsuccessful (7:44-46). The Jewish religious leaders cannot explain how a large group of people is not able to arrest one man without conceding that He is from God.

**7:33-34** “Him that sent Me” (7:33) would be the Father. Since they cannot go

where He is going, it means that they are in unbelief and will go to hell (7:34). However, He is still around for “a little while,” which means that they can still repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom. But, once He makes His soul an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10), He will ascend to the Father and sit at His right hand until He makes His enemies His footstool (Psalm 110:1), and they are His enemies.

The fact, that they are His enemies, is seen in the statement, “Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me” (7:34). The “seeking” must refer to seeking to kill Him again after His ascension, because of all of the Jews, who are being saved under the ministry of the little flock in early Acts. The reason I say this is that, if they are seeking for Him in order to be saved, they will find Him, as Jesus said, “He that seeketh findeth” (Matthew 7:8), and “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). Because Jesus is with the believing remnant in spirit, they will find Him, but, if someone is seeking for Jesus in His physical body after His ascension, they will not find Him. Apostate Israel will not find Him until He comes in the clouds of heaven to judge them (Matthew 26:64).

**7:35-36** The focus of the Jewish religious leaders is on the physical, which shows why they have not believed the gospel of the kingdom. The dispersed Jews were not on a missionary trip. Due to the unbelief of Israel, as part of the fifth cycle of chastisement, some of the Jews had been scattered among the heathen (Leviticus 26:33). Jesus, on the other hand, WAS on a missionary trip. He was sent by His Father to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24).

**7:37-38** The last day of the feast of tabernacles was set aside as a sabbath day (Leviticus 23:36). That is what makes it “that great day of the feast” (7:37). Jesus’ call, here, should have reminded the Jews of a similar invitation by God in Isaiah 55:1-3. Jesus is calling them to come unto Him and have eternal life. Thus, He is offering the nation “living water,” just like He offered the Samaritans in chapter 4. There, the Samaritans believed on Him (4:39,41). Here, the response to this call was that “every man went unto his own house” (7:53). Thus, the nation of Israel rejects God’s offer to them of eternal life. God is “the fountain of living waters” (Jeremiah 2:13), and He offers to give them eternal life, but they will not believe.

**7:39** In Jesus’ coming kingdom on earth, the new covenant will finally come to fruition for Israel. That new covenant involves God putting His spirit within them to cause them to walk in His law (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Therefore, saved Israel will be teaching God’s law to the Gentiles in the kingdom. Because Jesus will be ruling with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15), following His law is the way of life (Proverbs 6:23). Therefore, life would spring forth from their belly (7:38), because the words of the Spirit would come from inside them to speak life to the Gentiles who follow that law. However, the Holy Ghost could not yet come and fill believers, because Jesus had not yet bound Satan (Matthew 12:29) through His death on the cross. Therefore, John adds this parenthetical explanation that the giving of the Holy Ghost is still future at this point.

**7:40** “The Prophet” is a reference to Deuteronomy 18:15-19. That Prophet would

be both God and man, because God says that that Prophet would be “like unto Me” (Deuteronomy 18:15) and also “like unto thee” (Deuteronomy 18:18). Therefore, Jesus is that Prophet, but He is also the Christ. Since some said that He is “the Prophet” (7:40) and some said He is “the Christ” (7:41), it appears that they think that the Prophet and the Christ would be two, different people.

**7:41-43** Because Israel is in the Jewish religion, they do not know the scripture well. This is why they cannot decide if He is the Christ or not. In 7:27, some people gave the false doctrine that no one will know where the Christ comes from. Now, some people, who do know a little scripture, say that the Christ comes out of the seed of David and of Bethlehem. However, the prophets had also said that “He shall be called a Nazarene” (Matthew 2:23), and that He would be called out of Egypt (Matthew 2:15 and Hosea 11:1). Even though they are focused on Jesus coming from Galilee, Isaiah 9:1-7 says that the great light of the Messiah will shine upon Galilee. Therefore, the Messiah was also prophesied to have a ministry in Galilee. The point is that, if these Jews knew the scriptures well, they would know that the Messiah was to be from Bethlehem and Egypt, be of the seed of David, be called a Nazarene, and have a ministry in Galilee. Jesus meets all five of these criteria, which, in itself, is proof that Jesus is the Messiah. But, beyond that, they have five witnesses that His message is true (5:32-47). Scripture points to Jesus being the Christ without contradiction.

**7:44** The common Jews do not know what to make of Him, but most of them think He is from God. Therefore, when it says, “some of them would have taken Him” (7:44), it probably means that they would have taken Him to try to force Him to be their king, as they tried to do in 6:15. However, He will not be their king until His second coming; therefore, “no man laid hands on Him” (7:44).

**7:45-47** Matthew 7:29 says that Jesus, “taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Therefore, the officers of the religious leaders would not arrest Him. This shows that God’s Word is even more powerful than the physical miracles that He performs. Later, when they try to arrest Him, Jesus will say, “I AM He,” and they will fall backwards to the ground (18:6).

You may not have many believers at this time, but only the religious leaders are hardened against God enough to try to arrest and kill Jesus. Their officers, who would presumably be good, devout Jews, will not arrest Him, because they recognize that Jesus speaks God’s Word, while their religious leaders only speak religion. Meanwhile, the common people believe in Jesus enough to make Him king. This shows that the most evil, vile people around are religious folks, because they are the only ones who try to destroy completely what God is doing.

**7:48-49** The religious leaders are saying that, if Jesus were the Messiah, they would believe on Him (7:48). However, in the next verse, they admit that they have done a poor job of leading Israel, because they say that the common folk do not know the law (7:49). So, why should the common Jews believe what the religious leaders say? They should, instead, believe what God says, and God says that the priests handle the law, but do not know the Lord (Jeremiah 2:8). God also says

that “many pastors have destroyed My vineyard” (Jeremiah 12:10). Therefore, the standard, for determining whether or not Jesus is the Messiah, should be what God’s Word says and not what the religious leaders say.

Similarly today, in the dispensation of grace, people will reject the message of rightly dividing the Word of truth (II Timothy 2:15) because no big church or Christian leader teaches it, but we should not believe Christian leaders, because they are doing the devil’s will (II Timothy 2:25-26). The standard is not what man thinks; it is what God has said. The Pharisees claim that the people are cursed, but the people, who believe in Jesus, are the only ones who will be set free from the curse of the law by entering God’s kingdom.

**7:50-51** The question was raised if any of the rulers believed on Jesus (7:48). Well, there is at least one ruler standing there who will believe on Him— Nicodemus. While the other rulers accuse Jesus, Nicodemus stands up for Him. When Nicodemus first came to Jesus, he did so at night (3:2), because he was afraid that the other leaders would kick him out. Now, he is not afraid. The next time we see him is when he brought spices and helped bury Jesus’ body (19:39-40). This shows that Nicodemus was either kicked out by the religious leaders, or he left himself, probably as a result of how the religious leaders are wanting to put Jesus to death here.

**7:52** The Pharisees say that no prophet ariseth out of Galilee. If Nicodemus does “search, and look,” he will find they are wrong. Isaiah 9:1-2 says that Galilee will have the light shined upon them. Isaiah 9:6-7 says that this light is the Messiah, Who will rule and reign forever. 1:5 identifies the Lord Jesus Christ as this light that “shineth in darkness,” and Matthew 4:12-16 says that Jesus fulfilled the Isaiah 9 passage. Therefore, the scriptures say that the Messiah will come out of Galilee.

**7:53** The result of Jesus’ invitation to follow Him is that “every man went unto his own house.” Israel has heard their Messiah, and they have rejected Him.

**7:53-8:11** Note that modern translations say that these verses should be left out, and the New King James Version footnotes the passage to death. The NASB is particularly bold by saying that these verses were ADDED in later manuscripts. So, you mean to tell me that the most accurate translations have verse numbers that end with 7:52 and begin with 8:12, while unreliable manuscripts added in verses 1-11? If the verses were added later, they would have all been added to the end of chapter 7, because chapter 8 would have begun with verse 1! Also, 8:12 makes no sense if 7:53-8:11 were never there. How could Jesus speak again unto them in 8:12, when the people present for the conversation of 7:45-52 are all religious leaders?

**8** Israel has committed spiritual adultery against God (vs. 3-11). Jesus has come to set them free from Satan, but they try to kill Him (v. 59) because they are of their father, the Devil (v. 44).

**8:2** Although the nation, as a whole, has rejected Jesus as their Messiah, a good number of the people have believed in Him as their Messiah. Therefore, even though the feast is over, He sticks around and teaches them to prepare them to endure unto the end of the tribulation period and enter God's kingdom.

**8:3-5** The religious leaders are already trying to kill Jesus (5:16-18), but they are unable to arrest Him among the people because "never man spake like this man" (7:46). Therefore, they try to trap Him so that they can "lawfully" arrest Him (8:6). Bringing to Jesus this woman taken in adultery, then, is a setup.

Deuteronomy 22:22 says that "if a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall BOTH of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel." Therefore, the law does say that this woman is to be put to death. (By the way, Deuteronomy 22:25-27 says that, if this took place in the country, only the man would die, as the woman would get the benefit of the doubt that he could have raped her.) However, since a whole group of religious leaders took the woman "in adultery, IN THE VERY ACT," the man should be there, too. So, where is the man? Obviously, this is a setup, which means that what probably happened was that one of the religious leaders was committing adultery with this woman already and wanted to get rid of her now. So, they decided to bring her to Jesus so that they could have an excuse for arresting Jesus if He did not condemn her to death.

**8:6-9** Jesus writes on the ground with His finger. Since Jesus is God, He is writing with the finger of God. The 10 commandments were written with the finger of God (Exodus 31:18 and Deuteronomy 9:10), and Jesus cast out devils with the finger of God (Luke 11:20). It is possible, then, that He is writing the 10 commandments in the ground and says that the one who has never broken the 10 commandments should cast the first stone. That is what people like to say He did, because they see the God of the New Testament as a God of love. They say that, while the God of the Old Testament would have struck her dead, the God of the New Testament is merciful and does not charge people according to their sin. However, Jesus came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17).

Given this, and the fact that the religious leaders are asking Jesus to judge this woman, I believe that Jesus is doing exactly what He had just told the Pharisees to do. He is judging not according to appearance, but He is judging righteous judgment (7:24). Therefore, He begins writing the facts of the case down in the ground. The Pharisees continue to ask Him what He judges. Jesus then stood up and probably pointed to the ground, telling them that they could start throwing stones if they are innocent in this matter. He then continues to write in the ground what happened. The Pharisees then "heard" the evidence Jesus wrote on the ground, and their own conscience convicted them that they were just as guilty under the law as the woman, because they came up with the scheme to bring her to Jesus. They "went out one by one, beginning at the eldest" because this scheme started from the top religious leaders and was also carried out by the ones below them. Therefore, as Jesus wrote the facts of the case, the elder leaders left first, because Jesus wrote down their involvement in this scheme first.



**8:9-11** Now, the woman's accusers are gone. However, Jesus still has to judge the woman, and He needs to judge righteous judgment. God's law says that, in the case of adultery, the man always dies, but the woman does not die in the case of rape (Deuteronomy 22:25-27). Therefore, this woman may not be worthy of death. In order to sentence her to death, the law states there has to be at least two witnesses, who can verify that she had consensual sex (Deuteronomy 17:6). Therefore, Jesus says, "woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" With no witnesses, Jesus does not condemn her either (8:11). However, since He is God, He does know that she is guilty of adultery; therefore, He gives her the command to "go, and sin no more." As is seen, Jesus does NOT ignore the law, and, because of the lack of witnesses, He must let her go, according to the law, even though she has sinned. Therefore, the law is still in effect at this time, and Jesus judges according to the law. That law says she is not guilty of death.

**8:3-11** Now that we have straightened out the facts of this story, we turn our focus to the spiritual parallel here. The nation of Israel is God's bride. By disobeying God's law and serving Satan, Israel committed adultery against God. God caught Israel in the very act of this adultery. The law says that God could destroy her. However, just like there were no accusers in this story, God graciously decided to redeem her from Satan, rather than killing her. God sent His Son, Who died on the cross to atone for her sins. Jesus will marry Israel again at His second coming and live forever with her in His kingdom. Each individual within Israel will either be part of the bride or not based on their adherence to Jesus' command, here, to "go, and sin no more" (8:11).

**8:12** In Exodus 3:14, God says that His name is "I AM that I AM." In other words, He is whatever Israel needs Him to be. Because John shows Jesus as God, he shows Jesus saying many other I AM statements, completing what Israel needs God to be. I AM: 1) "Bread of life" (6:35), 2) "Light of the world" (8:12), 3) "The door" (10:9), 4) "Good shepherd" (10:11), 5) "Resurrection and life" (11:25), 6) "The way, the truth, and the life" (14:6), and 7) "True vine" (15:1). 7 "I AM" statements are given with 7 being the number of spiritual perfection. Here, though, because Israel is walking in their own religion, they are in darkness. Therefore, they need Jesus as "the light of the world" to bring them into God's kingdom. Once Israel believes, they will be a kingdom of priests to the Gentiles (Exodus 19:5-6), so that Jesus is also a light to the Gentiles (Luke 2:32), which makes Him "the light of the world."

**8:13** In 5:32-47, Jesus showed the Pharisees that He has five witnesses that His testimony is true, yet they are still accusing Him of having no witnesses to vouch for Him.

**8:14-15** Deuteronomy 19:15 says that a matter is established by two or three witnesses. That is because man may lie, and so it takes at least two witnesses to make sure a lie is not being told by just one witness. Therefore, the Pharisees say that Jesus' word cannot be trusted because He speaks of Himself (8:13). However,

“God...cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). Therefore, if God speaks, His Word is true. No witnesses are needed.

Therefore, Jesus tells the Pharisees that, the reason that His record is true, even though no one else is vouching for Him, is because He is God. That is what He means when He says, “I know whence I came, and whither I go” (8:14). Therefore, when He says that the Pharisees cannot tell whence He came and whither He goes, He is saying that, because they do not believe the gospel, they cannot understand that Jesus is God, because that is something that is spiritually discerned, and their spirit is dead (Matthew 16:16-17).

Therefore, they “judge after the flesh” (8:15). In other words, they do not recognize Jesus as their Messiah, because they look at His flesh, rather than seeing with spiritual eyes that He fulfills Old Testament scripture. Some of the common Jews in chapter 7 did know whence Jesus is because they believed God’s Word and came to the conclusion that He is the Messiah (7:31).

**8:15-16** Jesus tells the Pharisees that He does not judge after the flesh. First, He did not come to earth to judge man. He will do this at His second coming. However, when He is placed in a position of judge, as He was in 8:3-11, His judgment is true, because He judges based on God’s law. That is how the Father is with Him in judgment. The point, then, is that the Pharisees should be doing the same, rather than judging based upon appearance, because, by their judging based upon appearance, they have rejected Jesus as their Messiah and will not make it into God’s kingdom.

**8:17-18** Rather than giving them 5 witnesses, as He did in 5:32-47, Jesus gives them 2 witnesses, which is enough to establish something as true based on the law. Normally, someone could not count as their own witness, but Jesus does because He is both fully God and fully man. Jesus, as God, bears witness that Jesus’ testimony, as man, is true. God the Father also bears witness. By counting Himself as His Own witness, He is telling them that He is God, which they pick up on, as evidenced by their wanting to arrest Him in 8:20.

**8:19** Since the Pharisees “judge after the flesh” (8:15), they are looking for His physical Father. Of course, Jesus has no, physical Father, since He was virgin born. If the Pharisees recognize Who He is, this will all make sense to them, but they cannot recognize Him because of their unbelief.

**8:20** Again, John depicts Jesus as God. The Pharisees want to arrest Him for teaching the people that He is God, but “no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come.” Because He is God, Jesus is supernaturally able to keep the religious leaders from arresting Him because it was not yet time in God’s plan for Him to be crucified.

**8:21** Jesus came the first time to “save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Because they rejected Him as their Messiah, the religious leaders will die in their sins. Yet, they will still seek to find the Messiah, such that, during the

tribulation period, people will say, “Lo, here is Christ” (Matthew 24:23). Therefore, the Messiah has come, died for their sins, and they do not know it, such that they will still look for their Messiah to come. Today, 2,000 years later, Jews are still looking for their Messiah to come. The result of this search will be that they will make a seven-year covenant with a false Messiah, the Anti-Messiah, or Anti-Christ (Daniel 9:27), and this seven years is known as the tribulation period.

**8:22** The religious leaders show that they do not get it. The place where Jesus is going is not the grave, because that is not a place where the religious leaders cannot go. All go to the grave. The place they cannot go is New Jerusalem, because they will die in their sins (8:24) because they do not believe the gospel of the kingdom. Jesus said, in 14:2, that He goes to prepare a place for His disciples in His Father’s house. His Father’s house is New Jerusalem, which will come down to earth at the end of the tribulation period (Revelation 21:2). In other words, Jesus is telling the Pharisees that they will not enter God’s kingdom, because of their unbelief.

**8:23-25** The Pharisees know that Jesus claims to be God from Him saying that He is from above, and He is not of this world. The reason they ask Him: “Who art Thou?” is because they want to get Him to admit that He is God. Once Jesus does, they can try to kill Him for supposed blasphemy. However, Jesus wants those in the temple to be convicted so that they might believe the gospel and be able to enter God’s kingdom. Therefore, He will not come right out and say He is God until He is done talking (see 8:58-59). Thus, we see a game going on. Jesus reveals that He is God, but He does not say those exact words so that He can continue to speak to the common Jews there. Meanwhile, the Pharisees continue to talk with Him, not because they want to know Who He is, but because they are waiting for Him to say He is God so that they can try to kill Him.

**8:26** Jesus was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24). He speaks to the Pharisees, here, so that at least some of them will believe the gospel of the kingdom and be saved. However, for the most part, these Pharisees are apostate. Since Jesus does not judge until His second coming (8:15), the “many things” that He will say and judge of them primarily refers to His second coming. Therefore, Jesus holds off on those things because He recognizes that the Father is true, and so He trusts in the Father’s plan to hold off on judging them until then.

**8:27** The Pharisees’ unbelief has blinded them to the truth. God Himself is standing in their midst, and they think He is just a man.

**8:28-29** Lifting up the Son of man refers to lifting Him up on the cross to kill Him, as explained in 12:32-33. (This is also mentioned in 3:14.) It is only at that time that apostate Israel will finally know that He is their Messiah. That is why Acts 3:17 says that Israel crucified their Messiah in ignorance. Therefore, Jesus said from the cross, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34), and He sent them the Holy Ghost in early Acts to give them a renewed opportunity to believe. Yet, Israel rejected Him again at that time, even though

they knew then that Jesus was their Messiah.

The Father taught Jesus what to say and do by having a Bible study with Him every morning (Isaiah 50:4-5). As a result, Jesus always did “those things that please Him.” If we want to please God, we should also be in the Word of God on a daily basis so that the Spirit can teach us the deep things of God (I Corinthians 2:9-13).

**8:30** Now, we see why Jesus did not immediately tell the Pharisees that He is God. If He did, they would have taken up stones to stone Him (8:59). Instead, Jesus is able to continue to teach the common Jews in the temple. As a result “many believed on Him.” Thus, Jesus does the will of the Father by reaching the lost sheep of the house of Israel with the gospel, even though the Pharisees are listening to every word so as to trap Him and kill Him. So, too, it is not uncommon for people to question grace preachers today in an attempt to trap them in their words, but, in doing so, it gives true believers an opportunity to be edified. So, too, in the tribulation period, the little flock will be brought before kings and rulers to be killed as a public example to the world not to go against the Antichrist (Luke 21:12). However, unbelievers will become believers during those times, as “it shall turn to you for a testimony” (Luke 21:13).

**8:31** For those who believe the gospel, they will have the further challenge of continuing to trust in God's law during the tribulation period, rather than going back to religion under the Antichrist. Therefore, Jesus gives them the warning that they must stay away from religion in order to enter God's kingdom.

**8:32** This verse is often quoted, even among secular people. The context tells us that it is religion that binds someone in Satan's lie program. The truth of God's Word sets one free from Satan and from religion. Ironically today, Christians use this verse to put people under their religion by saying that their religion is the truth. So, they say they will free people with the truth, but they are really putting people in bondage, appearing to be ministers of righteousness, when they are really Satan's ministers (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

**8:33** Jesus is trying to set them free from religion, and their response is that they are already free because their religion tells them they are free. The Jewish religion said that all Jews would make it into God's kingdom because they are physical children of Abraham. Therefore, they say they are free, but Jesus sees that they are in bondage to religion and are Satan's lawful captive (Isaiah 49:25). They will only make it into God's kingdom if they repent, meaning that they abandon religion and follow God's law covenant, and are water baptized. Then, they will be free from Satan's bondage and religion and be able to enter God's kingdom.

**8:34-36** Because Israel is following their religion, rather than God's law, they are servants of sin. Therefore, they are in Satan's house and are doing his will. The good news is that “the servant abideth not in the house for ever” (8:35), which means that, if they believe the truth of the gospel, the Son will free them from Satan's house. Since “the Son abideth ever” (8:35), they will then “dwell in the

house of the Lord for ever” (Psalm 23:6). However, if they choose not to believe the truth, they will continue to abide in Satan’s house, and they will be thrown into the lake of fire at Jesus' second coming.

**8:37-40** Jesus now differentiates between being physical descendants of Abraham and spiritual descendants of Abraham. The Jews were physical descendants of Abraham, as Jesus acknowledges in 8:37. However, Ishmael was also a physical descendant of Abraham, but the promise was made to Isaac, not to Ishmael, because only Isaac was both a physical and a spiritual descendant of Abraham. Romans 9:7-8 says, “Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

God instituted the law of circumcision for Abraham's descendants and said that His descendants would be cut off by God if they did not obey the law (Genesis 17:14). Later, God made the law covenant with Israel under Moses, and, if Israel breaks the law covenant, they will be cut off from God. Therefore, although the Jews were "Abraham's seed" (8:37), they were cut off from being the children of Abraham if they did not do Abraham's works, because it meant that they were not spiritual descendants of Abraham.

Because they seek to kill Jesus, His word has no place in them (8:37), which means they do not have faith in God. Without this faith, they are not spiritual children of Abraham. Their spiritual father is the one whose works they follow, which, in this case, is the devil (8:44).

**8:41-44** Not only does the Jewish religion say that Abraham is their father, but it also says that God is their Father, just by being physical descendants of Abraham. However, as Jesus keeps telling them, their father is the one they follow. Because the Pharisees are not of God, they do not have the ears to hear what Jesus is telling them. Therefore, He tells them very plainly: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (8:44).

This verse is also where we get the term "the lie program" to refer to Satan. Satan is the father of lies, which is how he combats the truth that could set Israel free (8:32). From Adam to Jesus’ second coming, there are two programs going on at the same time: 1) God's truth program (For Israel, this means following the law covenant.), and 2) Satan's lie program. The one you believe determines where you will spend eternity, regardless of dispensation. For the Pharisees, since they refuse to believe the gospel of the kingdom, they are believing Satan’s lies and will have their place in the lake of fire. That is how Satan is a “murderer from the beginning” (8:44). He may not physically kill people, but he spiritually kills everyone who believes him, making Satan the greatest mass murderer in history.

**8:45** Regardless of how independent someone thinks he is, everyone makes the decision to either trust in Satan's lies or in God's truth. Satan takes “Christian ministers” captive to do his will (II Timothy 2:25-26). They pose as ministers of

righteousness, when they are really ministers of Satan (II Corinthians 11:13-15). They have “a form of godliness,” but they deny the truth of scripture (II Timothy 3:5). They lie in wait to deceive people with Satan’s lies, using “the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness” (Ephesians 4:14). The result is that most people, who attend a Christian church, believe the lies of Satan, when they think they are believing the truth of God. Therefore, most people, who say that they are believing God, are really believing Satan. The only way to combat this in your life is to read and believe God’s Word, rightly divided (II Timothy 2:15).

This is the trap that the Pharisees are in. That is why they refuse to believe the truth of God that Jesus speaks, and they think they are believing God by rejecting Jesus and following their own religion.

**8:46-48** The proof, that the Jews are of the devil, comes in their response. Since Jesus never sinned and spoke words that were always consistent with the Father and the Old Testament, He must be speaking the truth. To call the truth a lie, the Jews must be believing the lies of Satan. Therefore, the Jews are, in fact, children of the devil.

Note how they use the term "Samaritan" in a derogatory sense. They thought they would make it into God's kingdom, while the Samaritans would not be there. The truth is just the opposite, because the Samaritans believed the words of God (4:39-41) spoken by Jesus, while the Jews tried to stone Jesus to death here (8:59).

**8:49-50** God is “the Father of glory” (Ephesians 1:17), and He has given glory to His Son (11:4; II Peter 1:17; Matthew 16:27). The Son, in turn, seeks to bring many sons into the glory that He has received from His Father (Hebrews 2:10). Therefore, the “one that seeketh” (8:50) glory is the Father, and the reason He seeks it is so He can give it to His Son, Who will, in turn, give it to believers. The way the Father receives glory is by the Son doing the Father’s will, because it goes against the lie program of Satan.

Therefore, because Jesus honors His Father, He is bringing glory to His Father, Who gives glory to the Son, even though the Son does not seek glory. It is just the natural result of Him bringing glory to His Father.

**8:51** Jesus is talking spiritually here. Someone, believing the gospel of the kingdom and keeping God's law, may physically die. In fact, when the Antichrist comes to power, there is a good chance that a believer will die. However, he will never see spiritual death, because he will live forever in God's kingdom. The reason he will never die is because Jesus died for him. “As it is appointed unto men once to die,...so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:27-28). “Christ died for our sins” (I Corinthians 15:3). Since Christ died for our sins and men only die once, then all believers “shall never see death” (8:51).

**8:52** Because the Pharisees do not have the ears to hear, they are looking on the physical. Their statement shows how far religion has taken them from faith in God. Belief in the resurrection is absolutely essential to believe God's promise of

eternal life in the kingdom, because Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets have been physically dead for thousands of years and still have not obtained God's kingdom, which means they must still be spiritually alive. Yet, here are the Pharisees saying that “Abraham is dead, and the prophets” (8:52). In Jesus' day, the Jews do not have hope in resurrection, as they are looking for physical relief from their Roman oppressor by the Messiah, and the Sadducees, a Jewish religious sect, do not even believe in the resurrection (Matthew 22:23).

With regard to the Messiah, Isaiah 53:2 says, “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.” Therefore, when the Jewish religious leaders see Him, they reject Him, because He does not look like what they think their Messiah will look like.

**8:53** Jesus just told them that He honours the Father (v. 49) and does not seek His Own glory (v. 50), yet they accuse Him of making Himself into something great. Jesus said, “If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death” (8:51). That means that Jesus is making His words into something great. He is not making Himself into something great. Jesus is saying that His message is from the Father, and believing that message will give them eternal life. The Pharisees turn this around to say that Jesus has made Himself greater than Abraham. Granted, as God, He IS greater than Abraham, but He has not said that yet here.

**8:54-55** Note how Jesus says that the Pharisees say that the Father is their God. Today, the Mormons say they love Jesus because Jesus' name is in the name of their church. Saying something does not make it true. The Pharisees have not believed God's message to them, and so they are of the devil, even though they say that their Father is God. Jesus, on the other hand, knows the Father, as evidenced by the fact that He keeps the Father's saying.

**8:56** Abraham died over 1,000 years before Jesus was born, yet he saw Jesus' day. Hebrews 11:13 says that Abraham saw the promises “afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them.” Therefore, “My day” (8:56) refers to the Messiah coming and bringing in the kingdom. Abraham did not know the details and probably did not know that the Messiah would die. However, what he did see was God fulfilling His promises to him of eternal life in the kingdom, which is only made possible by what the Messiah did at His first coming.

**8:57** Again, religion looks at things backward. Jesus said that Abraham saw Jesus' day, which places the emphasis on what Jesus was doing as the Messiah. However, the Pharisees look at it as if Jesus said that He was alive during Abraham's day, rather than Abraham seeing Jesus' day. Therefore, the Pharisees are placing the emphasis on what Abraham did. This shows that Abraham is greater than Jesus in their minds.

**8:58** Although Jesus was not talking about being alive during Abraham's day, He uses this as an opportunity to proclaim to the Pharisees that He is the “I AM.” “I AM” is God's name (Exodus 3:14). Therefore, when Jesus says He was “I AM” before Abraham was even born, it is so clear that He is saying that He is God that

even the ignorant Pharisees pick up on this.

**8:59** The Pharisees now think they have a blasphemous statement from Jesus that allows them to stone Him under the law. However, because it is not time for Him to die yet, Jesus, as God, is able to hide Himself and get away.

You can see how much the Jewish religious leaders rely on emotions, rather than on God's Word. In 5:16, they sought to slay Him. In 5:18, they "sought the more to kill Him." In 7:32, the Pharisees sent officers to take Him. In 8:20, they want to take Him away. Now, in 8:59, they try again to kill Him. If they are always trying to kill Him, why do they even let Him speak? And, if they are such law abiding Jews, what right do they have to kill Jesus without having a trial first? The reason they are unable to kill Him is because it is not His time to die yet.

**9** Jesus heals a blind man to show Israel that He has come to heal them of their spiritual blindness and bring them into God's kingdom (vs. 1-7). All they have to do is acknowledge their lack of righteousness, which will cause them to believe the gospel of the kingdom (vs. 39-41).

**9:1** This man was blind from birth, just like Israel has been spiritually blind since they were birthed through the Red Sea when Moses led them out of Egypt.

**9:2-3** Christians sometimes accuse God of punishing someone with a disease or ailment due to some sin in their lives. God does not do this. Rather, this man, here, was born blind so that "the works of God should be made manifest in him." On the one hand, this means that he is an example of how God can get Israel out of their spiritual blindness, much like He heals this man. On the other hand, it means that physical suffering shows the man his need for God such that God can be strong through him. When Paul had a thorn in the flesh, God did not take it away, because God's "strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:9). "For when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:10). Weakness in the flesh gives God a chance to work His glory through us. Therefore, this man's physical infirmity gives God the opportunity to be manifested in him.

**9:4** For Jesus, "the night" was when He was in hell after dying and before rising from the dead. Psalm 16:7 refers to this as "the night seasons," but Jesus knew that God would "not leave [His] soul in hell" (Psalm 16:10). Here, in 9:4, Jesus is saying that He must reach the lost sheep of the house of Israel now, because He will not be able to reach them when He is in the grave.

Since Jesus talks about no man working in the night, there must also be another night period that applies to believers other than Jesus. Generally, "the night" refers to the tribulation period, but it cannot mean that in this case, because Israel is saved in the tribulation period. For the rest of saved Israel, the night probably means the period of darkness between the end of the tribulation period and the second coming of Jesus. During that time, the sun, moon, and stars all stop giving their light (Matthew 24:39). Then, when Jesus comes, He comes "as a thief in the night" (II Peter 3:10). Saved Israel cannot work at that time, because no one can



see.

**9:6-7** Jesus could have healed the man by speaking. He did not need to make clay and put it on the blind man's eyes. Therefore, He does this to represent something. He is representing that He is the light of the world (9:5). When God made Adam, He formed him out of the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7). Now, Israel is spiritually blind and needs spiritual sight. Only Jesus can give them their sight, since He is the light of the world. So, Jesus makes a new creation by giving him sight when he had no sight. Similarly, Israel is spiritually blind. He will make a new creation with the new covenant He gives Israel when He places His Spirit within them and causes them to walk in His statutes (Ezekiel 36:26-27). But, only those, who respond in faith to the gospel of the kingdom, will be part of this new creation of Israel. The man, by faith, washes in water and receives his sight, like Israel must be washed in water in order to be saved (Mark 16:15).

Being washed in water is part of the ordination of Israel as a kingdom of priests for God (Exodus 19:6, 29:4). They are then "Sent" to the Gentiles with the gospel (like this man went to a pool named "Sent") in Jesus' millennial kingdom as the light unto the world (Matthew 28:19-20). Thus, we see that Jesus is the light of the world by making a new creation of Israel, who come to Jesus by faith and are, in turn, sent to the Gentiles with the gospel message.

**9:8** These neighbours represent the rest of Israel, who see the little flock preaching the gospel during the tribulation period.

**9:9** Jesus received a new, glorified body after His resurrection. Because of His glorified state, it was hard for people to recognize Him as Jesus (21:4). Since the blind man receiving his sight is a type of the spiritual condition of Israel, the miracle represents Israel receiving spiritual sight, which happens when they receive their glorified bodies. Therefore, some, who knew the blind man before, recognize him. These people represent saved Israel in the kingdom. Those, who do not recognize the man, represent apostate Israel outside the kingdom.

**9:10** Their question of "How were thine eyes opened?" represents the question of the lost sheep of the house of Israel to the little flock during the tribulation period. They see the spiritual deliverance of the little flock and want this deliverance for themselves, as well. This is not unlike the question of Acts 2:37: "What shall we do?"

**9:12** Jesus will not be physically present during the tribulation period, just like this man does not know where Jesus is after He opened his eyes.

**9:13-14** Now, religion gets involved. Bringing the man to the religious leaders is a type of how unsaved Israel will bring believing Israel to the Antichrist to be killed, thinking they "doeth God service" (16:2) by doing so. Since the man was healed on the sabbath, religion has an excuse to say that Jesus is not of God. Similarly, in the tribulation period, because believing Israel will not worship the image of the beast, apostate Israel will kill them, saying that they are not of God.

**9:15** This man tells the Pharisees of his deliverance, much like the little flock will proclaim spiritual deliverance, i.e., the gospel, to the whole world, when they are put on trial by the Antichrist (Mark 13:9-11).

**9:16** The result of the preaching of the gospel by the little flock will be a division among Israel. The lost sheep will believe, such that “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26), while apostate Israel will continue in their unbelief because, “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Romans 9:6).

**9:17** The little flock will have the opportunity to share the gospel with the religious leaders in the tribulation period (9:15). They will also have the opportunity to tell them Who Jesus is. Unfortunately, some, for lack of faith in God’s Word to them, will declare Him to be a prophet, rather than the Messiah.

**9:18** Unbelievers do not believe in miracles, just like, when the little flock shares the gospel of the kingdom, many will not believe that it is really the gospel. Therefore, they will believe the Antichrist’s message instead.

**9:19-23** In the tribulation period, believers will be killed for not worshipping the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15). Because of that threat, unbelieving parents will not take the side of their believing children, allowing their children to be killed (Matthew 10:32-39). That is what the parents’ words, in 9:19-22, represent.

Religion said that if people believed Jesus is the Messiah, they would be kicked out of religion. That should not be a big deal, because the Jewish religion was of the devil (8:44). The common Jews should have voluntarily left the synagogue because they teach false doctrine. However, being part of the synagogue made someone look good in the eyes of man, and it would ease that person’s guilty conscience over the evil they do. So, people continued to go and being kicked out of the synagogue was a great threat to most Jews.

The situation is no different today. If you believe the truth of God’s Word over the religion taught by Christian churches, they will eventually kick you out if you question them. However, you should not want to go to those churches anyway, since they teach “doctrines of devils” (I Timothy 4:1). But, people forsake the truth of God’s Word for Christian churches so they look good in man’s eyes and so they can still do evil things and not feel so bad about it, since they spend some time with God every Sunday morning. What hypocrisy both then and now!

**9:24** The religious leaders are essentially saying that this man will be praising God if he says that God is a sinner! It was bad enough that Jesus’ disciples thought the reason the man was blind was because he had sinned (9:2), but how do the religious leaders figure that the Man Who healed the blind man is a sinner? Obviously, the religious leaders are trying to sway the thinking of the common Jews to convince them all that Jesus is worthy of death, even though all the evidence is to the contrary.

**9:27** Jesus has given the gospel and the truth of God's Word to the religious leaders over and over again, but they cannot hear because they do not have the ears to hear. How funny that this former blind man (blind from birth), who seems to know nothing of Jesus before Jesus heals him, knows more about Jesus than the Pharisees do, even though they supposedly were experts in God's Word!

Even this former blind man can see that the Jewish religious leaders' interest in Jesus is great, such that he thinks they want to be Jesus' disciples. After all, isn't that what the Jewish religion should be doing? He does not know that the Jewish religion is vehemently opposed to God. Similarly today, ordinary people think that Christian churches will lead them to God, when the opposite is true (Matthew 23:13).

**9:28-33** These verses are comical to read. This ignoramus in God's law shows that he knows far more than the experts in God's law. He points out that here is Jesus, Who healed him of his blind eyes. No man can open blind eyes. Therefore, Jesus must be of God and must be doing God's will. Otherwise, He could not open this man's blind eyes. And, here stand the religious leaders, who were supposed to point Israel to God. However, when confronted with a great work of God, they know nothing about the Man Who did this work. "Herein is a marvellous thing" (9:30).

The Pharisees say they are Moses' disciples (9:28), and they do not know from where Jesus came (9:29). If they are Moses' disciples, they should know Genesis – Deuteronomy extremely well. Deuteronomy 18:18 says that God will raise up a Prophet, and He shall speak all that God commands Him to speak. In 8:28, Jesus told the Pharisees that He spoke what His Father told Him to speak. Therefore, He claims to be the Prophet that Moses spoke about. He then proved He is that Prophet by healing this blind man (Deuteronomy 18:22), and the blind man even told the Pharisees that Jesus is a prophet (9:17). This shows that the blind man is a better disciples of Moses than the religious leaders are!

And, that is just one example from Moses. We could also mention the promised Redeemer of Genesis 3:15, the promised seed of Abram (Genesis 12:7), which is Christ (Galatians 3:16), the great parallels between the "I AM" of Exodus and Jesus in the book of John, and the prophecy of the Star in Numbers 24:17, fulfilled in the star seen by the wise men (Matthew 2:2), just to name a few more. A true disciple of Moses would have picked up on these, as well. Yet, the Pharisees do not know that Jesus is the Redeemer, the Seed, the I AM, the Star, or the Prophet, because of their unbelief.

There is more sound doctrine in the former blind man's statement of 9:31-33 than in all of the synagogue teachings of the religious leaders. In just one miracle, the former blind man recognizes that Jesus: 1) Worships God (v. 31), 2) Does God's will (v. 31), 3) Is unlike any man ever to live (v. 32), and 4) Therefore, He is of God (v. 33). The Pharisees have heard many teachings by Jesus and have seen many miracles, and they refuse to acknowledge even one of these points!

**9:34** The former blind man hit the nail on the head with his rational assessment of Jesus in 9:31-33, such that religion ex-communicated him for his insight into the truth of God. Note the religiosity of the Pharisees. They think that someone's status in life is determined at birth. They think this former blind man is headed for hell because he was cursed with blindness from birth. You can see this type of thinking in the disciples, thinking that either the blind man or his parents did something terribly wrong to be blind (9:2). The Pharisees see themselves as God's leaders in His kingdom by the fact that they are Abraham's physical seed (8:33). Thus, they teach people to look on the outward appearance, rather than to look for a heart of faith (I Samuel 16:7).

Similarly, Christianity only accepts those, who are part of their system. If you have not graduated from a seminary, you cannot be a pastor. If you do not agree with the church's teachings, you cannot be a member. If you disagree with church history, you are a heretic. Then, if you confront them with the truth of God's Word, they will excommunicate you, just like the religious leaders did to this former blind man.

**9:35-38** Like He did with the lame man in 5:14 after He had healed him, Jesus finds the former blind man and steers him away from religion. The man, in John 5, went back to religion (5:15), but this former blind man believes in Jesus as the Son of God and worships Him. Man would look at him and chastise him for being kicked out by the religious leaders, but this man will make it into God's kingdom, while the one in John 5 will not (if nothing changes in these men after these events). Therefore, being kicked out of a church is not such a bad thing after all.

Also, note the transformation in this former blind man after he had talked to the religious leaders. At first, he thought that Jesus was a prophet (9:17). By the religious leaders confronting him, he was able to talk things out and realize that Jesus really is of God (9:33), such that he now believes He is Lord before Jesus tells him that He is God (9:36). Thus, religious persecution makes people think about what they believe, and, although its intention is to get someone to stop believing God, the result of a commitment to the truth is that the person being persecuted ends up believing God instead. This man, then, represents the little flock in the tribulation period, and this story shows that the only Jews, who will make it into God's kingdom, are the ones who are willing to abandon religion and believe God's Word to them. The rest will join with apostate Israel in worshipping the image, taking the mark of the beast, and going to an eternal lake of fire.

**9:39-41** In these three verses, Jesus summarizes why He healed the blind man, and why He did so on the sabbath. What Jesus is basically doing is equating self righteousness with being able to see. He is also equating those who know they are sinners and worthy of death with those who cannot see. Romans 1:32 says that all men know they are worthy of death for their sins. Some people try to escape eternal death by following religion (in this case, refraining from the works of God on the sabbath). These are the people who say they see. Others realize the only way they can escape eternal death is through a Redeemer. Jesus has come to both groups of people. He has come to be the redeemer for those looking for one. Thus,

He has come to bring sight to those who cannot see (Luke 4:18). He has also come to show those, who say they can see, that they are really blind. Thus, Jesus also came to show the religious leaders that they do not see, and their sin remains. If they see that their sin remains, then they see their need for a Saviour. Thus, in verse 41, those, who realize they are sinners, "have no sin" because they believe the gospel of the kingdom. Those, who do not realize they are sinners, have their sin remain with them, and the light shines on them so that they might come to the light and be saved (8:12). However, because of the hard hearts of the Pharisees, they will not be saved because they do not comprehend the light of God that has come to them in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:5).

**10** Satan has used the religious leaders to enslave the entire nation of Israel to him (vs. 1-10), but Jesus has come as the good shepherd, giving His life for the sheep (vs. 11-18) so that, if they have faith in what God has told them, they will have everlasting life in God's kingdom on earth. Unfortunately, the religious leaders do not believe on Him (vs. 19-39), causing Jesus to flee to Jordan where Jews, who do believe on Him, may accept His kingdom offer (vs. 40-42).

**10:1** "The sheepfold" is the nation of Israel. The thieves and robbers are those perpetrating Satan's lie program. In Jesus' day, this would be the Jewish religious leaders, and the Antichrist will be the main thief and robber during the tribulation period. Those, trusting in God's Word, are able to differentiate between Satan's lie program and God's truth program. However, because most of Israel does not know God's Word, they listen to those that Satan had climb up into the sheepfold. As a result, Israel belonged to Satan when Jesus came to Israel (Luke 4:5-6).

**10:2** When Jesus came, He entered Israel "by the door," but Israel rejected Jesus because they were already following Satan through the ones who "climbeth up some other way" into the sheepfold (10:1). Thus, Jesus' way into God's kingdom did not seem right to them.

**10:3** However, a "little flock" (Luke 12:32) in Israel is trusting in God's Word over the religion of the Pharisees. Therefore, they have the "ears to hear" (Matthew 11:15) Jesus, as opposed to the rest of Israel that had "stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zechariah 7:11). Therefore, when Jesus comes with the gospel of the kingdom, they hear and follow Jesus, as Jesus leads them out of apostate Israel.

Jesus does not actually lead them out until His second coming. At that time, Jesus comes to the sheepfold of Israel as the judge of Israel. James 5:9 says that "the judge standeth before the door." Jesus will call to His sheep, and His sheep hear His voice and are led out by Jesus (10:3). Jesus "shall gather the lambs,... and carry them in His bosom" (Isaiah 40:11) to His Father's house, where He has prepared a place for them (14:2-3) at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9). That is why Revelation 3:20 says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." In other words, as the door of the sheepfold, Jesus has invited all of Israel to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Those, who believe the

gospel of the kingdom, hear His voice and let Him in so He can bring believing Israel into His Father's house for the marriage supper of the Lamb at His second coming. But, until that time, both believers and unbelievers are in the house of Israel.

**10:4-5** During the tribulation period, Jesus leads the little flock into God's kingdom by teaching them the mysteries of the kingdom so that they will not follow the false doctrine of apostate Israel during the tribulation period. Notice how He is leading them away from the apostate Jewish religious system. The way the sheep know the voice of Jesus is by knowing God's law so that they can distinguish between good and bad doctrine. When Satan "speaks" through a false religious system, the little flock will not follow because they do not recognize his voice, i.e., the doctrine does not match up with God's Word to Israel. When Jesus speaks through His Word, the little flock follows Him into the green pastures and still waters of the truth (Psalm 23:1-3).

**10:6** Even today, most Christians do not understand the meaning of this parable.

**10:7,11** Now, Jesus gives the explanation of the parable. Note that Jesus is both "the door of the sheep" and "the good shepherd." He is "the door" in the sense that He gave the lost sheep of the house of Israel the gospel of the kingdom. This is the way for them to enter God's kingdom. He is "the good shepherd" in the sense that He leads the little flock away from bad doctrine and from Satan's sheepfold. However, because Satan has Israel as his lawful captive (Isaiah 49:25), Jesus must first bind the strong man, i.e., Satan, and then He can lead His little flock away (Matthew 12:29). Therefore, He "giveth His life for the sheep" (10:11).

**10:8** The term "thieves and robbers" is used for those who "stole" the sheepfold (Israel) from God. These would be the Jewish religious leaders, who replaced God's law with the traditions of the fathers (Jeremiah 23:1-3). However, God's sheep "did not hear them." There was always a little flock (Luke 12:32), who continued to trust in God's law, despite the thieves and robbers. As such, each Jew has the free-will choice to believe Satan's minions—the Jewish religious leaders—or God's law. This is important for Jesus' audience to understand, because the deception program of the adversary will only get worse during the upcoming tribulation period (Matthew 24:4-5,23-24).

**10:9** Jesus provides the gospel of the kingdom by which Israel will enter the kingdom. Jesus leads the little flock out of apostate Israel by them believing the gospel, trusting in God's law covenant with them, and rejecting the traditions of the fathers. At the same time, though, Jesus has called them to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:6). They must go into Satan's sheepfold to find those lost sheep so that they can hear and believe the gospel of the kingdom and follow Jesus. Thus, they "shall go in and out" of the sheepfold. The reason they go out is to "find pasture," which means being edified by learning God's Word so that they will endure unto the end and be saved (Matthew 24:13). The good shepherd makes His sheep "lie down in green pastures" (Psalm 23:2). Thus, they come in to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and

they come out to be grounded in God's Word (17:15-18). This is much like what we do today when we go into the world walking in the Spirit, but then we come out of the world by reading God's Word so that Christ lives through us when we are in the world.

**10:10** In 10:8, Jesus referred to "thieves and robbers." Now, he refers to "the thief." "The thief" would be Satan himself, while the "thieves and robbers" are those Satan got to do his dirty work in Israel. By honing in on "the thief," here, Jesus is providing the contrast between Satan and Himself. Satan has a threefold attack against Israel. First, he stole most of them away from God by getting them to follow the Jewish religious leaders. Second, he killed the prophets, wise men, and scribes God sent Israel so that they might be saved (Matthew 23:34-35). Third, he destroyed God's law by replacing it with the traditions of the fathers such that, those wanting to follow God, had trouble doing so, because they thought they were following God through man's traditions. This is how Satan steals (people), kills (believers), and destroys (sound doctrine). By contrast, Jesus brought Israel eternal life in God's kingdom by His death on the cross and by their belief in His gospel message to them. He brings abundant life in the sense that life in Christ abounds over the destruction of Satan, as Romans 5:20-21 says, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

**10:11** Israel's pastors have destroyed and scattered the sheep (Jeremiah 23:1). The Lord promised to "gather the remnant of My flock" (Jeremiah 23:3). The way He does this is by His death on the cross, i.e., giving "His life for the sheep." Thus, He saves the sheep from Satan, making the Lord Jesus Christ the good shepherd.

**10:12-13** "An hireling" refers to the Jewish religious leaders. God placed them in charge of the well being of the nation of Israel. Because they were apostate, they were not concerned with the well being of the sheep. Therefore, when they saw Satan coming (the wolf), they fled. However, Satan caught them so that they would then destroy the rest of the sheep with Satan's bad doctrine. The scattering of the sheep refers to the sheep leaving God's sheepfold through their belief of this bad doctrine perpetrated by the Jewish religious leaders, who did so because they were now firmly in Satan's grasp (Ezekiel 34:5).

**10:14** The religious leaders were bad shepherds because they fed themselves and not the sheep (Ezekiel 34:2-3). As a result, God had promised that He would come and feed the flock Himself (Ezekiel 34:13-15). As such, Jesus' coming as the good shepherd fulfills prophecy. Note that He does not feed all of the sheep, because some of them follow Satan now. He only feeds those, who trust in God. That is why He spoke in parables, because unbelievers were not to be edified with sound doctrine (Matthew 13:11).

**10:15** Jesus says that He knows the Father just as well as the Father knows Him. Therefore, Jesus is saying that He is God.

Again, Jesus mentions that He would lay down His life for the sheep. This should clue the little flock into the fact that He came to die for them. His setting up His kingdom would come later. Believing this truth would have kept the 12 apostles from being offended by Jesus and fleeing when He was arrested by the Jewish religious leaders.

**10:16** This is NOT a reference to the Gentiles. Jesus came exclusively "unto the lost sheep of the house of ISRAEL" (Matthew 15:24). The "other sheep" is a reference to Jews in other nations, who were scattered among the Gentiles due to the fifth course of chastisement, as mentioned in Leviticus 26:33. In 7:35, the religious leaders mentioned that Jews were dispersed among the Gentile nations. Then, in 11:52, we are told that Jesus died for Israel plus "the children of God that were scattered abroad." This cannot be a reference to the Gentiles, since we are not told of Jesus giving His life a ransom for them until that mystery is revealed unto the apostle Paul in Acts 9 (Compare Matthew 20:28 with I Timothy 2:4).

It should also be noted that the nation of Israel includes both the northern, 10 tribes of Israel and the southern, 2 tribes of Judah. Jerusalem was in Judah, and, at the time of Jesus' first coming, was considered by the Jews to be the true Israel. Samaria was the capital of Israel, and the religious leaders considered them to be lost people, not part of God's kingdom (8:48). However, Jesus came to ALL of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He prophesied of taking the divided kingdom and making it one in God's kingdom on earth (Ezekiel 37:19-22). That is why "He must needs go through Samaria" (4:4). Therefore, the "other sheep" are Jews in other nations, including the northern area of Israel. Note that Revelation 5:9 says that they are redeemed "OUT OF every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Thus, Jews are saved OUT OF all nations and brought into God's kingdom.

**10:18** This is the definitive statement of Jesus as God with regard to His crucifixion. As God, no man had the power to take His life from Him. Pilate claimed to have this power (19:10), but Jesus said He had no power, "except it were given [him] from above" (19:11). Jesus willingly laid down His life so that Israel (the sheep) might enter God's eternal kingdom on earth. As we read of the events surrounding the crucifixion in John 18-19, we will see Jesus, as God, calling the shots. He is in complete control of what happens to Him.

Let us not leave out the last part of His statement that He also has power to take His life back up again, because, without the resurrection, there is no eternal life for anyone in any dispensation. We should also not overlook the fact that Jesus lays down His life and takes it back up at the commandment of His Father. This speaks of His role, as a Son, to be under His Father. "The Son can do nothing of Himself" (5:19). He would not be God if He did not totally obey His Father, but He also would not be God if He was lower than the Father. That is why He fulfills His role of the Son by obeying His Father, but He is also equal to the Father because He is God: "I and My Father are one" (10:30).

**10:19-21** Most religions, including liberal Christianity, recognize Jesus as a good man and a prophet, but they fail to recognize Him as God. However, an honest



look at the scriptures will never lead to such a conclusion. As God, Jesus causes you to come to one of two conclusions. Either you will choose to believe your flesh and conclude that He was crazy (10:20), or you will recognize He is God (10:21) and believe His message, as seen by the two conclusions here. There is no middle ground. Anyone, who says Jesus was just a good man, has never really read the scriptures.

**10:22** The "feast of the dedication" was not one of the seven feasts prescribed by God under the law (Leviticus 23). Rather, it was what is known today as Hannukah, which commemorated the revolt of the Maccabees in 165 BC in which the Jews were able to overcome Antiochus Epiphanes and get control over the temple and the altar again. We are told that "it was winter" to signify that Israel was in a winter season spiritually. They had rejected God's law for the traditions of the fathers. The traditions of the fathers probably gained a greater stronghold over God's law in Jerusalem as a result of the Maccabean revolt.

**10:23** Thus, Jesus is surrounded by religion in Jerusalem, as signified by Him walking "in the temple in Solomon's porch" during this religious feast.

**10:24-26** Jesus has already plainly told the Jews that He is the Christ. He did so in a way that those, who believe God's Word, would hear Him and have the opportunity to believe the gospel of the kingdom, but He has not said He is the Christ in plain enough words for the Jewish religious leaders to arrest and kill Him. In other words, those, who believe God, have read the Old Testament and believe what it says. They can then compare Jesus' works and sayings with Old-Testament prophecies of the Messiah and know for sure that Jesus is the Christ. However, because the religious leaders do not believe God's Word, they are not able to see that Jesus is the Christ.

Similarly today, God has not given us a Book that is divided by topic that clearly states major doctrines. You have to study it and allow the Holy Spirit to teach you those doctrines. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing" (Proverbs 25:2), because only faith pleases God. Therefore, "He is a rewarder of them that DILIGENTLY seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

**10:27-28** Because Jesus has the power over His Own life, He also has the power over His sheep's lives. Although the Antichrist will try to destroy Jesus' sheep in the tribulation period and he may physically kill them, Jesus, after He rises from the dead, will have the power over death and hell (Revelation 1:18), such that He will raise them from the dead and give them everlasting life in God's kingdom on earth. The Antichrist may be able to destroy their bodies, but He cannot destroy their souls. Only God has that power (Matthew 10:28).

**10:28-30** In 10:28, Jesus says that the little flock are in His hand. In 10:29, Jesus says that the little flock are in His Father's hand. Jesus then makes the statement in 10:30, which explains how both can be true. By saying that He and the Father are one, Jesus tells the Jewish religious leaders that He is God. But, the religious leaders had asked Him to tell them plainly that He is the Christ

(10:24), and, instead, He makes it plain that He is God. The reason Jesus does this is so they know that the Christ is also God. As stated in the commentary for 10:19-21, there is no middle ground with Jesus. He is either God or a lunatic.

**10:31** Now, the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus, because He has said that He is God. There is a big problem with what the Jews are doing. First, the law does not allow them to kill someone, who claims He is God, unless He is actually not God. So, they must have a trial to compare Old-Testament prophecies about the Messiah to what He has done and said in order to determine if He really is the Christ or not. Second, even if He is not the Christ, they must have at least two witnesses in a trial with credible evidence that shows He is not God (Deuteronomy 17:6). Therefore, the Jews are breaking the law by trying to stone Jesus without a trial, and they have no basis on which to conduct a trial anyway, because they have no proof of Him not being the Christ.

**10:32** Since the Pharisees have picked up stones to stone Jesus, they must have already condemned Him to die. They were not allowed to kill an innocent man. Therefore, Jesus asks their basis for judging Him worthy of death.

Jesus had previously told His little flock that they would preach the gospel of the kingdom to unbelievers (Matthew 5:13). Doing so, would be considered "good works" that bring glory to God the Father (Matthew 5:16). As a man, Jesus also did the "good works" of casting out devils and healing the sick as a way of showing that the gospel of the kingdom He preached was true so that Israel might be saved. That was the work that He had done so far in His earthly ministry. Since He had only done good works, He asks the Pharisees which one of His good works is worthy of death under the law.

**10:33** The Jews' statement, in 10:33, shows that they do not believe that the Messiah will also be God. However, Old-Testament scripture says that the Messiah will be both God and man. For example, His name is called "Immanuel" in Isaiah 7:14, which means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Also, Isaiah 9:6 says that "a child is born,...and His name shall be called...the mighty God." Therefore, the Pharisees should have known that the Messiah would be both God and man, but they did not know this because they refused to believe the scripture. Peter said that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16), and Jesus said that it took the Father revealing this to him in order to believe it (Matthew 16:17). Since the Pharisees were in unbelief, they would not understand this, even though scripture said this.

**10:34-36** The scripture, that Jesus refers to in 10:34, is a quote of Psalm 82:6, which says that God called the judges of Israel "gods," because God had put them in positions over men, even though they were only men. With regard to Jesus, God has sanctified Him to be God in the flesh. Therefore, there is certainly nothing wrong with calling Him the Son of God, because that is Who He is. Therefore, Jesus did not break the law. You can also see the appropriateness of this quote from Psalm 82:6 by the fact that the ones to whom the Word of God came were called gods. It is appropriate, then, that the Word of God Himself (1:1,14) call

Himself God.

Note that Jesus says “the scripture cannot be broken” (10:35). This is a great proof text of the holiness of scripture. Whatever God says is true. In this case, Jesus is saying that He would be calling God a liar if He did not agree that He is the Son of God. Therefore, He is not making Himself out to be God, as the Pharisees claimed (10:33). Rather, the holy scriptures say that He is the Son of God, and so He must fulfill what the scriptures said about the Messiah, if only for the fact that the scripture cannot be broken. Even God cannot exempt Himself from obeying scripture in order to save Israel!

**10:37-38** Note how Jesus’ goal was to bring glory to the Father, not to Himself. So much so, that He put belief in His works above belief in Himself. His works are summed up in the gospel of the kingdom that He proclaimed. Jews were saved by repenting and being baptized (Acts 2:38). They did not have to make Jesus the Lord of their lives or even believe that He was the Messiah in order to be saved. All they had to do was believe in His works, which is why Jesus tells the Jews to at least believe in His works, even if they do not believe He is the Christ, the Son of God, because believing in His works is what saves them.

**10:39** We were told, way back in 5:18, that the Jews were trying to kill Him. Therefore, this is nothing new now. They are just using Jesus’ admission, that He is the Son of God, as the latest excuse to try to kill Him. Since no man could kill Jesus (10:17-18) and His hour is not yet come (7:30 and 8:20), He escapes out of their hands.

**10:40-42** Jesus resorts to the same place outside of Israel where John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. The reason is because the gospel was to repent and be baptized. Repentance means changing their mind, which means abandoning religion and following God’s law instead. Abandoning religion means going to Jesus outside of the establishment, or “without the camp,” as Hebrews 13:12-13 says. A sign of this is seen in Israel physically going outside of Jerusalem and the religious system to go to Jesus beyond Jordan. Of course, practically speaking, it was also safer for Jesus to be in Jordan, since His life was in danger in Jerusalem.

Many are said to have believed on Him there (10:42). However, they believe Him for the miracles’ sake (10:41), rather than having faith in the gospel. We know this from 12:37 and 2:23-25. In other words, He may have had great crowds following Him and they believed that He was the Messiah, but they did so because of the miracles. They did not believe the gospel of the kingdom. As such, when He goes to the cross, they will abandon Him, such that only 120 people are gathered together to receive the Holy Ghost in Acts 1:15, and that is after the resurrection! Man wants God to fit into His mindset. Jesus’ miracles fit into that mindset, and so many believed on Him. Once He got out of that mindset, they would not believe, even though He proved He is truly Messiah and God by rising from the dead.

**11** Israel is spiritually dead in their unbelief of God. However, just as Jesus raised to life a man, who had been dead for four days (vs. 43-44), Jesus can raise Israel

from their spiritual grave and give them eternal life in the kingdom. Israel's response to His offer of life is to make a concerted effort to put Him to death (v. 53). They have deemed themselves “unworthy of everlasting life” (Acts 13:46).

**11:2** I think this parenthetical reference is here for at least two reasons: 1) To show that this was a household of believers. Thus, being raised from the dead is a foretaste of what will happen to these believers at Jesus’ second coming, and 2) Matthew 26:12 tells us that Mary anointed Jesus’ feet to prepare Him for His burial, which gives us the point of reference that Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead was just before Jesus Himself would be crucified. Thus, when we are in John 11, Jesus’ hour has almost come.

**11:3-5** Jesus loves Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Yet, He has no problem allowing Lazarus to die. This shows how Jesus does not really care if one of His believers dies because they will be raised to eternal life later. (Christians pray primarily for physical healings, when they should be praying for spiritual healings and growth.) Therefore, the purpose behind Jesus’ doing physical miracles was to show Israel the spiritual miracle He could do for them, i.e., bring them out of sin and into eternal life. Jesus, therefore, lets Lazarus die so that more people will believe the gospel of the kingdom in order to have eternal life. This is also a picture of Israel in the tribulation period. Israel will not come to God and be saved until they go through the refiner’s fire of the tribulation period (Malachi 3:1-3), which will include physical death (Revelation 20:4).

Note that Jesus said, “this sickness is not unto death” (11:4), but Lazarus did die (11:14). Therefore, the “death” Jesus is talking about is spiritual death. In other words, Jesus is saying, “Who cares if Lazarus dies, because it does not affect where he will spend eternity!” And, Jesus said this about someone He loves (11:5)! Therefore, as Christians, we should have the same perspective. Members of the body of Christ do not die; they only go to “sleep in Jesus” (I Thessalonians 4:13-14).

**11:6** Jesus purposely waits for Lazarus to die before He does anything, because raising him from the dead will show the Jews the resurrection power of God, such that they should be willing to be killed for the faith.

**11:8-10** Physically speaking, a man can walk just fine when he has plenty of light to light the way. Similarly, spiritually speaking, no one can harm someone if he is walking in the light of God. The reason Jesus says it this way is to teach His disciples that they will also be safe during the tribulation period if they walk in the light of God’s Word to them.

However, Jesus never addresses the disciples’ concern. That is because Jesus does not care if He is killed by the Jews. In fact, as God, He knows that He is going to Jerusalem so that they can kill Him, because His hour to die is almost here. This shows the difference in focus between the physically minded and the spiritually minded. The disciples (physically minded) think that Jesus delayed going to Bethany because He was afraid of being killed. The real reason Jesus (spiritually

minded) delayed was so that Lazarus would die so that Jews may be saved when Jesus raises him from the dead. Jesus was also not worried about his own physical death, since He was going to Jerusalem to die.

As saved people, Christ wants us to have this same perspective. In Acts 21:13, Paul says, “What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” Physical death is no big deal to the saved individual, who uses the mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16).

**11:11** Because Lazarus is a believer, he never dies in the spiritual sense, as God has promised him eternal life. Therefore, Jesus says that “Lazarus sleepeth,” even though man would say, “Lazarus is dead” (11:14).

**11:15** Jesus had previously revealed to His disciples that He would die, be buried, and rise from the dead, but they did not believe Him (Matthew 16:21-23). In fact, they would not believe in His resurrection until after He would rise from the dead (20:7-9). Therefore, when He says that He wants them to believe, He must be talking about resurrection. He is probably referring to the resurrection of the disciples to life in the kingdom, because, if they do not believe in that, they will not be willing to die for the faith before Jesus’ second coming, which means that they will not be willing to preach the gospel of the kingdom from city to city during the tribulation period (Matthew 10:22-23).

**11:16** Thomas is known as “doubting Thomas,” because of his statement in 20:25. However, Thomas made that statement because he did not see the Lord, as did the other 10 disciples. The other 10 did not believe initially either, but no one ever talks about that (Luke 24:10-11, 41). However, what is significant about Thomas is his statement here. He is the only disciple who seems to understand that Jesus intended to die, and he encourages the other disciples to all go with Jesus to die in Jerusalem. Thus, Thomas seems to show more faith, before Jesus’ crucifixion, than any of Jesus’ other disciples did.

**11:17** Lazarus’ being dead for 4 days shows how spiritually dead Israel is, as well. Just like Lazarus’ being raised from the dead leaves no question that He was dead, there will be no question that Israel’s entering into God’s kingdom will be all by the power of God.

**11:18** Bethany is almost two miles from Jerusalem.

**11:19** Religion shows up to provide comfort for what man values. God shows up to show them what they should be valuing is the eternal destination of the soul.

**11:20-22** Both Martha and Mary tell Jesus that their brother would not have died if Jesus would have been there (11:21,32), but Martha seems to have more faith, because she knows that Jesus can still raise Lazarus from the dead. Mary, on the other hand, does not mention this, and she does not even go to meet Jesus, which gives the idea that she has given up on Lazarus. As such, Martha represents saved

Israel in the tribulation period, who make it into the kingdom, but they sleep until the end, while Mary represents unsaved Israel in the tribulation period, who do not believe the gospel when Jesus comes and do not make it into the kingdom (Matthew 25:1-13). Now, that is not to say that Martha will be in the kingdom and Mary will not, but their actions represent saved and unsaved Israel, respectively.

**11:24** This statement shows that believers did believe they would be resurrected to eternal life in God's kingdom.

**11:25-26** Another "I AM" statement by Jesus, as God, being Who Israel needs Him to be. Believing in Jesus involves believing in the gospel that He gave them, which was to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). If they believe this gospel and endure unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13), Jesus will raise them up to eternal life in God's kingdom at His second coming.

Jesus' statement, here, also shows that, even in Israel's dispensation, believers of the gospel pass from spiritual death to spiritual life, as we see today in Ephesians 2:1.

**11:27** This is the same statement about Jesus that Peter made in Matthew 16:16. There, Jesus said that His Father had to have revealed that to Peter (Matthew 16:17). We can conclude that the same is true for Martha, which means she also must be saved, since the Father has communicated truth to her spirit.

**11:28-29** Martha just lied, because Jesus had not called for Mary. What probably happened was that Mary was mad at Jesus for not coming to heal Lazarus before he died, and lying to her was the only way Martha could get Mary to go meet Him. Even then, it appears that Mary went to meet Jesus to give Him a piece of her mind (11:32).

**11:32-33** Mary shows her unbelief by saying what Martha said in 11:21 without saying what Martha said in 11:22. Since Martha had some belief, Jesus was able to confirm her belief in the gospel (11:25-27). With Mary, all Jesus sees is unbelief. He also sees that others have followed her in unbelief, as opposed to Martha, who went to Jesus by herself. Therefore, Jesus is troubled and groans over the unbelief of Israel. He is not troubled over Lazarus' death, because He already knew about this and actually stayed away so that it would happen.

**11:34** "Come and see" was previously used in John (1:39,46) to show how Jews need to come and see for themselves that Jesus is the Messiah so that they might believe the gospel. Since most of Israel did not "come and see" during Jesus' ministry, it is now time for Jesus to "come and see" that, even after His earthly ministry is almost over, Israel is still spiritually dead.

**11:35** Jesus wept, then, over the unbelief of the nation of Israel. He did not weep, as is suggested by the religious leaders in 11:36, because Lazarus is dead. In fact, He intentionally stayed away from Lazarus so that he WOULD die (11:6) because Jesus is concerned about the spiritual well-being of Israel, not their physical well-

being. When He sees that Israel's priorities are flip-flopped, it means that Israel will not sacrifice Jesus on the altar by faith (Psalm 118:27). That means they have rejected their Messiah and will not enter God's kingdom at this time (12:37-40). Therefore, the real reason that Jesus wept was because Israel was only focused on the physical.

**11:37-38** 11:38 says that Jesus groaned because of the Jews' statement in 11:37 that they see Lazarus in the grave as a testament to the inability of Jesus to heal him. This is incredibly significant today, because, when a Christian dies of a sickness, it is common for people to blame God and say that He is powerless. Yet, God wants people to die, so that man sees that he needs a Saviour. God uses death to point people to Christ, but man uses death as an excuse not to believe God. Therefore, Jesus was grieved then, and He is grieved today over the focus of Christianity on the physical. The true miracle is a saved soul, not a healed body, but very few Christians will recognize this.

**11:39** Note that Jesus tells them to take away the stone before He raises Lazarus from the dead. Jesus Himself rose from the dead before the stone was taken away (Matthew 28:2,6). The difference is that Jesus had the power to rise from the dead Himself (10:18), while Lazarus had no power, having to be raised to life by Jesus.

Martha tries to stop Jesus from having the stone rolled back, because Lazarus stinks by now. This shows that Martha does not believe that Jesus will raise him from the dead, even though she believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, (11:27) and that God will give Him anything He asks (11:22). Will the Son of man find faith when He comes at the end of the tribulation period (Luke 18:8)?

**11:40** Jesus' response to Martha also serves as a warning to the little flock that they must maintain their belief in the gospel throughout the tribulation period in order to enter God's kingdom.

**11:41-43** Jesus had been accused of casting out devils by the power of the devil (Matthew 12:24). To keep this from happening again, Jesus clearly attributes resurrection power to God the Father so that there is no excuse the Jewish religious leaders can use when He raises Lazarus from the dead.

**11:44** Being "bound hand and foot," wearing grave clothes, and not being able to see represents the spiritual condition of Israel. They have no power to get out of their own, sinful condition. This resurrection shows the power of Jesus to give eternal life to Israel and bring them into the kingdom, in spite of Israel being bound and blinded by Satan. Jesus came to bind the strong man (Satan) (Matthew 12:29) so that He could loose Israel.

**11:45-46** Jesus already had some common Jews, who believed on Him. Now, He gets some of the Jewish religious leaders to believe on Him, also. This is enough to get the remaining unbelieving Jewish leaders to make Jesus #1 on their most wanted list.

**11:47-48** The Jewish religious leaders were supposed to point Israel to their Messiah. They failed to do this, but the common Jews may still end up believing on their Messiah. They should be excited about this. Instead, they want no one to believe in the Messiah. They are only concerned with having THEIR place and THEIR nation continue. They do not want GOD'S nation (Isaiah 51:4) to rise up and overthrow THEIR nation.

So, the real reason the Jews want Jesus killed is because they are afraid that the Romans will overtake their nation. In other words, they want Israel to live on. Yet, when they bring Jesus before Pilate, they say that the reason they want Him crucified is because He was trying to cause Israel to rise up against Caesar (Luke 23:2). The Pharisees even said to Pilate, "we have no king but Caesar" (19:15). Therefore, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of the very crime that they are guilty of.

Also, the religious leaders should have no fear of the Romans taking over Israel. In Genesis 17:7, God established an everlasting covenant with the nation of Israel. Since it is an everlasting covenant, the nation of Israel will last forever. Therefore, if the Jewish religious leaders really believed God's Word, even if they thought Jesus was just a man, there is no way they would come to the conclusion that the Romans could take away their nation. This shows their lack of faith in God.

**11:49-52** Caiaphas spoke in the physical sense, saying that Jesus should die so that the religious nation of Israel would not be destroyed. However, what Caiaphas said was prophetic of the spiritual nation of Israel. Jesus must die in order for Israel to enter God's kingdom and remain as a nation forever.

"The children of God that were scattered abroad" mentioned in 11:52 is NOT a reference to the Gentiles. They are the dispersed Jews (7:35), who were scattered among the heathen as a result of God's chastisement of Israel for breaking the law covenant (Leviticus 26:33). Jesus said in 10:16 that He has other sheep "which are not of this fold." These sheep can only be "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" for these are the only ones He came to (Matthew 15:24). He gave His life a ransom for the many in Israel who would believe the gospel of the kingdom and follow God's law covenant (Matthew 20:28). It was not revealed until Acts 9 that Jesus gave His life a "ransom for all" (I Timothy 2:4), including the Gentiles. If Jesus was saying He was dying for the Gentiles as well, the gospel of the grace of God revealed to the apostle Paul would not have been a mystery. However, Romans 16:25-26 and Ephesians 3:3-6 say it was a secret until revealed to Paul, while Israel's prophecy program was not a secret (Acts 3:21). Therefore, "the children of God that were scattered abroad" are the lost sheep of the house of Israel, who are living in other areas outside of Judah.

**11:51-52** It is also amazing to note that God used Caiaphas to be His prophet, by giving him the words to say regarding Jesus' death ("this spake he not of himself"), even though Caiaphas was an unbeliever.

**11:53-54** Up until this point, the Jews have tried on several occasions to stone Jesus, but it has always been a spur-of-the-moment decision. Now, they take



counsel to make a concerted effort to put Him to death. Therefore, Jesus "walked no more openly among the Jews," meaning that He did not openly walk in the places that the Jewish religious leaders frequented.

Having been rejected by Israel as a whole (12:37), He now concentrates on edifying the little flock—getting them ready to go through the tribulation period and not being offended in the Lord Jesus Christ. Since many people believed on Him before (11:45), you may think that a lot of people went with Jesus to Ephraim. However, since only the twelve are mentioned at the Passover meal that is “nigh at hand” (11:55; Matthew 26:20), it was still probably only a “little” flock, who went with Him. The new believers may have been like those in 2:23-25, who Jesus did not commit Himself to because He knew they would later be offended in Him.

**11:55-57** Note, again, that we are told that "the Jews" passover was at hand. Israel was following religion, not God's law. However, Jesus did follow God's law, and God's law said that He must appear at this feast (Deuteronomy 16:16). (Technically, Jesus had to appear at the feast of unleavened bread, but the Passover was the day before this feast (Leviticus 23:5-6).) Therefore, the common Jews' doubt in Jesus' appearing for the feast shows how far removed they are from the law. Most there are probably just following a religious observance, rather than knowing that the feast has required attendance under God's law. The fact, that Jesus would show up, shows His faith in the Father that He is willing to risk physical death just to obey God's law, even though God's feast had been watered down to a religious observance by the Jews. Most men would have justified not appearing at the feast, saying that it is not God's feast any more, but not Jesus. He came to fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17). The Pharisees "had given a commandment" to report any Jesus sightings so that they could arrest and kill Him. Israel should "obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29), but they will not do this, because of their unbelief (11:46).

**12** Mary anoints Jesus' body for His burial (v. 3), while the chief priests try to figure out how they can get Jesus in the grave (v.19). That will not be difficult because, even though no man can take Jesus' life from Him, Jesus will die so that Israel might live (v. 24). Jesus is troubled by the unbelief of Israel (v. 27 and 37), and gives them one, last chance to believe (vs. 44-50) before going to the cross.

**12:1** This is about six days before Jesus' crucifixion.

**12:2-3** Luke 10:38-42 tells of a time when "Martha was cumbered about much serving," while Mary "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word." Again here, we see Martha serving, while Mary is at Jesus' feet. This time, because she had heard His word before, she believes He will die and is preparing His body for burial (12:7 and Matthew 26:12), even though it is costing her a lot of money to do so. What a contrast between Mary, who is willing to spend a lot of money to prepare Jesus for His burial, and the Jewish religious leaders, who will spend money in order to get Him buried (Matthew 26:14-15).

**12:4-6** Matthew 26:13-15 says that Judas went to the chief priests after this

event and agreed to betray Jesus. Luke 22:3-4 says that Satan entered Judas at this time. So, what happened was that Judas was a thief (12:6). He saw an opportunity to get a lot of money for himself go by the wayside when Mary instead used the ointment to anoint Jesus for His burial. This infuriated Judas Iscariot. Satan then entered him, and he agreed to betray Jesus. By Satan entering him, he is a type of the Antichrist. In fact, the two people in the Bible called "the son of perdition" are Judas Iscariot (17:12) and the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2:3). Judas Iscariot stands as the ultimate example of the love of money being the root of all evil (I Timothy 6:10).

Here is something to think about regarding money. 12:6 says that Judas Iscariot was the treasurer. He must have been appointed treasurer by Jesus. Jesus, being God, knew he was a thief when He appointed him. This shows that Jesus does not care about money. He recognizes that the love of money is the root of all evil, and so He gets rid of that temptation in His life by having a thief take care of His finances.

As a man, the temptation of money must have been a strong one for Jesus. After all, people would be willing to give up their life savings for physical healings. Today, faith healers rake in millions of dollars, and they are fake healers. The real healer, the Lord Jesus Christ, then, would have had people throwing money His way in order to be healed by Him. Yet, He purposely healed people, who could not pay Him, such as the two men possessed with devils in the country of the Gergesenes (Matthew 8:28) or the lame man at the pool of Bethesda (5:5). We do not know much about the money Jesus received, except that women financed Him (Luke 8:2-3). But, I think it is safe to assume that Jesus could have been very rich if He wanted to be. However, He had faith in God's Word that money is a great temptation, and so He got rid of the temptation by letting a thief handle His money, so that He would be broke and not have to worry about it. This is quite a contrast with how megachurches are run today!

**12:9-11** The "therefore" is interesting in 12:9. If the Jewish religious leaders knew that Jesus was in town based upon the event of 12:3-8, I think we can assume that the reason they knew Jesus was there was because Judas Iscariot told them so. In other words, Iscariot had probably made a deal with the religious leaders that he would tell them the whereabouts of Jesus if they gave him money. This would be in addition to the 30 pieces of silver he gets for agreeing to betray the Messiah to them (Matthew 26:14-16).

Note the contrast between the two groups in Jerusalem. A believing group of Jews came to see Jesus and Lazarus, while the religious leaders want to kill Lazarus now, too, because his rising from the dead has led many Jews to believe on Jesus. Thus, the religious leaders are only concerned with continuing their religion so that they can keep getting money from the common Jews, and they will kill anyone who stands in their way of getting that money, including their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and an innocent bystander, Lazarus.

The group of Jews, who "believed on Jesus," will probably fall away during the

tribulation period, which is why they are not seen around Jesus just before His crucifixion. Note how it seems that they have almost made Lazarus into a god, such that the religious leaders want to kill him, too. If they were true believers in the Messiah, they would follow Jesus, not Lazarus. Lazarus is just a man used by God for His glory (11:4).

**12:12-15** So much for Jesus coming into Jerusalem secretly this time! Actually, He did not intend to come in secretly, because there was scripture to fulfill. The people saying "blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord" fulfills Psalm 118:26. Jesus' "sitting on an ass's colt" fulfills Zechariah 9:9. Note that the Zechariah passage says that "He is just, and having salvation." Therefore, He was coming into Jerusalem to die for Israel so that they might be saved from Satan's grasp. Jesus' sitting on an ass's colt, or a small ass, is a picture of how the nation of Israel was not ready to receive Him. The small ass could not support His weight well, just like Israel did not receive the salvation He brought. The ones praising Him were believers who would soon fall away. The only reason they are praising Him is because He had just raised Lazarus from the dead. They do not believe the gospel of the kingdom. Thus, Israel's Messiah is here, but Israel is still in apostasy.

**12:16** Jesus told His disciples in 14:26 that the Holy Ghost would "bring all things to [their] remembrance, whatsoever [He had] said unto [them]." Therefore, while the disciples do not now understand the prophecies that are being fulfilled, they will understand them after they receive the Holy Ghost in Acts 2. The disciples' problem is that they do not believe Jesus will die. They are still hanging on to their religious idea that their Messiah will overthrow the Romans right then and there. After Jesus' resurrection, they understand why Jesus came. Therefore, the Holy Ghost brings these things to their remembrance.

**12:17-19** All of Jerusalem is greeting Jesus, which is why the Pharisees want to kill Him, which is why He did things the way He did because His hour to die has come. Therefore, He will lay down His life for the many of Israel who will believe the gospel of the kingdom. This shows that the primary reason Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead was probably so that the common Jews would praise Him, leading to the Jewish religious leaders wanting to kill Him then. In other words, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead so that He would be crucified.

**12:20-23** Jesus seems to ignore the request of the Greeks to see Him, as He does not respond with a "yes" or "no" answer. However, He does respond because 12:23 says that "Jesus answered them." His answer was that "the hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified" (12:23). In other words, Jesus' ministry was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24). They were supposed to, in turn, be a kingdom of priests to the Gentiles to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6), which is how "God so loved the world" (3:16). In this way, Jesus would be "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:32). Now that the Gentiles have come seeking Him, it is time for Him to go to the cross to die, because, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (12:32). So, the Gentiles said, "We would see Jesus" (12:21), and Jesus said, "The hour is

come” (12:23). In other words, the Gentiles will see Jesus by His drawing all men unto Himself through His death on the cross.

Thus, when Jesus goes to the cross, His death will count for both Jews and Gentiles, even in Israel’s program. The problem, though, is that Israel did not believe on their Messiah (12:37). Therefore, Israel will not make it to the Gentiles before the kingdom program is put on hold with the mystery program taking its place ever since the call of Paul in Acts 9. How ironic that Gentiles are ready for salvation in Israel’s program, while Israel is not ready. That is why, when the Jews have completely diminished away in the mystery program, Paul says, “the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it” (Acts 28:28). Paul knows the Gentiles are ready to be saved.

**12:24** This verse is the clearest explanation by Jesus to His disciples of why He must die. Jesus is the only man ever to earn eternal life, because He lived a perfect life. Therefore, He could go on living forever and never die. However, if He does not die, no one else can have life, just like a corn of wheat will never produce anything unless it dies. Therefore, God must make “Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Corinthians 5:21).

In the context of Israel’s program, if He does not die for the sins of Israel, Israel will not enter the kingdom. Believing Israel is represented by wheat, and unbelieving Israel is represented by tares in Matthew 13:24-30. At Jesus’ second coming, the tares are bound to be burned, and the wheat is gathered into God’s barn (Matthew 13:30). However, if Jesus never dies, everyone is a tare; there is no wheat to gather (12:24). Therefore, He must become the substitute sacrifice for the sins of Israel (Hebrews 9:26-28).

**12:25** If Israel believes the gospel of the kingdom, they are to preach it during the tribulation period. Given that the Antichrist will institute the death penalty for those, who do not worship the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15), the believing remnant must hate their “life IN THIS WORLD” in order to “keep it unto life eternal.” The key phrase is “in this world.” Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (18:36). Therefore, if they love their life in this world, they will deny Jesus before the Antichrist to keep from being killed. Jesus will then deny them spiritual life before His heavenly Father (Matthew 10:33).

**12:26** In this context, “let him follow Me,” means let him follow Me to the death. Jesus will die so that Israel may be saved. So, too, the little flock should be willing to die for Christ’s sake so that Israel may be saved as well. If they do that, they will be in the New Jerusalem with Christ, waiting for Him to establish His kingdom on earth at His second coming, where they will be honoured by Jesus’ Father with a position in God’s kingdom (Luke 19:16-19).

**12:27** Luke shows Jesus as the perfect man, and so he shows Jesus’ flesh troubled at the thought of dying (Luke 22:42-44). John shows Jesus as God, and so he shows Jesus’ soul troubled. As God, He is not worried over His flesh dying. His soul being troubled means that He is troubled over the unbelief of Israel

(12:37). He came to save Israel from their sins, but Israel does not want to be saved from their sins. So, it seems like a wasted effort, and He should say, “Father, save me from this hour,” because this “generation of vipers” cannot “escape the damnation of hell” (Matthew 23:33). But, as God, He will not say that, because He knows that, if Israel will not be saved now, the Gentiles will be saved (12:32), and then Israel will be saved later (Romans 11:25-26). Therefore, Jesus’ death will accomplish fruit (12:24), even though it does not look like it at the time.

**12:28** Jesus asks the Father to glorify His name. The context is for Him to glorify it through Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. The Father speaks, saying that He has glorified His name and will glorify it again. 12:31 says that His death on the cross will cast Satan out. That is how the Father will glorify His name in the future. In the past, He has glorified His name through the perfect life that Jesus has lived.

The Father’s name is also glorified by those, who receive the gift of eternal life, by believing the gospel. Jesus brought this glory to the Father’s name by preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of Israel, and the Father’s name will be glorified in the future through the believing remnant preaching the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as well. Therefore, the Father gets both past glory and future glory from the faith of Israel in God and from the faith of Jesus in the Father. Jesus’ faith in God plus man’s faith in God equals eternal life for man.

**12:29** Since the voice, in 12:28, refers to Himself in the first person, the voice must have belonged to God the Father. However, some people said, “an angel spake to Him.” This is the response of religion. Man is made “a little lower than the angels” (Psalm 8:5). Man knows that there is a God, and He is worthy of man worshipping Him (Romans 1:19-20). However, man becomes vain in his own imaginations (Romans 1:21) and worships “the creature more than the Creator” (Romans 1:25). Therefore, in order to avoid worshipping God, some people will worship angels. In fact, Colossians 2:18 talks about the worshipping of angels and says that, those doing so, are vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds, intruding into those things which they have not seen. Most modern versions change this verse to say that these people have, in fact, seen angelic things, so that the worship of angels seems to be supported by God’s word. This should not come as a surprise, since angel worship was evidentially a part of the Jewish religion of Jesus’ day.

But, getting back to the voice. We are told that the voice of God thundered. Jesus nicknamed two of His disciples—James and John—the “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). Therefore, this nickname means that James and John would speak God’s Word with the gospel of the kingdom, just like Jesus did, so that Israel might be saved.

**12:30** As God, Jesus was never in doubt that He should go to the cross and die for the sins of Israel. He was just troubled that Israel did not believe. God the Father spoke in an audible voice from heaven to help the unbelief of Israel. What Jesus was saying about how He would die for their sins was true, and God the

Father Himself confirmed with an audible voice from heaven that Jesus' death would bring glory to God. Yet, they still did not believe (12:37).

**12:31** The prince of this world is Satan (Ephesians 2:2). Jesus will cast him out with His death on the cross, such that Jesus will now be the Prince (Acts 5:31). However, He will not take over as the Prince of Peace until His second coming (Isaiah 9:6), since death still has to be destroyed (I Corinthians 15:24-28). However, Jesus does defeat Satan at the cross (Colossians 2:14-15), crushing his head (Genesis 3:15), binding him, and taking from him those with faith in God (Matthew 12:29). Therefore, Jesus' death accomplishes the victory over Satan, and it is just a matter of time before Jesus establishes God's kingdom on earth.

**12:32-33** Israel was supposed to have bound Jesus on the altar in the temple as the complete passover lamb sacrifice (Psalm 118:27). Because of their unbelief (12:37), they did not do this. Therefore, He would die on a cross by the Gentiles, which would also draw the Gentiles to Him. Since both Jews and Gentiles would be drawn unto the Lord by the cross, the cross was God's plan all along. However, He did not reveal it as such, because, if Satan's forces knew that was God's plan, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:7-8).

**12:34** The people's questions tell us two things about Israel at the time: 1) They do not understand that Jesus is both the Christ and the Son of Man. This means that they do not understand that the Christ must be virgin birth without a sin nature, and 2) They think that Jesus is saying that He will ascend unto the Father. They do not understand that He is saying that He will die (12:33). What this tells us is that the common Jew believed that God would send the Christ from heaven, and He would immediately set up God's eternal kingdom on earth. Since they have cut out Jesus' death, it shows that they are self-righteous. In other words, they believe that the Christ will not have to die, because there is no reason for Him to die. They think God will bring them into God's kingdom because they are physical Jews (8:33,39). Therefore, they see the gospel of the kingdom as unnecessary, which is why they did not believe (12:37).

**12:35-36** John 1:5 "The light shineth in darkness." John 1:9 "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 3:19 "Light is come into the world." John 9:5 "I am the light of the world." These verses make it clear that Jesus is in the light. However, Jesus is about to be crucified. Thus, He gives them the warning to believe the gospel while the Light is with them. After His crucifixion, the tribulation period was soon to start if Israel believed the gospel of the kingdom (Daniel 9:26-27). Without Jesus, unbelieving Israel would then be in darkness. Therefore, they should believe the gospel while the Messiah is there. It will be a lot harder to believe when the Antichrist is calling the shots. Put a different way, Jesus says in Luke 23:31, "if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Therefore, Jesus' hiding of Himself (12:36) is a picture of the darkness that unbelieving Israel will be in during the tribulation period.

**12:37-38** 12:37 sums up what Israel did with Jesus. In spite of all of the miracles

He did that proved He is the Christ and the kingdom of God is at hand, Israel did not believe Him. Israel's not believing on Jesus fulfilled Isaiah 53:1's prophecy. The report that was not believed was the gospel that Jesus and believing Israel published, as prophesied in Isaiah 52:7, while the arm of the Lord is the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christ gave Israel the gospel and was there in the flesh, but they did not believe Him.

**12:39-40** Isaiah 6:9-10 says that God made Israel's ears heavy and closed their eyes so that they could not hear the gospel and see the Messiah and believe and enter God's kingdom. So, why did God send the Messiah to Israel and give them the gospel to be saved, but then kept them from hearing it so that they would not be saved? The answer is that Israel did not believe God's Word in the first place. Because of their unbelief, God deemed them unworthy to learn the mysteries of the kingdom; therefore, He closed their eyes and ears from hearing the truths of God by speaking to them in parables (Matthew 13:11). Thus, Israel did not believe God's law covenant to them. As such, "their eyes they have closed" and "their ears are dull of hearing" (Matthew 13:15). Then, because they have closed their own eyes and ears, God took understanding away from them. "For whosoever hath [ears to hear], to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath" (Matthew 13:12). Therefore, both statements of Isaiah are true. Because the people did not believe (Isaiah 53:1), God closed their ears and eyes so that they would not receive any further truth from God (Isaiah 6:9-10). After all, if you do not believe the gospel, you are not going to believe anything else from God. All you will do is twist the truth into a lie, like Satan did (8:44). Therefore, to keep Israel from blaspheming God's name further (Isaiah 52:5), He closed their ears and eyes.

**12:41** This verse tells us that the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9-10 is in the context of Isaiah 6:3, when Isaiah saw the whole earth full of the glory of the Lord. This is important to note because it tells us that, if the whole earth is going to be full of the glory of the Lord, God must do away with unbelievers. While Satan is "the prince of this world" (12:31), God keeps unbelievers from learning the deep things of God (I Corinthians 2:9) by closing their ears and blinding their eyes. If God does not do this, God's plan of having saved Israel ready to rule with Him on this earth will not come to pass. Therefore, in order for the whole earth to be filled with the glory of the Lord, God must keep all unbelievers from knowing His truths. Therefore, rather than this being a sign of God predestinating people to go to hell, it is really a sign that God will fulfill His promise of eternal life to saved Israel on this earth. Isaiah 42:8 confirms this: "I am the Lord: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another."

**12:42-43** Religion teaches the lie program of Satan (8:44). The closer that lies are to the truth, the more believable they are. The problem that religion has is that, if people are seeking for the truth and religion is close to the truth, truth seekers may find the truth and abandon religion. Therefore, religion will ostracize anyone who does not believe their lies. Therefore, many chief rulers believed Jesus' gospel of the kingdom, but they kept silent about it so that they would not lose their position of authority. Similarly, in the tribulation period, apostate Israel will make

a covenant with the Antichrist (Daniel 9:27). Knowing the Old Testament, many will believe on Jesus as the Messiah. However, they will not deny the Antichrist for fear of losing their jobs. Therefore, they keep on denying the Messiah and will not make it into God's kingdom as a result. Similarly today, there are probably many pastors, who understand that God gave Paul a different message, but they will never teach God's Word rightly divided, lest they lose their paycheck from their denomination.

**12:44** Even Jesus, in the book of John that shows Jesus as God, pointed people to His Father, not to Himself. Today, we have Jesus, because He is the Word (1:1,14), and His Word points people to the Father. Therefore, we should never exalt ourselves, our church, our religion, or others. Rather, we should exalt God's Word so that the Word exalts the Father.

**12:46** Going along with the idea of pointing people to God's Word today, Jesus says, "I am come a light into the world." Psalm 119:105 says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Jesus pointed people to the Father, and we do that today through God's Word.

**12:47-48** Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom for salvation (Matthew 4:17). This was Israel's opportunity to be saved. Jesus will judge them later at His second coming, but not now. Note that Jesus says that it is His word that judges man. In other words, God does not condemn man to hell. Man deserves hell due to his sin. God provides a way for him to have eternal life. If he believes God's word to him, he receives eternal life. Otherwise, the lack of his believing the gospel will send him to hell.

**12:49-50** The words that the Father gave to Jesus were the gospel of the kingdom. That is why they are "life everlasting." Thus, Jesus concludes by telling the unbelieving Jews that they do not have to believe in Him as their Messiah. They just have to believe the words He speaks to them, which are for them to believe that God will save them through the law covenant He made with them ("repent"), abandon the traditions of the fathers, and be water baptized to be cleansed from their idolatry (Ezekiel 36:25). Similarly today, we do not have to turn from our sins or make Jesus the Lord of our lives in order to be saved. All we have to do is have faith in the gospel God has given us, which is to believe in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection as atonement for our sins (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

**13** Jesus has supper with and washes the feet of His disciples, as a picture of what He will do with them just before they enter God's kingdom. However, Judas Iscariot will not enter the kingdom, because he will betray Jesus, yet Jesus will be glorified in dying. The little flock still needs a lot of spiritual growth, as Peter will deny His Lord.

**13:1-3** Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet is based upon His knowledge of five things: 1) His hour has come to go back to the Father, 2) Judas Iscariot will soon betray Jesus, 3) The Father hath given all things into His hands, 4) He came from God, and 5) He went to God. Let us take a look at some of the things that Jesus



knew.

2) Luke 22:3-4 tells of how Satan entered Judas to get him to make an agreement with the religious leaders to betray Jesus. 13:2 says that the devil put it into Judas' heart to betray Jesus. Then, in 13:27, Satan will again enter Judas to betray Jesus. Thus, Judas is allowing Satan to control him. As such, he is a picture of the Antichrist. By contrast, Jesus, the true Christ, allows the Father to control Him. The difference, then, between the Antichrist and the Christ is the one working through them. 3) The "all things," that the Father has given into Jesus' hands, means that He is completely responsible for redeeming Israel, which means He has to go to the cross, He has to rise from the dead, and He even has to wash the little flock's feet. This shows that Jesus could have stopped the crucifixion if He wanted to. In 10:18, Jesus said that He would lay down His life for the little flock. Thus, Jesus has power over His physical body, and He chooses to give it over to the Jewish religious leaders to be destroyed.

4) The fact, that Jesus knows "He was come from God," shows that Jesus, the man, had to learn that He was the Messiah. Growing up, Mary and Joseph undoubtedly told Him so, but His trust was completely in His Father. Therefore, He had to read the Old Testament, discover from it that He was the Messiah, and believe it (Isaiah 50:4-5). That is how Jesus, the man, learned that "He was come from God." 5) I am not sure what the phrase "went to God" means. "Went" is past tense, but Jesus will not go back to the Father until after His crucifixion. Perhaps He "went to God" in prayer.

Knowing these five things is significant to His washing the disciples' feet. Otherwise, John would not have mentioned them as introductory material to the feet washing. It is fascinating that only John shows Jesus washing the disciples' feet, which means that He does this as God, which is weird, because washing feet is a lowly, servant role, as seen in Peter's objection to the feet washing (13:8). It shows that God must do everything to redeem believing Israel. All Israel can do, as part of their redemption, is believe the gospel.

Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet is a picture of the final cleansing of the little flock before they enter into God's kingdom. They were already washed in water through the water baptism they received when they believed the gospel of the kingdom. However, their feet need to be cleansed because, when Jesus pours His vengeance upon the wicked, the righteous will wash their "feet in the blood of the wicked" (Psalm 58:10). This makes sense in light of the fact that "the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:19) will yield a river of blood that is 5 feet high and 200 miles long (Revelation 14:20). Since wicked blood cannot enter God's kingdom, Jesus will have to cleanse them of this unrighteous blood Himself.

Note the foreshadowing of this in Joshua 3:14-17, where the feet of the priests "were dipped in the brim of the water" of Jordan as they crossed over into the Promised Land. Crossing the Jordan is symbolic of crossing into God's eternal kingdom at Jesus' second coming. Therefore, the significance of Jesus' washing His disciples feet is that the nation of Israel, as a kingdom of priests, must be

cleansed from the apostate nation's unbelief before entering into God's eternal kingdom on earth.

**13:4** Jesus' rising from supper shows the time when Jesus will wash the feet of the little flock at His second coming. It is after the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9). Jesus will have to lay aside His garments, like He does here (13:4), because they will be stained with blood after having slain the wicked at His second coming (Revelation 19:13,15,21).

**13:5** Normally, a person would provide water for their guests to wash their own feet, as seen in Genesis 19:2. Alternatively, a lowly servant washed the guests' feet, as seen in I Samuel 25:41. However, because "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), Jesus has to wash the little flock's feet Himself, because only Jesus can wash away wicked blood.

**13:6-8** As we have already seen, Jesus has to wash the feet of the little flock in order for them to enter God's kingdom. Peter does not realize this yet, as Jesus says. Jesus does this, here, as a foretaste of what He will do after the marriage supper of the Lamb. If Jesus does not wash wicked blood off of Peter's feet, Peter cannot enter God's kingdom. That is why Jesus says He must wash his feet, or else he has no part with Jesus. In other words, he has no part in the kingdom.

Similarly, we saw, in 6:53, that the little flock must eat of the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood in order to have eternal life. They do this at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and their bodies are cleansed. Then, Jesus washes their feet to make them completely clean.

**13:9-11** Peter's body was already clean because he participated in Jesus' death by believing the gospel of the kingdom. Only Peter's feet were unclean from God's vengeance poured out upon apostate Israel at Jesus' second coming. Thus, Jesus will only wash the little flock's feet after the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The phrase "but not all" refers to Judas Iscariot. Although Judas was one of the apostles, he was not clean because he was offended in Christ and joined forces with apostate Israel. This is a sign of how a believer must endure unto the end of the tribulation period, by not taking the mark or worshipping the image of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11), in order to be saved (Matthew 24:13).

**13:12** After the tribulation period is over, those, trusting in the gospel of the kingdom, make it to the marriage supper of the Lamb. At that supper, they partake of Jesus' flesh and blood so that it can atone for their sins. Jesus then washes their feet so that they will be cleansed from the blood of the wicked. Now, they are ready to enter God's eternal kingdom. That is what Jesus has done for them in type here, so that Israel, in the tribulation period, will understand that they are sinners and need to believe the gospel, in order to be saved.

**13:13-17** The disciples do not understand the purpose of Jesus washing their feet. 14:26 says that the Holy Ghost will teach them all things and bring all things

to their remembrance. Therefore, when they were filled with the Holy Ghost in Acts 2, they would have remembered this. Yet, the book of Acts never mentions the disciples physically washing each other's feet, as Jesus commands them to do, here (13:14). Therefore, they either did it, and the scripture does not mention it, or Jesus was referring to the spiritual washing of feet.

In Matthew 10:14, Jesus told His disciples to "shake off the dust of your feet" when they preach the gospel of the kingdom, and the people reject that gospel. We see Paul and Barnabas doing this in Acts 13:51. It is possible that what Jesus means for them to do is, after they have been rejected in one city of Israel, they should "wash the feet" of other members of the little flock by telling them not to go into that city with the gospel. Thus, the little flock keeps dust off of their feet by warning other members of the little flock not to go to cities that have rejected the gospel of the kingdom. By keeping the dust off of their feet, these gospel publishers have beautiful feet (Isaiah 52:7). This is how they do unto each other as Jesus has done unto them. This is also how they are happy because they are saved a lot of grief from preaching the gospel to people, who refuse to believe.

As a side note, I Timothy 5:10 says that women should have "washed the saints' feet," as part of their service as members of the body of Christ, which, in the context, seems to mean that she should be hospitable in making the saints welcome in her house, which would support the conclusion of how members of the little flock are to wash each other's feet.

**13:18** The apostles now have clean feet, but Judas Iscariot will dirty up his feet by raising his heel against Jesus. This is a fulfillment of Psalm 41:9. However, Jesus' enemy will not triumph over Him (Psalm 41:11), and Jesus will have eternal life in the kingdom (Psalm 41:12). Therefore, Satan's attack through Judas Iscariot will not succeed.

In reference to Judas' attack against Him, Jesus says, "I know whom I have chosen" (13:18). What this tells us is that, as God, Jesus even handpicked the person, who would betray Him. That is not to say that Jesus forced Judas to betray Him, but, as God, Jesus knew the nature of man. Therefore, He knew that, given the circumstances, Judas would choose to betray Him.

**13:19** The fact, that Jesus tells His disciples beforehand that one of them will betray Him, will be further proof that Jesus is the Messiah, and that Jesus' crucifixion was part of God's plan all along.

**13:20** Jesus says, here, that those, who receive the apostles, receive the Father, just like those, who receive Jesus, receive the Father. Therefore, God's plan to reconcile Israel back to Himself will continue through the little flock, even though Jesus will soon be crucified and ascend back to the Father. Therefore, they should not be discouraged when Jesus is killed.

**13:21** Jesus is not being selfish by being troubled over Judas' betrayal. Rather, He is troubled because He loves all humans, and such woe will come upon Judas

for his betrayal that it would have been better if he had not been born (Matthew 26:24). It is Judas' eternal suffering that troubles Jesus.

**13:23** The one, whom Jesus loved, is John, the writer of this gospel. The way we know this is that the disciple, who leaned on Jesus' breast, is identified as the writer of this book in 21:20,24.

**13:24-26** The fact, that the one whom Jesus loved was leaning on Jesus' bosom when he asked Jesus who would betray Him, leads people to believe that Jesus only answered John. However, Mark 14:20 says that Jesus answered "them" by saying "it is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish," and Matthew 26:25 has Judas asking Jesus if he is the one who will betray Him and Jesus says he is. Therefore, while John quietly asked Jesus who would betray Him, Jesus told all of them who would do it, telling Judas to his face.

**13:27-29** This is the second time that Satan has entered Judas Iscariot. The first time was in Luke 22:3-4, when he agreed to betray Jesus. Now, he will actually betray Jesus. Note how Jesus, as God, is in complete control of every event leading to His crucifixion. He knows that Satan has entered Judas, and He orders Judas to go betray Him. This shows how confident Jesus was, as God, in doing His Father's will, such that He gives warning to Judas that he had better go now and betray Him! Man would never do such a thing, which is why, even though Jesus has just told them all that Judas will betray Him, the disciples have no idea that Judas is going right then to betray Jesus. After all, what man would order his own betrayal? That is precisely the point of John, here: Jesus is God, and He has just intentionally begun the process of His Own betrayal! Also, Jesus refers to His death as "the cup which my Father hath given Me" (18:11). Therefore, Jesus' dipping the bread in a cup and giving it to Judas is symbolic of how Judas has a part in causing Jesus' death to take place.

**13:30** "Night" is a key word in John, signifying the darkness of the unbelievers, in contrast to those walking in the light by trusting in God's Word, e.g., 3:2, 9:4, and 11:10. The fact that "it was night," then, shows that this is Satan's "hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke 22:53). This verse also shows that Judas Iscariot is completely wicked, since he "immediately" goes out to betray Jesus. He does not hesitate over doing the worst thing a person could ever do.

**13:31-16:33** This is the longest recorded message that Jesus gives His disciples. He begins it immediately after Judas leaves. Essentially, Jesus kicks Judas Iscariot out by commanding him to go and betray Jesus so that, while he is gone, Jesus can share with them the information they need to make it through the tribulation period as the little flock. Jesus does not share these things with Judas because he is of the devil and, thus, not worthy to learn the mysteries of the kingdom (Matthew 13:11-12).

**13:31-32** Note the contrast between Luke and John. In Luke, Jesus, as the perfect man, views His crucifixion as "the power of darkness" (Luke 22:53). In John, Jesus, as God, views His crucifixion as the time when He and the Father will

be glorified (13:31), so much so that glory is mentioned five times in these two verses! Although Satan will seem to gain the victory by crucifying the Son of God, it is actually God, Who gains the victory. Satan will bruise Jesus' heel, but Jesus will crush Satan's head (Genesis 3:15). In other words, by dying, Jesus will bind the strong man, spoil his house (Matthew 12:29), triumph over Satan's forces (Colossians 2:14-15), and reconcile both the earth and the heavens unto Himself (Ephesians 1:10).

**13:33** Jesus told the Jews in Matthew 18:3 that they must become as little children in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus meant that they must abandon the religion of the Pharisees by having faith in God, as a little child does, in order to make it into God's kingdom (Mark 10:15). Therefore, by calling the disciples "little children," He is saying that they have faith in the gospel of the kingdom. However, He is also advising them not to stop there, but to continue to trust God's Word so that they grow in grace (II Peter 3:18) from being little children to being young men to being fathers in the doctrine (I John 2:12-13).

**13:34-35** The way the little flock gets converts in the tribulation period is by loving each other. The lost sheep will not want to join the little flock if the little flock "bite and devour one another" (Galatians 5:15), even if they perform miracles to verify the gospel that they preach is true.

Jesus calls this "a new commandment." They already had the commandments to love the Lord their God and to love their neighbours as themselves (Matthew 22:36-40). Since the new commandment is for them to love one another as Jesus has loved them, Jesus' love must be higher than the love they already were supposed to have for their neighbours. Jesus will later tell them that "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (15:13). Jesus is calling the little flock to be willing to die for each other. Apparently, this was either impossible for man to do before Jesus' death on the cross, or it was not necessary until the tribulation period, which will be the worst time of persecution of believers this world will ever see (Matthew 24:21).

**13:36-38** Peter does not understand that Jesus will die for the sins of Israel and then rise from the dead, even though Jesus has told him this on several occasions. Peter just thinks that Jesus is going into a dangerous situation with the Jewish religious leaders and is trying to protect Peter from being killed. Peter is willing to be killed protecting Jesus, and we see this in 18:10, when he cuts off the high priest's servant's ear. What Peter does not realize is that Jesus will freely lay down His life for the sins of Israel (10:18). Being the macho fisherman that he is, Peter is willing to fight to the death to protect Jesus, but his flesh is not satisfied by a Saviour Who willingly is killed and does not want to put up a fight. That is why, in this situation, Peter will deny his Lord three times before the cock crows. Peter will die for a righteous man (Romans 5:7), but he will not die for God if God does not put a fight.

**14** Jesus emphasizes to His disciples that He must die and ascend back to His Father so that they may have a place in God's kingdom (v. 3), have eternal life (v.

19), and He may send them the Holy Ghost (vs. 16-17) to give them comfort (v. 26) and peace (v. 27) during the tribulation period.

**14:1** The little flock has faith in God and the gospel of the kingdom. However, they do not have faith in their Messiah. Granted, they do believe He is their Messiah, but they also believe religion when it says that the Messiah will overthrow the Romans and set up God's kingdom NOW, rather than dying and setting it up at Jesus' second coming. Therefore, when Jesus is arrested to be crucified, they will all be offended because of Jesus (Matthew 26:31) and flee from Him (Matthew 26:56). Jesus is telling them to believe that His death is actually for the best, because He needs to go and prepare a place for them in His Father's house, which is impossible to do without His death, burial, and resurrection.

**14:2-3** Peter had just asked Jesus where He was going (13:36). Therefore, Jesus now tells His disciples where He is going and why. He is going to His Father's house to prepare a place for them. That place is a place of authority, as they will "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). His Father's house is in the New Jerusalem. Although Jesus goes to heaven and prepares a place for them in the New Jerusalem, the disciples do NOT have a place in the heavens. God will set up His kingdom on EARTH (Matthew 5:5), and they will be in the New Jerusalem on EARTH, as New Jerusalem will come down from God out of heaven. It is "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2). The only reason it is prepared is because Jesus went away to prepare it, meaning that He brought the blood of His sacrifice into the heavenly tabernacle so that the sins of Israel would be atoned for (Hebrews 9:24-28), enabling them to dwell in His Father's house with a holy God (I Peter 1:16).

He must die in order for this to happen (12:24), which is why He could not prepare a place for them before He left heaven for His virgin birth. Therefore, after His death, Jesus is going away to prepare a place for them in New Jerusalem in heaven with His shed blood. He is not going to immediately overthrow the Romans and set up His kingdom right then, as the disciples thought He would (Acts 1:6). New Jerusalem will come down to earth. Jesus will also "come again" (14:3) and then receive them into New Jerusalem. Note that Jesus specifically says: "I will come again." Therefore, the disciples should have known that the Messiah would have two comings, but they do not realize this because they are blinded by religion.

**14:4-6** The disciples know that Jesus is going to His Father, and they know that the way to the Father is Jesus Christ. If they did not know these things, Jesus would be lying in 14:4. Jesus has told them that He will die so that they can be with the Father and with Him forever. The disciples know this, because Jesus has told them, but they refuse to believe it, because they will not give up their religious belief that Jesus Christ will forcefully create the way into the kingdom by an immediate overthrow of the Romans. They are trying to believe what Jesus has said without abandoning their religious belief. Since Jesus' teaching does not fit into their religion, they hang onto their religious belief, and Thomas says that they do not know where Jesus is going or the way to get there.

Most churches will tell you, when you are saved, that you need to read the book of John first. However, because John is written to a previous dispensation, new Christians should really read Romans first. The reason they use John is because they want you to follow the red letters of Jesus in Matthew through John, rather than Jesus' words for us today in Paul's epistles (Galatians 1:11-18; I Corinthians 9:17). And, they pick John over Matthew through Luke, because John shows Jesus as God. As God, Jesus has a view of reconciling the whole world back to Himself through Israel (see Exodus 19:5-6 and John 3:16), more so than just reconciling Israel back to Himself first, which is seen more in Matthew through Luke. Therefore, 14:6 is an oft-quoted scripture by fundamental Christianity to show that Jesus is the way to eternal life, but they fail to understand that what Jesus taught His disciples to believe, in order to receive eternal life ("Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17)), is different from what Jesus tells us today through Paul to believe in order to receive eternal life (Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection as atonement for sins. (I Corinthians 15:3-4)).

At the same time, these Christians will vehemently oppose the truth that no one in the Old Testament trusted in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection as atonement for their sins, because the Old-Testament saints did not know this is how God would bring saved Israel into the kingdom. Yet, we see that even the 12 disciples, who spent a few years in the flesh with Jesus, did not understand that Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection was the way to the Father. The reason is because Hebrews 9:8 says, "the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." Therefore, no Old-Testament saint, at least up to Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the tabernacle, knew that the Christ was the way to approach boldly the throne of grace in heaven (Hebrews 4:16), which means that, if you believe that any Old-Testament saint before that time trusted in the Christ's death as atonement for his sins, you are calling the Holy Ghost a liar.

This also shows that Thomas is not dumb, doubting Thomas. Rather, he is a saint of God, who has heard from Jesus progressive revelation about how to get into God's house, and he refuses to believe it because religion has taught him otherwise. Therefore, the 11 disciples do not know where Jesus is going NOW, and they also do not know the way to that place. Jesus has to specifically tell them that He is the way to the Father, and that He must go to the Father to create that way.

Jesus is the way in the sense that the only way anyone can have eternal life with God is if they have faith in what God has told them. If they have this faith, Jesus' death substitutes for their death and they have eternal life, even if the information from God they are to have faith in is something other than trusting in Jesus' death as atonement for their sins. Jesus is the way and the life for all believers, regardless of the dispensation they live in. 17:17 says that God's Word is truth, and 1:1-2 says that Jesus is the Word. Therefore, He is the truth also.

Jesus is the way to the Father. The only way to go to the Father is to believe the

truth that God has told them. Then, they will have everlasting life. This makes Him "the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6). Note also that Jesus is "THE" way. He is not "a" way. Only believing God's Word to you will give you eternal life. All of man's religions, including Christianity's works-based salvation (Galatians 1:6-8), lead people straight to the lake of fire.

**14:7** The disciples do not believe what Jesus is telling them (14:1), and they do not know Him (14:7). However, from henceforth, they will know the Father. Therefore, they will now know Jesus. They will then know that the Messiah must die for their sins. This is how they will now know the Father. This is also how they will now see the Father, because they will see the Father through the works that Jesus does, because the Father "doeth the works" Himself (14:10). Thus, when Jesus does the "work" of dying on the cross for their sins, they will see the Father. However, it takes Jesus showing them these works after His resurrection and before His ascension before they finally understand. We know this because 20:9 says that they did not believe that Jesus would rise from the dead, until after He had already done so.

**14:8-10** Jesus is not talking about physically seeing Himself or the Father, as all the disciples have certainly seen Jesus' physical body and the Father does not have a physical body (4:24). Rather, Jesus is talking about spiritually seeing Him and the Father. Spiritually seeing Him involves having the spiritual eyes to see, which means believing by faith that the Messiah must die for their sins before coming back and establishing God's kingdom on earth. Yet, Jesus has been with them for three years now, and they still do not believe that He will die for their sins. That is why Jesus says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me?" (14:9). The disciples' unbelief also means they do not believe Jesus is God, because their unbelief in His death means that they do not believe that Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him (14:10). If they believed He is God, they would have no problem with His death, because they would know that He could raise Himself up from the dead (10:17-18).

It is also fascinating to observe the different roles of the Godhead, here. Jesus is fully God, and yet He only speaks what His Father wants Him to speak, and His Father does the works through Him. As God, Jesus could certainly speak and do the works Himself, but the Father does them through Him, because the Father is over the Son.

**14:11-12** Jesus' casting out of devils and healing the sick were the works that He had done to demonstrate that the gospel of the kingdom is true (Matthew 4:23-24; Mark 16:20). These works, in themselves, should also convince the disciples that what Jesus is saying about dying for their sins is true (5:36). The "greater works" that the disciples will do have to do with a greater presence of God among His people, as a result of the cross work of Christ. They will cast out devils and heal the sick like Jesus did ("the works that I do shall he do also"). However, because Jesus goes to His Father, He will send the Holy Ghost, i.e., the Comforter (14:16). When the lost sheep of Israel believe the gospel after Jesus' ascension, they will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38), which is something that did not



happen in Jesus' earthly ministry. This receiving of the Holy Ghost upon all that believe are the "greater works than these" (14:12), because this results in the gospel of the kingdom being preached among all nations (Matthew 24:14) through the gift of tongues (Acts 2:4-5,8), and it ultimately results in the Spirit causing Israel to walk in God's law perfectly under the new covenant (Ezekiel 36:27).

**14:13-14** Another part of the greater work they will do is made possible by Jesus' unconditional prayer promise. Most all Christians try to apply the book of John to themselves today, yet this unconditional prayer promise does not work today. People try to qualify it by saying, "Well, you have to have faith," or "You have to pray according to God's will." However, there are NO qualifiers in the verse. Jesus, says "WHATSOEVER ye shall ask...I WILL do it."

What this means is that the little flock will preach the gospel of the kingdom from city to city in Israel (Matthew 10:6-8). They will perform the signs of the kingdom (casting out devils and healing the sick) so that the lost sheep of Israel might believe that gospel (Mark 16:16-20). The little flock will have the Holy Ghost with them, giving them discernment about the spiritual condition of people, such that they will have the power to either remit or retain sins (20:23). Thus, they will also have the discernment to know what signs they need to do in order for someone to believe the gospel. Thus, Jesus promises that whatever they ask for Jesus to do, Jesus will do it, so that all the lost sheep of Israel might believe (Romans 11:26).

An example of this is seen in Acts 5:1-11, where Ananias and Sapphira are struck dead. Peter has the spiritual discernment from the Holy Ghost to know that they have lied and are worthy of death. The Son granted his request, and the Father was glorified in the Son, in that the believing remnant was kept pure of sin. Today, no one has such spiritual discernment, because we are living in a different dispensation. Therefore, this prayer promise of 14:13-14 is not applicable to us today.

**14:15** For this to work, though, the little flock needs to keep Jesus' commandments. This does not mean that they live a sin-free life. Rather, it means that they need to continue to preach the gospel of the kingdom from city to city within Israel (Matthew 10:23) even though the Antichrist and apostate Israel are persecuting them the whole time.

**14:16** Just ten verses down (v. 26), we are told that the Holy Ghost is this "Comforter." Why would they need the Comforter? Because the little flock will soon go through the tribulation period and will need comfort in order to "endure unto the end" (Matthew 24:13), because the Antichrist and apostate Israel will be persecuting them in an attempt to get them to defect.

**14:17** The Holy Spirit is also called "the Spirit of truth" because He will teach the little flock "all things, and bring all things to [their] remembrance" (14:26). In this way, He sets them apart from the world by teaching them the truth of God's Word (17:17). Because the world does not believe the gospel, they do not believe the truth, which is why they cannot receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells with

the disciples now because Jesus has the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16), and the disciples abide in Jesus (14:20 and 15:4). Once Jesus ascends to the Father, He will send the Holy Spirit to dwell with them, which He does in Acts 2.

Thus, the little flock is comforted by learning and standing upon the truth of God's Word. They are NOT comforted by the Holy Ghost by going through uncontrolled gyrations and speaking a bunch of jibberish, as the Pentecostals would have you believe.

Note also that, if a person knows Jesus, he also knows the Father (14:7) and the Holy Ghost (14:17), which shows that Jesus, as the God-man, bridges the gap between God and man, so that man can know all members of the Godhead intimately.

**14:18-20** Jesus says He will not leave them comfortless, because He will come to them. Since He says in 14:16 that He will give them another Comforter, the way He comes to them is by sending them the Holy Ghost. If He were talking about His second coming here, He could not say that they are comfortless because they will have the Comforter with them for ever (14:16). Thus, Jesus is with them through the Holy Ghost. That is also how they see Jesus, even though He is not physically there. The world will not see Jesus when He is gone because they cannot see the Comforter (14:17).

The good news about Jesus going back to His Father is that the little flock has eternal life only by Him approaching the Father with His blood to atone for their sins. There is no eternal life for anyone apart from Jesus' death. Jesus will die, rise from the dead, and ascend to the Father. Because He is able to do this, He is also able to raise believers from the dead into eternal life.

Once the little flock receives the Holy Ghost, they will understand the Trinity in action. Jesus is in the Father, and the little flock is in Jesus and vice-versa, and they are kept in the Son by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, the little flock has eternal life with the Father through Jesus' death, and Jesus is with them eternally as well through the Holy Ghost dwelling inside them.

**14:21** In order to make it into God's kingdom, the Jews had to repent, which means they had to change their mind. Specifically, they had to change their mind about following the Jews' tradition and follow God's law instead. They will follow God's law during the tribulation period only if they love God. That is not to say that they will obey the law perfectly, but they will stay true to Christ throughout the tribulation period. Specifically, this means that they will not deny Him and side with the Antichrist, because, if they deny Christ, He will deny them (Matthew 10:32-33). If they deny Christ, they must not have God's love, and so they will not make it into God's kingdom because they did not endure unto the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 10:22). Contrast this with the dispensation of grace, where "God commendeth His love toward us" (Romans 5:8), and we are "NOW justified by His blood" (Romans 5:9). We have God's love without having to do His commandments, which was not the case during Israel's kingdom program.

**14:22** We are told that this is not Judas Iscariot, as Judas Iscariot was not there (13:29-30), which is why Jesus is telling His disciples these things now. Luke 6:16 tells us that the other Judas is the brother of James. Matthew 10:3 tells us that he was also called Lebbeaus and Thaddaeus.

**14:22-23** Jesus manifests Himself to the little flock through the Holy Ghost's dwelling in them. Since the world cannot receive or see the Spirit (14:17), that is how Jesus manifests Himself to the little flock and not to the world. However, an individual Jew will not have the Holy Spirit within him if he does not keep Jesus' words. The Holy Spirit will not leave the believing remnant as a whole, but a Jew could choose to break ranks with the little flock by worshipping the image of the beast or taking the beast's mark. Then, the Holy Spirit would leave that person. That is why we are told, in certain places in Acts, that people are speaking, being full of the Holy Ghost, e.g., Acts 4:8 and 7:55. Thus, the little flock, during the tribulation period, needs to continue to love God so that they obey His commandments so that the Holy Ghost continues to dwell with them. Thus, Jesus says that, given these conditions, the Trinity will "make [their] abode with him" (14:23).

**14:24** Halfway through the tribulation period, Satan will institute capital punishment for all those who refuse to bow down to the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15). As seen in type with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in Daniel 3, people will have to make the choice to either bow down and receive eternal punishment in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11) or confess that Jesus is the Christ and be physically killed for not bowing down to the image. If they love Jesus, they will keep the Father's saying and confess that Jesus is the Christ (Matthew 10:32-33). This must be what Jesus is referring to. What else could it mean? After all, no one obeys the law perfectly, and so Jesus could not be saying that He would throw them into hell if they sin (Romans 3:9-10). And, the only saying of God's that is identified as receiving eternal punishment in the lake of fire is either taking the mark or worshipping the image of the beast. But, Jesus does not give the details here, because the details are not given until revealed after the cross in the book of Revelation, which is still in plenty of time before the image of the beast is set up in the temple.

The meaning of this verse is very important to understand because Christian churches will use this verse to preach conditional salvation so that they can instill fear in you if you do not meet their standards so that they can get you to give money and time to them for fear of losing your salvation. However, when you understand this verse in the context of Israel's program, you can stand fast in your liberty in Christ (Galatians 5:1) by not subjecting yourself to impossible standards placed upon you by a greedy church.

**14:26** Jesus taught the disciples many things, yet it seems like the only thing they believed was the gospel of the kingdom. Even after His resurrection, they still did not believe He would rise from the dead (20:9). In the first 7 chapters of Acts, though, the disciples can do no wrong. How is it that they went from being

spiritual dolts to being spiritually brilliant (Acts 4:13)? Because Jesus instructed them after His resurrection, and He gave them the Comforter to bring to their remembrance the things that Jesus had taught them. This will be especially important during the tribulation period when members of the little flock are brought before councils to be judged. That is when the Spirit will speak through them so that the lost may hear the gospel and be saved (Mark 13:9-11).

**14:27** Comfort is the first thing we are told the Holy Ghost gives the little flock (14:26). The second thing is peace (14:27). This is important because the Antichrist and apostate Israel will be at war with the little flock during the tribulation period, persecuting them and trying to kill them. "In the world ye shall have tribulation", but with Jesus with them, they have peace (16:33). If they love God, they will keep His commandments, which means the Holy Ghost will be with them, Who will comfort them and give them peace as they go through the greatest period of tribulation this world will ever see. The physical illustration of this was given to them in Mark 4:37-39, where Jesus brought peace to the little flock, even though the world around them was full of wind and waves. Therefore, in the tribulation period they should not let their heart be troubled or afraid (14:27), because they have God's peace with God being with them.

God's peace is "not as the world giveth" (14:27), which means it is a peace of the soul, rather than of the flesh. They must recognize this because the world "shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (I Thessalonians 5:3), meaning that the Antichrist and apostate Israel will boast in there being peace on earth. However, there is no peace, because they do not have peace with God. By contrast, the little flock will be running for their lives, but they will have peace, because God gives it to them.

**14:28-29** Because the disciples are still clinging to the Jewish religion, they are not following God's commandments. Therefore, they do not love Jesus yet. The disciples also do not believe that Jesus will die and ascend back to God the Father. They are still expecting Jesus, as Messiah, to overthrow the Romans and establish God's kingdom right then with Israel ruling over the Gentiles. They will believe, though, after Jesus' resurrection. Therefore, they will love Jesus by keeping His commandments, and they will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. However, out of all of Israel, only 120 are initially in the little flock (Acts 1:15), which shows how unpopular the truth is, even when it is coupled with all of the miracles that Jesus did.

**14:30-31** Satan had entered Judas Iscariot (13:27), and Judas Iscariot went to betray Jesus. Therefore, when Judas Iscariot comes with the religious leaders to arrest Jesus (18:3), that is when "the prince of this world cometh." Since Judas Iscariot was already on his way, there is not much time for Jesus to instruct His disciples. Note how Jesus, as God, is actually looking forward to His crucifixion, while Jesus, as man, asks the Father to remove the crucifixion from Him, "if it be possible" (Matthew 26:39).

As God, Jesus told Judas Iscariot to hurry up and betray Him (13:27). Now, He

tells the rest of the disciples to "arise, let us go hence" (14:31). In other words, Judas would be going to the garden of Gethsemane because he knew Jesus would go there to pray. So, Jesus is not avoiding His arrest, but He is intentionally going to it! In other words, He cannot stay and talk with the disciples much longer, because He needs to go to Gethsemane to make sure He does not miss His crucifixion appointment! Jesus says, "the Father gave Me commandment" to be killed, so, "arise, let us go hence."

**15** Jesus emphasizes to the little flock that they must abide in Him in order to make it into God's kingdom. The way they abide in Him is by obeying His commandments. This results in them not taking the mark of the beast or worshipping his image. The primary way for them to obey His commandments is by preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, using God's unconditional prayer promise to them so that souls may be saved. The little flock will be persecuted because the world hates them, but the Holy Spirit will comfort them and testify of Jesus to the world.

**15:1** In Isaiah 5:7, God says that Israel is His vineyard. In Isaiah 5:1-4, God says that He planted it and took care of it, but that "it brought forth wild grapes," i.e., it brought forth a false religious system. As a result, God allowed His vineyard to get in bad shape (Isaiah 5:5-6), which has happened during "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), which started with the Babylonian captivity. By the time Jesus came, Israel had been reduced to a fig tree within the vineyard, with the fig tree representing God's religious system that He established with the law, but no fruit was on it because Israel was still apostate (Luke 13:6-7). They would have one year, with the ministry of the Holy Ghost, to believe the gospel of the kingdom and follow God's law covenant or else be cut down (Luke 13:8-9). That is why the dispensation of grace started in Acts 9 with the calling of Paul.

In the meantime, with Israel being apostate, the little flock cannot abide in the Jewish religious system and be part of God's kingdom. They still must abide in God's vineyard, but we find out in 15:1 that the true vine is not what is mentioned in Isaiah 5 or Luke 13. The true vine is the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, when the fig tree is cut down at the end of Acts 7, with Jesus standing in judgment of apostate Israel (Acts 7:55), God's promise to reconcile the earth back to Himself through the nation of Israel is not gone (Exodus 19:5-6), even though Israel is in unbelief. Rather, it is put on hold with the Lord Jesus Christ being the true vine in Whom saved Israel will dwell when God picks Israel's program back up after the rapture. In the meantime, though, Israel is to abide in the Lord Jesus Christ's words to them, rather than in the Jewish religious system.

**15:2** Abiding in Jesus means abiding in His Words to them. If they love God, they will keep His commandments (14:23), which means not taking the mark of the beast or worshipping his image in order to make it into the kingdom and preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of Israel so that they may be saved. By doing so, they bear the fruit of the lost sheep of Israel being found. Jesus will cause them to bear even more fruit, because He will "purge them as gold and silver" (Malachi 3:3) through the refiner's fire of the tribulation period (Malachi 3:2-

3).

If they are true gold and silver, meaning that they truly believe God's Word, they will "bring forth more fruit." If not, God will take away that branch, meaning He will cast it into the lake of fire to be burned forever (15:6). The way this all works is that the Antichrist will impose the death penalty midway through the tribulation if someone does not worship the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15). At the same time, if someone does worship the image, God will throw them into the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-10). These death penalties will try someone by fire. If they believe God's Word, they will abide in Jesus by not taking the mark and will bear fruit by abiding in His Word. If they believe the Antichrist over God, God will cast them into the lake of fire (15:6) at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-14). That is why there are only two types of branches in the vine—fruit bearing and non-fruit bearing.

**15:3** Note how the little flock is clean. It is by the word Jesus spoke to them. In other words, they are clean by believing the gospel of the kingdom, i.e., repent and be baptized. **Even in Israel's dispensation**, the gift of eternal life comes by believing God's Word. It does not come by performing works, because "there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psalm 14:3).

**15:4** The little flock cannot bring souls into God's kingdom unless they obey God's commandments to them. They need to believe that God will bring them into His kingdom by imputing His righteousness to them by faith, and they need to preach the gospel of the kingdom. If they do this, they are abiding in Jesus, and fruit will be the result.

**15:5-6** Christians like to quote 15:5 and apply it to today, but they do not do the same with 15:6. Both verses are meant for the little flock going through the tribulation period. If they do not continue to abide in God's words to them, they will end up following the Antichrist, worshipping the image of the beast, and be thrown into the lake of fire as a result.

Because Christianity, in their pride, likes to make keeping your salvation based upon your works, we must emphasize that abiding in Christ has nothing to do with works of the flesh. Galatians 2:16 says that, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." That is because "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Even AFTER you believe the gospel, you are still dwelling in a "VILE body" (Philippians 3:21). Even AFTER you believe the gospel, "IN MY FLESH dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Romans 7:18). Even AFTER you believe the gospel, you are incapable of doing any good for God. That is why we are not told to do good works for God, we are told to "WALK" in the works that God has ordained for us, being "HIS workmanship" (Ephesians 2:10). Even Israel declared, "Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter; and we are all the work of Thy hand" (Isaiah 64:8). Therefore, any idea that anyone in any dispensation keeps their salvation by something they do is utterly false!

Therefore, if abiding in Jesus meant doing works on your own, even AFTER you believe the gospel, then you will definitely go to hell. There is no getting around that. Therefore, when Jesus says that the little flock must abide in Him in order to avoid the fire of hell (15:6), He must be referring to having faith in Him until the end of the tribulation period (Matthew 24:13). For Israel in the tribulation period, this means that they will not bow down to the image of the beast or take the mark of the beast, because God tells us, in Revelation 14:9-11, that this is what abiding in Jesus means. It does not refer to this current dispensation, and it does not refer to any works of the law or of the flesh. It refers to faith, and not bowing down to the image of the beast is a work of faith that justifies them (James 2:21-25).

**15:7-8** With the little flock's salvation being settled by 15:6, Jesus now moves on to instructions to help them lead the lost sheep of Israel to be saved, as well. Again, we see the unconditional prayer promise to the little flock. If the little flock abides in Jesus' words, then they will be going from city to city in Israel, preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 10:6,23). With the Holy Spirit inside them, they will have the wisdom to know what sign a particular Jew needs to see in order to believe the gospel, and Jesus promises to do whatever they ask so that that Jew might believe. As a result, the Father will be glorified, and they will bear much fruit (15:8).

**15:9-10** Since the little flock's salvation has been settled by 15:6 and they are abiding in His words in 15:7, they will be in the Father's love. Therefore, when they preach the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, the reason the lost sheep of the house of Israel will believe is because they will see the Father's love in the little flock, which will be proof, in addition to the signs of the kingdom, that the gospel they preach is true. This love will be the key factor that separates them from apostate Israel, since the Antichrist will do "signs and lying wonders" (II Thessalonians 2:9) and his minions will be casting out devils and doing wonderful works in the Lord's name, as well (Matthew 7:21-23). It is by love, then, that all men shall know that they are Jesus' disciples (13:35).

**15:11** In order for the little flock to have God's full joy with them, they need to obey His commandments to preach the gospel to Israel. If they do this, they will be "in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16). They will be brought before councils and be scourged in synagogues (Matthew 10:17). They will be hated of all men (Matthew 10:22). They will be persecuted (Matthew 10:23). Yet, going through all of this is the only way they will have full joy. This shows that joy is not dependent upon circumstances. Rather, it is dependent upon your spiritual condition. Thus, Paul could command in this dispensation to "rejoice evermore" (I Thessalonians 5:16). Circumstances are not always favorable, but you can always have a favorable disposition toward circumstances, allowing the Holy Spirit to work through you in every situation. God has not called you to be happy, but He has called you to rejoice.

**15:12-14** Because the little flock will be persecuted and arrested, they need to love each other to the point of being willing to die for another member of the little flock, as Revelation 6:9 says that people will be slain for the Word of God in the

tribulation period. Jesus set this example for them by laying down His life for them.

These verses also show that the doctrine of universal salvation is false. Jesus laid down His life only for His friends, and His friends are those who keep His commandments. This does not mean that the little flock will lose their salvation if they do not love each other. Their salvation was already established by 15:6, and so Jesus is talking about their sanctification and them doing God's will by leading others to Him. They may not do this right then, due to their flesh, but they will do this in the millennial kingdom, operating under the new covenant (Ezekiel 36:26-27). We know this because Jesus calls them friends in 15:15, even though they have not yet done His commandment of loving each other. Jesus knows their faith, and so He calls them friends, even though they may not act like it until the new covenant.

**15:15** Another proof that the little flock is saved is that they know what Jesus is doing. In Matthew 13:11, Jesus said the little flock is to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but the unbelievers are not to know these things. In Matthew 16:16-17, Peter proved he is part of the little flock, because he understood Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, which is something that only the Father could have revealed to him. Remember that Judas Iscariot is not present to hear these things (13:27,30). It is the 11 apostles only who Jesus has now told that He will go to the Father and prepare a place for them in God's kingdom, and will come again and bring them into the kingdom. Since Jesus has brought them into His confidence because they are believers, this means that they are now His friends and not just servants. This means that His death, burial, and resurrection will atone for their sins, both past and future sins. Granted, the gospel they believe is to repent and be water baptized (Matthew 3:2,6), but it is Jesus' blood that atones for their sins as a result of them having faith in the gospel of repentance and water baptism.

**15:16** By Jesus saying that He has chosen them and they have not chosen Him, He is not referring to individual predestination. Rather, He chose them to preach the gospel to Israel because they believe the gospel. Jesus has moved on past their salvation to their sanctification and the lost sheep's salvation. I suggest, then, that we move on with Him, instead of trying to twist verses to justify false doctrine that satisfies the flesh. Again, we see the unconditional prayer promise being linked to them going out to Israel with the gospel so that the lost sheep might believe the gospel and be saved.

**15:18-19** In Matthew 10:22, Jesus said, "ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake." Here, in 15:18-19, Jesus explains why. The world is of Satan, since he is "the prince of this world" (12:31, 14:30, and 16:11). The little flock is of God. Since Satan hates God, the world hates the little flock.

Also, 15:19 shows that believers, even though they are living in the world, are not of this world. In other words, because they believe God, God has changed them to make them fit for His eternal kingdom. For Israel, this is called "that holy thing" in



Luke 1:35. For us today, this is called the “new creature” in II Corinthians 5:17. Either way, believers are hated by the world, because they are a different species than unbelievers the world. Granted, believers and unbelievers have the same, vile flesh (Philippians 3:21), but they are different inwardly. That is why the world will hate the believing remnant during the tribulation period.

**15:20-21** All unbelievers know there is a God, and He is worthy of their worship (Romans 1:19-20). But, men, in their pride, want to recognize themselves as God (Romans 1:25). Therefore, when the little flock comes along and proclaims God, they hate believers, because believers are showing men that they are not God.

**15:22-24** Romans 3:20 says that “by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The Jewish religious leaders had sin, but they cloaked it, or covered it up, with the religious system they had developed. By Jesus’ coming and exposing it, bringing God’s law to the forefront, He removed their cloak (Matthew 5:20-48). Thus, now all of Israel had knowledge of their sin. They were also guilty of the sin of rejecting the kingdom of God by not believing the gospel (Matthew 3:7-10). Therefore, when Jesus says that, if He had not come and spoken the gospel unto them or done the Father’s works among them, “they had not had sin,” He means that they would not have THAT particular sin because they would not have been presented the kingdom. They still would have had the sin of their disobedience of God’s law covenant, which means they would still go to hell. Now, since Jesus has come, He has exposed their sin for all of Israel to see, and they have the additional sin of rejecting God’s kingdom.

**15:25** In hating the Lord Jesus Christ without a cause, the Jewish religious leaders fulfilled Psalm 35:19 and 69:4. Psalm 35:21 shows them accusing the Lord Jesus Christ. How can sinful man accuse a sinless God of wrongdoing?

**15:26-27** In spite of the sins of the nation of Israel, they will get a one-year grace period after Jesus’ ascension to heaven in which they can believe the gospel and be God’s kingdom of priests to reach the Gentiles with the gospel (Luke 13:6-9). This one-year time period is recorded in Acts 2-7, in which Jesus will have two witnesses, because at least two witnesses are necessary under the law to establish a matter (Deuteronomy 19:15). Those two witnesses will be the Holy Ghost and the apostles.

Note that 15:27 says that the apostles had to have been with Jesus from the beginning in order to be His witness, so they could testify that Jesus had done no sin (Hebrews 4:15). That is why, when a replacement is chosen for Judas Iscariot in Acts 1, the replacement was required to have been with Jesus from the beginning (Acts 1:22).

**16** Jesus will go back to His Father, but He will send the Holy Ghost to comfort the little flock through the tribulation period. The little flock should preach the gospel of the kingdom during that time, and God will do anything they ask of Him so that the lost sheep of the house of Israel may be saved. The disciples do not understand all of this now, and, what they do understand, they will abandon due

to their fear of the Jewish religious leaders. But, they will be spiritually restored by Jesus after His resurrection and by the Holy Ghost after Jesus' ascension.

**16:1** Jesus tells His disciples that the reason He told them the things of 13:31-15:27 is so they will "not be offended," which means not abandoning the gospel of the kingdom and losing their salvation. In Matthew 13:21, Jesus says that the stony-ground believers will be offended because they will receive tribulation for believing the gospel of the kingdom. In speaking of the tribulation period, Jesus says in Matthew 24:10 that many shall be offended, and Matthew 24:13 says that these people will not make it into God's kingdom. Therefore, Jesus' revealing to His disciples of His Father's plan to reconcile the earth back to Himself through the nation of Israel by having Jesus die on the cross, ascend to the Father, prepare a place in the kingdom for the little flock, and help the little flock through the tribulation period was done so that they would endure unto the end of the tribulation period, believing the gospel of the kingdom, so that they will receive eternal life in the kingdom. Unfortunately, they are offended in Him (Matthew 26:31) when He is arrested, which is why Jesus will have to restore Peter after His resurrection, and Peter will subsequently restore the little flock to believing in the gospel of the kingdom (21:15-17).

**16:2** In the tribulation period, apostate Israel will make a seven-year covenant with the Antichrist (Daniel 9:27), thinking that he is their Messiah. He will then set up an image and cause all to worship it or be killed (Revelation 13:15). Because apostate Israel thinks that the Antichrist is their Messiah, they will think that worshipping the image is a commandment of God and will have people killed for not obeying, thinking that they are really doing God a service. However, they are without excuse because God's law forbids killing innocent people.

Still, the deception will be so great that the little flock will look like the ones rebelling against God, such that all would be offended in the gospel and no longer be part of the little flock if not for God's shortening of the time that the Antichrist will rule to seven years (Matthew 24:22). Therefore, the disciples need to know this so that they will continue to trust in God's Word through the end of the tribulation period, even when the nation of Israel, as a whole, is telling them that they are abandoning God by not following the Antichrist.

**16:4** Jesus is only telling the disciples of the tribulation period at the end of His time on earth, because Jesus was able to protect them from religion leading them astray during His time on earth. Once He leaves, they will need the discernment to determine that the things apostate Israel say are lies so that they continue to trust in what Jesus has told them, regardless of the circumstances surrounding them that tell them otherwise.

**16:5** In 13:36, Simon Peter specifically asked Jesus, "Whither goest Thou?" However, here, Jesus says that none of them had asked Him "whither goest Thou." He also said that "whither I go, ye know" (14:4). What Jesus means in 16:5 is that none of them had asked Him why He was going to His Father. "Whither" can mean "to what place," but it can also mean "to what purpose." Simon Peter asked where

He was going, and Jesus told them He was going to the Father. Thus, they knew where He was going. However, they did not know why He was going to His Father. After all, why would He go back to the Father? Didn't He come to establish the kingdom on earth right then? What they do not understand is that Israel, as a whole, has not believed, and so He is going to His Father for the purpose of sending the Holy Ghost to help them through the tribulation period, as He tells them in 16:7, so that Israel will believe.

**16:6** Because the disciples know that Jesus is going back to the Father, they are sorrowful. They think that God is leaving them and is not going to establish the kingdom. That is why Jesus tells them that they will not be alone for He will send them the Comforter (the Holy Ghost) to be with them until He comes back to establish the kingdom (16:7).

**16:7-11** Rather than being sad over Jesus' departure, the apostles should actually rejoice (14:28), because they will be comforted by the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost will "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Reproving has to do with correcting bad doctrine, as mentioned in II Timothy 3:16. Thus, during the tribulation period, the Holy Ghost will speak the truth of God's Word through the little flock to Israel (16:13) to correct Israel's bad doctrine about sin, righteousness, and judgment, so that they might "repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). As such, the sin part involves correcting them regarding them not believing the gospel of the kingdom. The righteousness part involves correcting them regarding their belief that they are righteous because they follow the Antichrist. He will do this by stating that the true Christ is with His Father in heaven. The judgment part involves teaching them that Satan has been judged by God. Therefore, they should not be following the Antichrist. Instead, they should believe God and His Word.

**16:12** The "many things" that Jesus shares with His disciples will come during the 40 days after His resurrection and before His ascension to the Father. That is when they can bear them. The reason they cannot bear them now is because of their unbelief regarding Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. They must overcome religion in that area, before they can allow Jesus to help them overcome religion in other areas (Matthew 17:20).

It is a good thing that Jesus does not share them here, because that would just be more scripture that Christianity would twist to fit their lies.

**16:13** Therefore, they will understand the meaning of these "many things" when the Holy Ghost comes upon them in Acts 2 and guides them into the truth of what Jesus has told them. The disciples will then understand the "things to come," which would be the things of the kingdom. Specifically, they will understand that, at Jesus' second coming, He will overthrow Satan and his forces and bring believing Israel into the kingdom (Revelation 19:20 – 20:4); He will use believing Israel to preach the gospel of the kingdom to Gentiles during the millennial reign (Matthew 28:19-20); and Israel will rule on earth over believing Gentiles for all eternity (Deuteronomy 32:8; Daniel 2:44; Psalm 2:8; Isaiah 61:6).

**16:14-15** The way that the Holy Spirit shows them things to come is by receiving the doctrine Jesus taught and revealing it to the little flock. Because God is a Spirit (4:24), the only way the little flock comes into the knowledge of the truth is if the Holy Spirit teaches them the doctrine (I Corinthians 2:9-14). That is why it is essential that Jesus goes back to the Father so that He can send them the Holy Spirit (16:7).

Note also that He is called the Comforter. The reason for that title is because sound doctrine comforts the believer going through tribulation (II Corinthians 1:3-4), and there will be plenty of that for believing Israel before Jesus' second coming! Since the doctrine comes to the little flock by the Holy Ghost, it is doctrine that Jesus taught, and Jesus' doctrine comes from the Father, we see the Trinity at work through His Word during the tribulation period.

**16:16** The context shows that the time in which they will not see Jesus refers to His death, while the time when they do see Him again refers to the Holy Ghost coming upon them in Acts 2. This does not refer to His second coming. The way I came to the conclusion that it refers to Jesus' coming through the Holy Spirit is that: 1) That is the context. He just said He would send them the Spirit, and the Spirit would reveal Jesus to them (16:13-15), 2) Jesus' coming to them again is linked to His going to the Father, and He had just linked going to the Father with the sending of the Holy Spirit in 16:7, and 3) Jesus links His coming back to them with the unconditional prayer promise (16:23), which is for the tribulation period. Thus, Jesus is saying in this verse that He will soon die ("ye shall not see Me"), but He will soon thereafter come back to them by sending them the Holy Ghost ("ye shall see Me"). His going away the first time refers to His death, not to His ascension, because Jesus says they will "weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice" (16:20), while we see the disciples rejoicing at His ascension (Luke 24:51-53).

**16:17-19** The disciples do not understand what Jesus just told them because they are trusting religion that the Messiah would set up His kingdom on earth right then, instead of trusting what Jesus is telling them that He must die first and then set up His kingdom in the future.

**16:20** The disciples will weep and lament at Jesus' death (20:11), because they are believing the false doctrine that the Messiah will set up the kingdom right then. So, when their Messiah dies, they will think Jesus is not really their Messiah, and they will weep and lament over God's kingdom not coming to them. The world, on the other hand, will rejoice because their kingdom, i.e., Satan's kingdom, will continue to flourish through the religion of the Jews. Thus, their flesh is not defeated yet. However, the disciples will have joy again when the Holy Ghost comes upon them in Acts 2.

**16:21-24** The illustration of 16:21 is of a new birth. There is great sorrow from birth pains until the child is born, but the joy of a child being born exceeds the pain of giving birth, such that the pain is forgotten. So, too, Israel must be "born

again" before they can enter God's kingdom (3:3), which means they must believe the gospel of the kingdom. Like the woman giving birth, Israel will have sorrow in the tribulation period, as they are persecuted by the Antichrist and apostate Israel. Their new birth means having God's Spirit in their hearts, causing them to obey God's law (Ezekiel 36:27). Obeying God's law brings full joy (15:10-11). However, during the tribulation period, the little flock may disobey God's commands. This is the only way they will not have joy. Note that Jesus says that no man can TAKE their joy away from them, but they can give it up voluntarily by not obeying God's commandments. Obedience, in this context, means preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. If they do this, they can ask the Father to perform any and all signs necessary for the lost sheep to see in order to believe the gospel (Mark 16:16-20). The Father will grant the signs requests, the lost sheep will be saved, and the little flock will have full joy, having obeyed God's commands. Therefore, while full, everlasting joy is theirs in the kingdom because they will obey God's law perfectly because God's Spirit will be in them causing them to obey the law, full joy can also be theirs in the tribulation period if they preach the gospel of the kingdom then.

"In that day ye shall ask Me nothing" (16:23) means that, when the Holy Ghost is upon them, He will give them the understanding of what Jesus taught them, such that the apostles will not have to ask Him any clarifying questions, as they were doing among themselves in 16:17-18. With this understanding, they would then ask the Father to perform miracles through them so that the lost sheep of Israel will be saved (16:24).

Today, in the dispensation of grace, we can also "rejoice evermore" (I Thessalonians 5:16), if we walk in the Spirit instead of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). The way we walk in the Spirit is by reading and believing sound doctrine, such that the Holy Spirit teaches it to us (I Corinthians 2:9-13) and Christ lives in us (Galatians 2:20).

**16:25** The disciples do not understand what Jesus is saying because He is speaking in proverbs. By this definition, then, a proverb is a wise saying that is difficult to understand. The book of Proverbs is written to Israel for the tribulation period. Therefore, the wisdom there is also not on the surface level. It takes the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to understand proverbs. With the Holy Spirit, then, proverbs become plain speech, which is why Jesus says that "the time cometh, when...I shall shew you plainly of the Father" (16:25).

Thus, the way that Jesus will shew them plainly of the Father is through the Holy Spirit speaking to them. It is the same today in that our natural man cannot receive the things of God (I Corinthians 2:14). We need the Holy Spirit to commune with our spirit to teach us spiritual things (I Corinthians 2:13). This is accomplished through our reading of God's Word rightly divided (II Timothy 2:7,15).

However, Christianity views proverbs as wise sayings that more clearly explain a truth. They have this opposite definition so that they can claim that proverbs are easily understood on the surface level. That way, you never learn the truth of

God's Word, which enables Christianity to use your flesh to guide you deeper into their lies.

**16:26-27** Note the change that will take place with the Lord Jesus Christ being in heaven. Since the Father loves the Son (Matthew 3:17) and the apostles love the Son, the Father loves the apostles (16:27). Therefore, all the apostles have to do is ask the Father in Jesus' name, and the Father will give them what they ask. What a contrast with unbelieving Israel, who have to be killed (Revelation 14:19-20) so that the Father's holiness is not marred (Leviticus 20:7-8; Isaiah 59:2).

**16:29-30** In 16:25, Jesus said that He spoke in proverbs. Just four verses later, the disciples say that He is not speaking in proverbs. Who should we believe? Of course, we should believe Jesus. Therefore, when the disciples say that they understand that Jesus knows all things and does not need anyone to ask Him, that is not what Jesus has been telling them. Jesus has been telling them that He has had to speak in proverbs because He has not gone to the cross yet. After the cross, He can speak plainly to them, and they can understand what He says, because they will have the Holy Ghost. However, the disciples, in their pride, want Jesus to think they understand Him now, which is why they say that Jesus is speaking plainly, directly contradicting what Jesus just said in 16:25.

**16:31-32** The disciples may have the head knowledge that Jesus came from God, but they do not have faith in believing Jesus above all else. Otherwise, they would not abandon Him when He is arrested (Matthew 26:31,56). Thus, the disciples still fear man and man's religion over God and His Word.

Jesus' statement of: "Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me" (16:32) is significant, because the little flock will go through a similar forsaking in the tribulation period. Apostate Israel, including physical family members, will forsake them, but they do not need to worry, because God will never leave them nor forsake them (Hebrews 13:5).

**16:33** Who the little flock is in will determine their spiritual condition in the tribulation period. If they believe God's words to them, they will be in Christ, which means they will have peace, because the Holy Ghost will be with them. Since they are in Christ and Christ has overcome the world, it means that they will be overcomers, as well. However, if they do not believe God's words to them, they will not have the Holy Ghost with them, and they will be in the world or in Adam (I Corinthians 15:22). Thus, they will not have peace in the midst of tribulation.

So, too, in today's dispensation, the peace of God rules in our hearts (Colossians 3:15) only by believing God and His Word so that the Holy Ghost lives through us. Otherwise, we are living in the world.

**17** Matthew 6:9-13 is the little flock's prayer during the tribulation period. It is not the Lord's prayer. John 17 is the true Lord's prayer. Jesus prays for: 1) Glory for the Father through Jesus' death (vs. 1-5), 2) Endurance for the little flock to get through the tribulation period with the Holy Spirit working through them,

sanctifying them through the truth of God's Word (vs. 6-19), and 3) Expansion of the little flock to include all of the lost sheep of Israel so that all of saved Israel may enter God's kingdom at Jesus' second coming (vs. 20-23).

**17:1** It is interesting how people today bow their heads and close their eyes in prayer, while Jesus "lift up His eyes to heaven" when He prayed to His Father here.

"The hour" refers to Jesus' crucifixion, which will bring glory both to Himself and to the Father, although Satan does not think that Jesus is referring to His crucifixion.

**17:2** The way God is glorified through Jesus' crucifixion is that His death gives Him power over the souls of men to raise them to eternal life for all those believing the gospel given to them.

**17:3** The way that Israel knows God is through God's law covenant with them. Thus, they are to repent. In other words, they are to change their mind. They are to stop following the Jewish religious traditions and start following God's law covenant with them. Note how Jesus refers to Himself in the third person. This is because Jesus is praying as God, and it is Jesus, the man, who will be crucified for the sins of Israel. Thus, He omits the word "Lord" in His title.

**17:4** Jesus has not gone to the cross yet, but He says that He has finished the work the Father gave Him to do. What Jesus is referring to is explained in verses 6 and 12. Jesus manifested God's name to the little flock (17:6) and then kept them safe from being lost (17:12).

**17:5** Before the world began, everything was in harmony. Satan, known as Lucifer, led the worship of God in heaven, and all of heaven gave God glory (Ezekiel 28:13). Then, Satan fell and took 1/3 of the angels with him (Revelation 12:3-4). Then, he got Adam to fall (Genesis 3:6) so that Satan had glory both in heaven and in earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, Jesus will reconcile both the earthly and the heavenly places back to God (Ephesians 1:10) so that God will have the glory that He had before Satan rebelled and man fell. This will take place when Jesus comes back and judges the world. Then, "He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (I Corinthians 15:24).

**17:6-8** Jesus, as God, was able to differentiate between those who believed the gospel of the kingdom and those who would fall away. In 2:23-25, Jesus would not commit Himself to believers in Jerusalem, because He knew they would fall away before the end of the tribulation period. Therefore, Jesus also knows, that the 11 apostles (Judas Iscariot being excluded) and the other members of the little flock, will endure unto the end of the tribulation period. Thus, Jesus recognizes them as sheep, who already belonged to the Father when Jesus came ("Thine they were"), and so Jesus faithfully showed them of the Father. As such, the disciples believe the gospel of the kingdom and know that Jesus is the Messiah. Thus, Jesus has "finished the work" that the Father gave Him to do (17:4).

Note that Jesus says that “they have kept Thy word” (17:6). Yet, we know that the disciples do not understand much of what Jesus has told them, and they are in unbelief with regard to Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, which shows they are in sin. Therefore, “they have kept Thy word” does not mean that they have obeyed the conditions of the law covenant. Rather, it means that they have faith in the gospel of the kingdom for God to bring them into the kingdom. Therefore, they have kept God’s word by having faith in it, not by doing works of the law.

**17:9** Although the disciples believe the gospel and believe Jesus is the Messiah, Satan will soon try to take them away from God when he has Jesus arrested and killed. As Jesus told Peter, “Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:31b-32a). Thus, Jesus prays for all the members of the little flock that they yield not to temptation. The problem is that they will flee from the Lord (Matthew 26:56). Therefore, after His resurrection, Jesus will restore Peter (21:15-17), who will then, as the new leader of the believing remnant (Matthew 16:18-19), restore the little flock (Luke 22:32b).

Jesus does not pray for the world because the world has already rejected Him. He still loves the world (3:16) and wants them to be saved, but that will come through the Holy Spirit’s ministry through the little flock. Right now, Jesus is still tasked with getting the little flock to the other side of His crucifixion still believing the gospel of the kingdom.

When the world does hear the gospel during the millennial reign (Matthew 28:19-20), Jesus still would not pray for the world because He is only concerned about individuals in the world to be saved. He does not pray for the world, as a whole, because He knows that this world will be destroyed (Matthew 24:35). We should learn from this by focusing our efforts in having people saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4), rather than trying to reform the world or our country.

**17:11** At the time that Jesus prays this prayer, the greatest time of tribulation this world will ever see will soon start, if Israel believes the gospel. Israel must continue to believe the gospel of the kingdom, not forsaking God for the Antichrist and his religious system, and they must preach the gospel during that seven-year tribulation period. The key to both of these will be for them to trust in God’s law covenant with them (Exodus 20) over the seven-year covenant the Antichrist makes with apostate Israel (Daniel 9:27). This will be accomplished only by the Holy Spirit working through them. If the Holy Spirit is in them and working through them, they have the same relationship with the Father as Jesus had with the Father, since Jesus also had the Holy Spirit working through Him (Matthew 3:16 – 4:1). Therefore, the little flock will be one in the Father, as Jesus was one in the Father through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the prayer by Jesus, here, that they follow His example so that the little flock may be one in God.

**17:12** As “the Good Shepherd” (10:11), Jesus kept the little flock in God so that they did not go astray. Once Jesus ascends to heaven, He will send the Holy Spirit,



Who will take over, keeping them safe in God through the end of the tribulation period. Then, “the Chief Shepherd [the Lord Jesus Christ] shall appear” (I Peter 5:4).

Judas Iscariot is called “the son of perdition.” This term only appears one other time in the Bible, where it refers to the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2:3). According to II Peter 3:7, perdition is God’s judgment of ungodly men into the lake of fire. This shows the seriousness of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus Christ. Jesus said about Judas Iscariot: “It had been good for that man if he had not been born” (Matthew 26:24).

**17:13-14** Jesus said, in 15:10-11, that the little flock will have joy if they keep God’s commandments, which Jesus has spoken to them. Jesus spoke God’s Word to them so that they may have joy, even though they are greatly persecuted by the world. If Jesus had not spoken God’s Word to them, the little flock never would make it through the tribulation period, because they would end up believing the Jewish religious system pushed on them by apostate Israel.

When we share right division with mainstream Christianity, we are told that we are making things way too complicated, and that God’s Word is simple to understand. However, as Jesus reveals in these verses, that is a lie. The world hates believers, but, God must speak His Word in the world so that believers will hear and be edified by it. Since God’s Word is for believers only, God conceals His Word (Proverbs 25:2) with parables (Matthew 13:10-11) and proverbs (16:25) so that only believers will understand it, while unbelievers will deny it. God only rewards those who “DILIGENTLY seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). That is why the Bible is so hard to understand. If an easy explanation is given of God’s Word, then it is probably not a correct explanation.

**17:15** It is not yet time for saved Israel to be taken out of the world’s system around them, because the lost sheep of the house of Israel need to be reached with the gospel throughout the entire tribulation period (Matthew 10:23). Therefore, they need to go into Satan’s sheepfold, i.e., Israel, with the gospel (10:9). The bad part of this is that it will be hard for the little flock to continue to believe the gospel, when people all around them are trying to convince them that the Antichrist is really the Christ. Therefore, Jesus prays for the Father to keep them from believing the Antichrist and apostate Israel while they are in apostate Israel preaching the gospel to the lost sheep.

**17:17** The way the little flock will be sanctified, or set apart as holy, from the apostate nation of Israel is by believing the truth of God’s Word over the religious system of the Antichrist and apostate Israel. This will be the work of the Holy Ghost to guide them into all truth (16:13). Thus, when the world is trying to get them to worship the image of the beast and take the mark which will damn their souls into hell (Revelation 13:15), the Holy Ghost will be in them, giving them the understanding of the truth that Jesus shared with them in His earthly ministry of the plan of the Father and the glory that awaits them in His coming eternal kingdom. Satan’s forces may be strong in the tribulation period, but all members

of the Trinity will work so that truth will win out over Satan's lie program in the hearts of the little flock during the tribulation period.

So, too, today, if we are to walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16), we need to read God's Word so that the Spirit can guide us into the practical application of the sound doctrine of God's Word rightly divided. Thus, we should always let God's Word be the final authority in our lives, and not let Satan deceive us through false ministers, appearing as apostles of Christ (II Corinthians 11:13), teaching doctrines of devils (I Timothy 4:1) by twisting scripture to match Satan's lie program (II Peter 3:16).

God's Word is truth. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). God promised to preserve His Word forever (Psalm 12:6-8), which means that we have God's holy Word without error today in the English language in the King James Version. Therefore, the Bible can be the final authority in our lives. We should not let anyone tell us to change it to fit our doctrine. Rather, we should let God's Word change us.

**17:18** The way the Father sent Jesus into the world was by giving Him a position of authority in His kingdom with the task of bringing the lost sheep of Israel into God's kingdom. Similarly then, Jesus sends the little flock into the world with the task of bringing souls into the kingdom, and they will receive authority in the kingdom for their work. This is explained to them in Luke 22:29-30.

**17:19** The word "sanctify" means to make holy or to set apart. Both meanings are seen in this verse. The Lord Jesus Christ sanctified Himself by setting Himself apart as the propitiation for the sins of the world (Romans 3:25). Because He was the substitutionary sacrifice, those, who believe the gospel, are then sanctified or made holy by their belief. Thus, Jesus sanctified Himself (set Himself apart) so that Israel might be sanctified (made holy) through their belief of the gospel. Then, when Jesus comes back and establishes His kingdom on earth, He will sanctify His holy name through saved Israel, as Ezekiel 36:22-27 states. In other words, Jesus is saying in this verse that He set Himself apart as a sacrifice for sins so that those, who believe the gospel, may be made holy so that they may have eternal life.

Note also, that the way saved Israel is sanctified, is through the truth. This means that they have to believe the gospel that God gives them. That is why God says that, if anyone believes another gospel, "let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8-9). In other words, someone, who invites Jesus into his heart, is not saved. They are only saved by believing the truth. That is why there are so many false gospels out there, and that is why it is absolutely essential that we make the Bible our final authority, because man will usually lead you astray.

**17:20** Jesus' prayer for the Father to keep the little flock's souls safe through the tribulation period also extends to the future members of the little flock. Therefore, those believing the gospel of the kingdom through the ministry of the little flock will also be given the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth so that they will endure to the end of the tribulation period and receive eternal life in God's

kingdom on earth.

Note also that the people, who believe after the apostles, will believe “through their word.” Romans 10:17 says, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” This shows how important it is for believers to proclaim the Word of God so that others may be saved. Of course, it was even more important for the little flock to do this, since Jesus would come back once the tribulation period was over. That is why Jesus told the little flock to “sell that ye have” (Luke 12:33) and preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:6-7).

**17:21** This verse adds a little more detail to what Jesus said in 17:11. It is not that the little flock was to be united in themselves alone, because the Jewish religious leaders had such unity but were children of the devil (8:44). Rather, the little flock’s unity was to be in their belief of God’s Word over Satan’s lie program. Then, the little flock would be one in God so that unbelievers would believe the gospel that they preach.

**17:23** During the tribulation period, the little flock will only go to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10:6) and will not finish going over all the cities of Israel before Jesus’ second coming (Matthew 10:23). Yet, the whole world will hear the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 24:14), because the little flock will be brought before kings and governors (Matthew 10:18). And, when they do go before those kings and governors, the Holy Spirit will speak through them (Matthew 10:20), which will show the world that Jesus is the true Christ, while the Antichrist is a false christ. Without the Holy Spirit speaking through them, the power of God would not be manifested to the world. This shows how important it is that the little flock continue to trust in God’s Word throughout the tribulation period.

**17:24** By trusting in God’s Word, the little flock will endure to the end of the tribulation period, which will enable them to be with Christ in God’s kingdom on earth.

The phrase “before the foundation of the world” is found three times in scripture. This reference says that God loved Jesus at that time. Ephesians 1:4 says that the body of Christ was chosen to be in Christ at that time. I Peter 1:20 says that Christ was chosen to be the sacrificial Lamb “before the foundation of the world.” What this tells us is that God had a plan to show love to His Son and to all believers, who would be placed into Christ. This plan would be executed by Jesus coming to the earth as the sacrificial Lamb. God decided this before He made the world, which shows that God had foreknowledge of Satan’s rebellion and man’s fall and loved us so much that He decided to bless us, in spite of our sin. Therefore, Jesus’ impending death on the cross will bring eternal glory to Christ by saving believing man.

**17:25-26** Jesus declared (past tense) the Father’s name to Israel through the casting out of devils and the healing of the sick which demonstrated that the gospel of the kingdom is true. He will declare (future tense) the Father’s name by bringing salvation to the little flock by dying for their sins.

The Father's name, in this chapter, is "Holy" (17:11) and "Righteous" (17:25). Jesus declared "Holy Father" by casting out the unholy devils and sickness. Jesus will declare "Righteous Father" by bringing salvation to those believing the gospel. This declaration of "Righteous Father" by Jesus shows His long-term view of the situation. Man, with his sin nature, would say that the Father is unrighteous, because He is going to place our sin upon Jesus, Who knew no sin. Jesus, as God, sees the Father as righteous, because He walks by faith, not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7), and so He sees God's imputed righteousness being extended to believers through His shed blood (Romans 3:22).

**18** Jesus is arrested by the religious leaders (vs. 1-12) and unjustly sentenced to death by them (vs. 13-27). Even Peter joins the side of the religious leaders (v. 18), showing that the entire nation of Israel has forsaken Jesus. The only one not finding fault with Jesus is an unbelieving Gentile ruler (v. 38)!

**18:1-2** After Satan entered Judas Iscariot, Jesus told him to go quickly to betray Him (13:27). Jesus knew that Iscariot would lead the Jewish religious leaders to the garden, since Jesus went there often (18:2). Therefore, when Jesus finished His prayer for the disciples, He entered the garden (18:1). Note the differences in the accounts between Luke and John. Luke shows Jesus as the perfect man. Therefore, you see Jesus as the man struggling in prayer to the Father, not wanting to die, but giving over to the Father's will in the end (Luke 22:41-46). John, on the other hand, showing Jesus as God, shows Jesus praying for His disciples, having no concern for His Own flesh. In fact, He probably prayed aloud so that His disciples could hear a progress report of how far they had come and how far they still needed to go.

**18:3** Judas comes to Jesus with appointees from the religious leaders, and Satan is also in Judas. They come with weapons. This shows that Judas also did not understand that Jesus was going to die willingly.

**18:4** Since John shows Jesus as God, we see Jesus in complete control of what goes on. Remember, man will not take His life from Him; He will lay it down willingly (10:18). As God, He knows all things that will happen. Also, note that He asks them a question. When man sins, that is usually what God does to get man to see His guilt before God and seek confession and forgiveness. We see this, for example, when God speaks to Adam just after he had sinned for the first time (Genesis 3:9). There, the question is "Where art thou?" for Adam to see he is apart from God. Here, the question is "Whom seek ye?" to show the religious leaders that they are seeking to kill their Messiah rather than seeking to be reconciled to God the Father by believing the gospel of the kingdom.

**18:5-6** Jesus' answer of "I AM He" is another "I AM" statement of His deity. Hebrews 4:12 says that "the word of God is quick, and powerful." Therefore, when God Himself declares to them that He is God, they fall backward to the ground. This should be a sign to all, including these religious leaders, that Jesus is God and speaks God's Word. After all, no other man in history has ever had a group of

men fall backward to the ground by merely saying to them, “I am he!” What, then, is the purpose of their weapons (18:3)? If Jesus did not want to die, there is absolutely nothing they could do to kill Him, regardless of how powerful their weapons are.

We also see, from 18:5, what side Judas Iscariot is on. He is standing with the men, who have come to arrest Jesus, while Jesus and the 11 apostles stand on the other side.

**18:7** Having experienced the power of God, Jesus gives them another chance to seek to be reconciled to God by asking them again, “Whom seek ye?” They answer “Jesus of Nazareth,” just like they did the first time He asked them. This shows the hardness of religion that, even after experiencing the power of God knocking them down to the ground, they still think Jesus is a man, rather than being God.

**18:8-9** As God, Jesus is in control of the situation, commanding that His disciples not be arrested with Him, fulfilling what He had just spoken to His Father in prayer in 17:12. The reason Jesus said to let His disciples go was so they would not be lost. What this means is that, if the disciples were arrested, because of their unbelief in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, they would have denied Jesus. If they were then killed for being aligned with Jesus, all of them would have gone to hell, because Jesus said, in Matthew 10:33, that He would deny before His Father those who denied Jesus before men. Therefore, it is very significant that Jesus kept the 11 apostles from being arrested.

**18:10-11** Peter told Jesus that he was willing to lay down his life for Jesus, and he meant it (13:37). Therefore, he cuts off the servant’s ear. The problem is that Peter did not have faith in what Jesus had told him. He thought that Jesus would set up His earthly kingdom right then. Peter is willing to fight and be killed for that to happen. However, when Jesus tells Peter to stop fighting because He must die for their sins, Peter no longer believes Jesus is the Messiah, because surrendering to the enemy does not fit into Peter’s plan for who the Messiah would be. Therefore, Peter denies Jesus (18:17,25, and 27). Again, in this passage, we see Jesus in control of what happens, commanding Peter to stop fighting and instead allow the Messiah to fulfill the Father’s will of dying for the sins of Israel.

Looking back at what happened, Peter’s fighting is comical. After all, Jesus just made the enemy fall down to the ground by speaking to them. What good is fighting with a sword when there is such power in God’s words?!

**18:12-14** The top dogs, in the Jewish religious system, would not dirty their hands by going out in the middle of the night to arrest Jesus, but they are present in this secret council in which they will sentence Jesus to die. Caiaphas’ prophecy of Jesus dying for all of Israel, found in 11:49-50, is mentioned to show that the ironic thing is that the children of the devil (8:44) had the same plan for Jesus as God did. The difference is that the devil thought he would defeat God by killing Jesus, while God knew that He would defeat the devil by killing Jesus. In fact, that is what God said, way back in Genesis 3:15, but the devil, because of his unbelief,

did not understand he was fulfilling God's plan of redemption!

**18:15** While the disciples fled when Jesus was arrested (Matthew 26:56), two of them came back and followed Jesus from a distance. The "another disciple," here, is probably John, since we probably see him later watching Jesus from the cross (19:25-27) and going with Peter to Jesus' tomb after His resurrection (20:2-3).

What we see from Peter and John are the two, different reactions to God's truth, when it opposes what religion says. Most Christians are like Peter in that they deny the truth when it goes against their beliefs. Some, however, are like John in that they do not deny the truth, even though they may not understand it. The result is belief, when they finally do understand, as John believed the moment he saw Jesus' empty tomb in 20:8, but we are not told that Peter believed at that time.

**18:16-17** Peter's hope of Jesus being the Messiah has been dashed, since Jesus is not setting up God's kingdom on earth right now and Jesus will not even fight. As a commercial fisherman, Peter probably thinks of Jesus as a coward. Therefore, Peter denies his Lord. He does so, even though John is one of Jesus' disciples and no harm has come to him by being there.

Note the contrast between Peter's statement here and Jesus' statement in 18:5. Jesus fears God, not man; therefore, He said, "I AM He." Peter, though, fearing man, says, "I am not." As such, Peter is a type of someone in the tribulation period, who believes the gospel of the kingdom, yet denies Christ in order to be spared from being killed by the Antichrist. After Jesus' resurrection, though, Christ will restore Peter as the leader of the little flock (21:15-17).

**18:18** The fact that "it was cold" shows the agony of Jesus' prayer in the garden that He sweated great drops of blood in that condition (Luke 22:44). Seeing Peter warming himself by the fire is a type of him being close to the lake of fire, as he would go to the lake of fire if he did not confess Jesus before men after Jesus rose from the dead (Matthew 10:32-33). So, too, those, who deny the Christ in the tribulation period, will go to the lake of fire if they die having denied the Christ. Also, note who Peter is standing with. He is with the servants and officers of the Jewish religious leaders, as Judas Iscariot was when they arrested Jesus (18:5). This shows whose side Peter is on right now.

**18:19-21** The Jewish religious leaders want to kill Jesus because they are afraid He will take over their followers. Jesus' answer to the high priest shows that is exactly what is happening. God is binding Satan (Matthew 12:29), taking back the lost sheep of the house of Israel from Satan's captivity of them (Isaiah 49:24-25), and bringing them into God's sheepfold (10:3,9).

Jesus never addresses the question by the high priest of His disciples, because He is keeping the disciples safe from being lost (18:8-9). He really does not address the question about His doctrine either. That is because sound doctrine is only for believers (Matthew 13:11) because unbelievers will only use it against believers.

This shows how pointless it is to argue with people over doctrine, when you have given them scripture to support your conclusion and all they do is ignore and reject what God's Word says. That is why Titus 3:10 says, "a man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject."

**18:22** Jesus' response that God's kingdom will triumph over Satan's kingdom gets this child of the devil upset, such that he strikes Jesus.

**18:23-24** Note that Jesus is still in control of what is going on. He knows that the law says that the judges are to "justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked." According to the law, only after a man is deemed "worthy to be beaten" can he be struck (Deuteronomy 25:1-2). Therefore, these people, who are supposed to be upholding God's law, have broken God's law by striking Jesus without a just cause, and Jesus calls them out on this here. He does not cower in the power of the high priest, but He subjects the judges to the very law they are supposed to follow. Thus, Jesus, as God, judges the judges.

John gives us the little note in 18:24 that Jesus was bound before the high priest. There was no need for this, since Jesus would not do anything unlawful. The person, who should have been bound, was the officer who struck Jesus unlawfully (18:22).

**18:25-27** Again, we see Peter warming himself (18:25), telling us that he is close to hell fire. Peter denies Jesus a second and third time, fulfilling Jesus' prophecy that Peter would deny Him thrice before the cock crows once (13:38).

**18:28** This verse shows the hypocrisy of the Jews' religion. They can unjustly strike an innocent man contrary to the law (18:22-23), and they can condemn their Messiah, God in the flesh, to die for blasphemy (Mark 14:64). However, they dare not step inside the judgment hall when Jesus is actually condemned by the Roman government, lest they be defiled from eating the Passover! I think it is safe to say that, in spite of their "cleanness" here, they ate the Passover with defiled hands that year, willingly admitting that the blood of their Messiah and God was upon their souls as they chowed down on a leg of lamb (Matthew 27:25). Yet, to the common Jews at the Passover, these religious leaders still appeared to be holy, as there is no complaint against them recorded in scripture. So, too, in the tribulation period, apostate Israel will be guilty of killing many believers of the little flock (Revelation 6:9), yet they will appear holy to the common Jews as they observe Jewish feasts with their "messiah," the Antichrist, leading the people into the lake of fire, going right along with them.

**18:28-29** Pilate actually judged Jesus outside of the judgment hall. Perhaps this is a sign that God Himself is outside of man's judgment.

**18:29-30** This shows that the Jews had no just cause for having Jesus condemned, since they will not give Pilate an answer as to why Jesus should be killed.

**18:31-32** When the Jews condemned someone to death, their law said they were to stone them to death, e.g., Leviticus 20:2,27 and 24:16. However, the Jews were so infuriated by Jesus' taking the Jews away from their power and into God's kingdom that they wanted Jesus crucified by the Romans. This fulfills the prophecy Jesus spoke in 12:32-33 that He would be crucified to death. Probably another reason why they wanted Jesus crucified was so that the Romans would be the ones doing it, and not the Jewish council. Since Jesus did many miracles, the common Jews may have objected to the Pharisees killing Him. However, if the Romans killed Him, it would make them think He committed a crime, outside of the Jewish law, that warranted capital punishment.

**18:33** How funny that Jesus' judge (Pilate) and His accusers are not in the judgment hall with Him. Jesus is in there with the guards. Did He preach the gospel to them, causing at least one of them to believe in Him at the cross (Matthew 27:54)? Did the thief on the cross, who believed Jesus was Lord, come to this conclusion because he heard the gospel preached to him at this time (Luke 23:41-43)?

**18:34** Jesus, as God, is putting Pilate on trial here. Rather than answering Pilate's question, Jesus essentially asks Pilate why he is allowing others to call the shots if he is really the judge. Jesus is trying to get Pilate to think, rather than act upon his emotions. Thinking will lead him to be saved, while acting will lead him to a hotter place in hell, since he would be condemning the Son of God to death.

**18:35-36** Pilate said that "Thine Own nation" is wanting to kill Him (18:35). Jesus clarifies that that is not true. Because Israel is apostate, they are not His nation. Rather, Jesus' "kingdom is not of this world" (18:36). Jesus further explains by saying that "NOW is My kingdom not from hence" (18:36), meaning that, at His second coming, Jesus will judge the worldly kingdom belonging to Satan. THEN, His kingdom WILL be from the earth. At that time, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). But, for now, Jesus' kingdom is "not from hence."

It is important to understand this, because Christianity wants to twist this passage to say that God will not establish His kingdom on earth. However, it is clear that "the meek...shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5) and that New Jerusalem comes down from heaven to the new earth (Revelation 21:1-2), where there is no more curse (Revelation 22:3) and Israel rules with Jesus Christ for ever and ever (Revelation 22:5).

**18:37** By saying "thou sayest I am a king," Jesus says that Pilate is correct in saying that He is a king. However, Jesus points out that He did not come into the world to reign as king. Rather, He came to "bear witness unto the truth." The truth is that those, who believe the gospel, will have eternal life with God. He bears witness to this truth by making eternal life with God possible by living a perfect life and dying for mankind's sins. Those, believing God's Word, hear Jesus' call (10:3-5) to believe the gospel and enter God's kingdom. These are the ones "of the truth," in contrast to the Jewish religious leaders who are of their "father the devil," who



“is a liar, and the father of it” (8:44).

**18:38** Pilate does not wait around for an answer to his question of “What is truth?” Pilate is not looking for an answer. He believes, like most people today, that truth is relative—that there is no absolute truth. If he believed there was truth, he would have heard the voice of Jesus and became a believer. Instead, he continues in his relativism, not concerned about truth, even though “the truth” is standing right in front of him (14:6).

**18:38-40** The fact, that Pilate finds no fault in Jesus, shows that it is the Jews, who condemned Jesus to die. In fact, they say at this time: “His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matthew 27:25). The fact that Barabbas goes free, when he is guilty under the law, while Jesus is killed, when He is innocent under the law, is a type of what happens to Israel. Israel is guilty and worthy of death, yet God justly judges that they will receive eternal life, if they believe the gospel of the kingdom, due to the death of Jesus in their place.

**19** Jesus lays down His life for the sheep (10:11). He is in control of everything that happens, even to the point of saying “I thirst” just to fulfill scripture (v. 28).

**19:2-3** The soldiers mock Jesus by putting a crown of thorns and a purple robe upon Him. However, these items are significant. Thorns represent the curse of the ground as a result of sin (Genesis 3:17-18). Therefore, Jesus' wearing of the crown of thorns represents His "being made a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). It represents Him taking the sins of the world upon Himself, bearing the wages of sin, which is death, so that we may have eternal life (Romans 6:23). A purple robe represents a king. It is only by His taking on the curse of sin that Jesus will be an eternal king over the whole earth. Thus, the crown of thorns represents Jesus' first coming, and the purple robe represents His second coming.

The smiting of Jesus by the soldiers also is a type of Jesus taking on the curse of sin, as Isaiah 53:5 says, “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.” Sure, they were mocking Him as “King of the Jews,” but they were really showing that He is the King of the Jews by taking on the curse and punishment of sins so that He may be “King of kings” (Revelation 17:14).

**19:4** Pilate may have found no fault with Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders may have taken the blame for killing Jesus (Matthew 27:25), but Pilate, as governor, is not guiltless in the crucifixion of Jesus, as Jesus tells him in 19:11. He could have believed in the gospel and refused to kill Him, or he could have just released Him if he wanted to (19:10). Ultimately, Pilate is the one who gave the order to have Jesus crucified (19:16).

**19:5** In Zechariah 6:12, the Messiah is identified as the perfect man. There, and here, the statement is made "Behold the man." This Man is wearing a crown of thorns, signifying that He is taking away the sins of those believing the gospel, and He is wearing a purple robe, signifying His eternal reign as king over the earth. This is "the Man" Israel is beholding.

**19:6** What a person does when he beholds the Man determines his eternal dwelling place. The Jewish religious leaders killed Jesus; thus, they will end up in the lake of fire, if they did not later believe the gospel. The believing remnant believed the gospel He preached; thus, they will end up in His eternal kingdom.

**19:7** "We have a law." Oh, really? Which law is that? Under God's law, claiming to be the Son of God is only punishable by death if there are at least two or three witnesses that can prove that what Jesus said is not of the Lord (Deuteronomy 17:6 and 18:18-22). Jesus presented five witnesses that He is the Son of God, which they could not refute (5:31-47). Thus, Jesus is not worthy of death. The law further stipulates that false witnesses receive the punishment they tried to inflict upon the person whom they were testifying falsely about (Deuteronomy 19:16-19). The Jewish religious leaders specifically "sought false witness against Jesus" (Matthew 26:59). Therefore, if the Jews want to go by God's law, they would have to kill themselves and those who testified falsely against Jesus, while Jesus would go free. Therefore, the Jews' appeal to the law, here, to have Jesus crucified is a false one.

**19:8** Probably in between John 18 and 19, Pilate's wife told him, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him" (Matthew 27:19). This would have made Pilate afraid. Therefore, when Pilate now hears that Jesus claims to be the Son of God and he already knows that Jesus is not guilty of any crime, Pilate "was the more afraid."

**19:9** Therefore, Pilate asks Jesus if He is from God. Since Jesus has already been sentenced to die, He would not be sinning by not responding to Pilate. And, since prophecy said He would not open His mouth (Isaiah 53:7), Jesus does not answer Pilate here.

**19:10** Some people may think that Pilate is innocent of having Jesus killed, since he stated three times that he found no fault with Jesus (18:38, 19:4, and 19:6) and he symbolically washed his hands of the matter (Matthew 27:24). However, it still remains that Pilate had the power to either crucify or release Jesus. Therefore, Pilate is not guiltless of the blood of Christ.

**19:11** Note that Jesus says that the Jewish religious leaders have the "greater" sin. This means that Pilate is still sinning by having Jesus crucified, but his punishment for doing so will be less than the Jewish religious leaders' punishment because they were the ones who instigated Jesus' death. Therefore, Jesus' answer is worded to convict Pilate of his sinful part in Jesus' crucifixion so that he may repent of his decision and believe the gospel.

**19:12-13** Jesus told Pilate that his power comes from God (19:11), and the Jewish religious leaders told Pilate that his power comes from Caesar. Pilate chooses man's word over God's word and officially sentences Jesus to death on a cross. Every man, who is ever born, has similar forces at work. He has the internal witness of God and the external witness of man. If he believes God over man, he

will have eternal life. Unfortunately, most choose death in the lake of fire, as Pilate did, by believing man over God.

**19:14-15** It is "the preparation of the Passover." Unbeknownst to Israel, the complete Passover Lamb is being "prepared" to take away the sin of the world (1:29). It is also about the sixth hour, which is 12:00 PM. Luke 23:44 says that "there was a darkness over all the earth" from "about the sixth hour...until the ninth hour." God probably brought darkness upon the earth at the time that the Jews pronounced that Jesus is to be crucified, and that they "have no king but Caesar," showing the Jews' final rejection of their king, servant, man, and God.

In 19:5, Pilate had the Jews "Behold the Man," Who was about to die for the sins of Israel. Now, he has them "Behold your King," Who will rule over Israel and the whole world in God's eternal kingdom on earth. Since they have rejected Him as king, they will not be part of God's eternal kingdom. Back in I Samuel 8:5, Israel asked for "a king to judge us like all the nations." God said that "they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (I Samuel 8:7). Now, the Jews have another chance to have God reign over them, and they again reject God as their king saying, "We have no king but Caesar." Israel was to be a kingdom of priests to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6), but the earth is not going to be reconciled back to God right now because of Israel's unbelief. This is probably why God brings darkness upon the earth at this time, as a physical manifestation of the spiritual reality of the earth's condition as a result of Israel's rejection of God's offer to reconcile the earth back to God through them.

**19:16** The Jews are to blame for Jesus' crucifixion. They condemned Him to death, but only Rome could condemn Him to death by crucifixion. Pilate told them: "Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him" (19:6). Therefore, Pilate delivers Jesus to the Jews, and the Jews take Jesus away to be crucified. As the Jews said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25).

**19:17** This verse says that Jesus bore His Own cross. Matthew 27:32 says that Simon of Cyrene bore Jesus' cross. This is no contradiction. They both carried Jesus' cross. Luke 23:26 provides the answer by telling us that Jesus carried the top part of the cross, and Simon of Cyrene carried the bottom part.

Golgotha is the name of the place in the Hebrew, as Matthew (27:33), Mark (15:22), and John (19:17) record it. Calvary is the English translation of the name, as Luke (23:33) records it. Both names mean "the place of the skull."

**19:19-22** Although the Jews denied Jesus as their king, Pilate wrote an inscription that says Jesus is the king of the Jews. He wrote it in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore, when they looked upon Jesus hanging on that cross, everyone could read the inscription that He is the king of the Jews. This, coupled with the gospel in the stars (see Numbers 24:17, Psalm 19:1-4, and Matthew 2:2), which they could see since it was dark, was evidence to all those there that Jesus is the Saviour of the world. Jesus was sent "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24), and, since it was Passover time, many Jews were in the

city and read the sign. Thus, the Jews were without excuse for not believing the gospel.

Also note that "Jesus was crucified...nigh to the city" (19:20), which means He was crucified outside the city. Hebrews 13:12 mentions that Jesus was crucified outside the city so "that He might sanctify the people with His Own blood." Jesus had tried to save Jerusalem, but they would not believe because they were polluted with religion (Matthew 23:37). Therefore, saved Israel must go outside of that religious system to Jesus by believing the gospel of the kingdom in order to have eternal life (Hebrews 13:13).

The Jewish religious leaders said that the title, above Jesus' cross, should say that Jesus said He is the king of the Jews (19:21). However, Jesus never made such a statement about Himself. It was the Jews, who said that Jesus claimed that He was the king of the Jews (Matthew 27:37), and Pilate said that the Jewish religious leaders were the ones, who called Jesus "king of the Jews" (Mark 15:12). Therefore, Pilate says, in 19:22, that "what I have written I have written." This response shows that he is fed up with the Jewish leaders. He just wants this to be done so that there is no Jewish uprising, so that he does not get in trouble with Caesar.

**19:23-24** Note the detail with which Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah. Psalm 22:18 says that the soldiers would divide Jesus' garments among themselves, except for His vesture, for which they would cast lots. Both prophecies are fulfilled here. There must also be significance to Jesus' garment being without a seam. Otherwise, it would not be mentioned here. No seam means His garment was all from the same piece of cloth. Two pieces of cloth were not sewn together.

**19:25** It is the Mary trio, standing together, watching Jesus' crucifixion.

**19:26-27** The disciple, whom Jesus loved, is commonly thought to be John. John took Mary into his own home. However, John probably was not there much because he was daily in the temple and going from house to house (Acts 2:46). Perhaps Mary went with John, wherever he went. After all, Acts 1:14 says that Mary was among the 120 tarrying for the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

This also begs the question of what happened to Mary's family. Joseph and Mary had been married before Jesus was born, and they have children after Jesus (Mathew 13:55). It appears that Mary was probably a widow by this point. But, then, what about Mary's other children? Why didn't they take care of Mary, instead of John?

Once Jesus called His 12 disciples and gave them power to heal the sick and cast out devils (Mark 3:13-19), we are told that Jesus' "friends" thought He was crazy and went to lay hold on Him, probably to take Him to the funny farm (Mark 3:21). Ten verses later (Mark 3:31), it is His mother and half-brothers, who show up to take Him away. In other words, once Jesus began His earthly ministry and called

apostles to perform miracles, His family thought that He had started a cult and they sought to commit Him to a mental institution. To this attack, Jesus says, "Who is My mother, or My brethren?" (Mark 3:33). "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother" (Mark 3:35). Although Jesus' half brothers and sisters and probably still alive and capable of taking care of Mary, at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, they are probably still apostate. Therefore, Jesus considers John to be His brother and asks him to take care of Mary, rather than asking His apostate, physical family to take care of Mary.

The fact, that Jesus says this from the cross, shows that He, as God, is in total control of the situation, and He is looking out for others. No one else, having suffered so much that He was marred more than any other man (Isaiah 52:14), would ever have the ability to make such a statement. It took the Son of God to do this.

**19:28** This verse tells us that all things were not accomplished until Jesus made sure Mary would be taken care of. This probably indicates that Mary would stop believing in the gospel and would not enter God's kingdom if John did not take her into his house. I say this because Jesus said, in 17:12, that He lost none of the Father's sheep. Thus, He had to make sure Mary would not become lost after Jesus' death. Otherwise, all things would not be accomplished.

The fact, that all things are now accomplished, also means that Jesus has already been forsaken by the Father (Matthew 27:46), paying the debt for the sins of Israel. Since God can never forsake Himself and John portrays Jesus as God, Jesus' statement, found in Matthew 27:46, is not recorded in John's gospel.

Note that Jesus, as God, is in complete control of what goes on. He knows everything has been accomplished. He just has one more prophecy to fulfill by speaking. Therefore, He says, "I thirst," so that Psalm 69:21 is fulfilled. No mere man would have been able to go through such a thinking process to have this prophecy fulfilled just before He gives up the ghost. Also, note that Jesus did not say "I thirst" because He was thirsty, although He was thirsty, having lost so much blood. (Also, Jesus would have been lying if He said, "I thirst," when He did not thirst, and "God cannot lie" (Titus 1:2).) He said it so that scripture would be fulfilled. This shows His complete control over His flesh, such that He would not even fulfill a basic fleshly appetite of thirst on the cross, except that prophecy required Him to do so!

**19:29** There may be some significance to hyssop being brought to Jesus' mouth, since hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of the old covenant upon Israel (Hebrews 9:19), and Psalm 51:7 says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean."

**19:30** Spiritually speaking, Jesus had accomplished everything after verse 27. Prophetically speaking, He has now accomplished everything, which is why He now says, "It is finished." "It is finished" means that the transgression of Israel is finished, due to the blood atonement Jesus Christ provides for them (Daniel 9:24).

As such, these are the three most important words that have been or ever will be uttered, because they mean that lost man bound for hell can now have eternal life with God. Wow! What a transformation!

It is very important for us to recognize that the “it,” that Jesus refers to, is the transgression of Israel, because it has been paid for by Jesus’ blood atonement. The reason is because most of Christianity claims that Jesus did away with the law at this time, ushering in grace. They base this conclusion on Matthew 5:18, where Jesus says, “One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” They conclude that all is fulfilled with Jesus’ death on the cross; therefore, we are not under the law today.

However, as Bible believers, who believe that every word of scripture is true, we must examine each word carefully. Jesus said “IT” is finished. “It” refers to one thing. “ALL” refers to more than one thing. Therefore, “till ALL be fulfilled” means that multiple things have to be fulfilled, not just one thing. These multiple things are listed in Daniel 9:24, and ALL of these things are not finished until after Jesus’ second coming. Therefore, because Jesus said “IT is finished,” rather than “ALL is finished,” we must conclude that the law continues to be in force for Israel after the cross of Christ.

Because "it is finished," "He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost" (19:30). His life was not taken away from Him; He gave it up, as He said, in 10:18, that He would do. Since He laid down His life, as He said He would do, we can also rest assured that He will take it up again three days later, as He said He would do (10:18; Matthew 12:40).

**19:31** There go the Jews again, following their religion. It does not matter to them that they killed their Messiah, but God forbid that He should hang on the cross any longer, lest they be defiled and not able to eat the passover (18:28)!

“That sabbath was an high day” (19:31) is the key to understanding that Jesus died on a Thursday, not on a Friday. Jesus said that He must be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights (Matthew 12:40). We know that He died at 3:00 PM on one day (Mark 15:33-37), and He rose from the dead on a Sunday morning (20:1). Since He died in the afternoon and rose in the morning, He could not have been in the grave for exactly 72 hours. God counts a day starting with the evening (Genesis 1:5) at sundown. If we assume 6:00 PM as sundown, we can count the three days and three nights as follows:

Day 1: 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM Thursday  
Night 1: 6:00 PM - 6:00 AM Thursday/Friday  
Day 2: 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM Friday  
Night 2: 6:00 PM - 6:00 AM Friday/Saturday  
Day 3: 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM Saturday  
Night 3: 6:00 PM - 3:00 AM Saturday/Sunday

This is only 60 hours. If you assume He dies on a Wednesday, you would have 84

hours. Since He died on the preparation day, the next day was a sabbath day, because it was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread (Leviticus 23:5-7). If He died on a Wednesday, the women would have gone to His grave on Friday with the spices. However, if He died on a Thursday, they could not go to His grave on Friday, because that would be a high day. They also could not go to His grave on Saturday, because it was the normal sabbath. Their first opportunity to go to the grave would have been on Sunday morning. Therefore, Jesus died on a Thursday, which is the day before the Passover sabbath, and He rose on a Sunday, which is the day after the regular sabbath.

**19:32-33** The fact, that Jesus was already dead while the others around Him were not dead yet, is further proof that Jesus did, indeed, lay down His life. He could have stayed alive longer, but He laid down His life, since He had done everything He needed to do. In fact, Pilate marvelled that Jesus was already dead (Mark 15:44).

**19:34-35** There is a long, medical explanation as to why both blood and water came out of Jesus' side that involves fluid gathering in a sack around Jesus' heart due to going into hypovolemic shock due to the great loss of blood He experienced. Based on 19:35, I tend to think the blood and water, that came out of Jesus' side, was a supernatural occurrence, rather than a natural one. Even if the medical explanation is true, the real answer is a spiritual one, not a physical one. His blood was poured out so that man might be saved by believing the gospel, as Colossians 1:14 says, "We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Water was poured out as a sign of the living water that God gives to those believing the gospel (Jeremiah 2:13 and John 4:10). This living water is the Holy Spirit (7:38-39), giving eternal life to those in the kingdom (Revelation 22:1-2). Thus, the blood and water, flowing out of Jesus' side, represent the forgiveness of sins that is available through His blood and the continuance of living a sinless life in the age to come through the living water—the Holy Spirit—flowing out to saved Israel in God's kingdom on earth. The water could also be a reference to water baptism that believing Israel, during the at-hand phase of the kingdom, needed in order to be saved (Acts 2:38).

We should also note that I John 5:8 says that "the spirit, and the water, and the blood" "bear witness in earth" that Jesus is the Son of God (I John 5:5). 19:35 says that John bore record of the blood and the water coming out of Jesus' side so that Israel might believe. Therefore, John may have made a big deal out of this, because the blood and the water may be two of the three witnesses from the cross that Jesus is the Son of God, with the third witness being His spirit, that He commended to His Father (Luke 23:46).

**19:36-37** Although Jesus had done everything HE needed to do in order to fulfill prophecy, John mentions two more prophecies about the Messiah that were fulfilled after His death, giving proof positive that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, since a dead man cannot make other men do things. The prophecy about

no broken bones is found in Psalm 34:20. The prophetic scripture about looking "on Him Whom they pierced" is found in Zechariah 12:10, which will see its full fulfillment at Jesus' second coming.

The point is that, while man may have natural explanations for not breaking His bones and for piercing His side, God, in His foreknowledge, prophesied these things would take place with the Messiah, as further proof that He is the Messiah. This is important, since, in the prophetic timeclock, the Antichrist would come not long after this, and he will not fulfill these prophecies, which proves that Jesus is the Son of God, rather than the Antichrist being the true Christ.

**19:38** Messianic prophecies continue to be fulfilled. Joseph of Arimathaea was a rich man. Thus, "He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich" (Isaiah 53:9) is now fulfilled.

**19:39** We now see the complete transformation of Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a Jewish religious leader (3:1). At first, He came to Jesus at night (3:2) so he would not be criticized by the religious leaders. Then, he took Jesus' side in a debate among the religious leaders (7:50-51). Now, he is with a disciple of Jesus, helping to bury Jesus' body, when the 11 apostles are nowhere to be found. As such, Nicodemus is a picture of the transformation that Jesus sought to perform for the nation of Israel as a whole so that they all may enter God's eternal kingdom on earth.

At the same time, we see that no one expects Jesus to rise from the dead. After all, Nicodemus is carrying 100 pounds of embalming fluid and perfume. That is an unnecessary hassle and expense, since Jesus will rise three days later. Yet, no one says something like, "You idiot. Save that for someone else. Jesus will rise from the dead soon," even though many had witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus not many days prior to this. Granted, Nicodemus has great intentions, but he does this in unbelief regarding Jesus' resurrection. As such, he is a picture of religion. Christianity is full of sincere people, who are trying to work their way to heaven, ease a guilty conscience, and/or appear good in the eyes of men. They may have good intentions, but their works show unbelief in the crosswork of Christ, Who bore ALL of their sins for them (Ephesians 1:7).

**19:41-42** Isaiah 53:9 says that He made His grave with the rich and the wicked. Most people take this to mean that the rich was Joseph's grave, while the wicked were the malefactors hanging on the cross next to Him. However, the verse says "grave," and so it seems more likely that the tomb, that Jesus was buried in, was among wicked people, as well. Since the grave was close by, there probably were others, who had been crucified, buried close by.

Adam and Eve sinned in a garden, and so it is appropriate that the curse of sin be lifted by having Jesus buried in a garden. The fact, that He was buried in a new sepulchre, means that He was both virgin born and virgin buried.

**19:41- 20:1** These verses tell you that there was barely enough time to bury



Jesus, much less actually steal His body. Joseph and Nicodemus quickly buried Him so that they would not be defiled for eating the passover. Then, no one could come to the tomb for the next two days, because they were both sabbaths. Therefore, the first opportunity that Jesus' followers had to go to His grave was three days later, after Jesus had already risen from the dead. Therefore, Jesus was not in the tomb long enough to mourn over His death, which is appropriate, since Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection represents God's eternal victory over Satan and his forces (Colossians 2:14-15).

**20** Jesus rises from the dead (v. 1), ascends to the Father to atone for Israel's sins (between verses 18 and 19), and then appears to His disciples to restore their belief in Him (vs. 19-31).

**20:1** The remaining 11 apostles (12 minus Judas Iscariot) thought that their Messiah would overthrow the Romans and set up God's kingdom on earth with Israel ruling right then. When Jesus willingly died instead, they gave up on their Messiah, such that they did not even come to His grave to mourn, as was the Jewish custom. Of course, they were also scared of the Roman guards, who were guarding His tomb (Matthew 27:64-66). It is Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus cast seven devils (Mark 16:9), who comes to the tomb.

Christianity likes to say that they have a sunrise service on Easter because Jesus rose at sunrise. However, the sunrise service is associated with pagan worship. Ezekiel 8:16 shows men at the temple of the Lord, who are worshipping the sun toward the east. Since the sun rises in the east, this shows that they were worshipping the sun at sunrise. Therefore, Easter sunrise service has its origin in paganism. Also, note that Jesus did not rise at sunrise. Rather, He rose BEFORE sunrise. He rose from the dead in the middle of the night. After He rose from the dead, the stone was rolled away by an angel (Matthew 28:2), not so Jesus could get out, but so man could see that He had risen from the dead—the tomb is now empty.

**20:2** Mary Magdalene's unbelief is astounding here. She knew: 1) That Jesus had recently raised Lazarus from the dead, 2) That Jesus had promised to raise Himself from the dead, 3) There were Roman guards making sure no one moved Jesus' body, and 4) The angel of the Lord sat on the sepulchre's stone and told her that "He is risen" (Matthew 28:2-6). Yet, she STILL does not believe! In spite of all of this evidence, she thinks that someone took Jesus' dead body and put it in a different tomb (20:2)!

**20:5-8** There are a lot of details here that appear insignificant, but they must be important since God tells them to us. In 20:5, we are told that John "saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in." In 20:8, we are told that he "went in..., saw, and believed." I think he did not believe the first time he saw. John saw only with his physical eyes, but then he saw with his spiritual eyes when he actually went into the tomb. Therefore, he believed. Peter went into the tomb and saw with his physical eyes, but he did not see with his spiritual eyes. Peter still does not believe that Jesus is risen from the dead.

The fact, that the napkin and the linen clothes are wrapped and lying there, shows that no one stole Jesus' body. After all, if there were Roman guards outside the tomb and someone somehow slipped by them, he would take the body and run. He would not carefully unwrap the linen clothes, put them in one place, and then unwrap the napkin and put it in another place before running off with the body. Yet, Peter believes his religious view over the evidence clearly in front of him.

This also shows that Jesus is the One, Who raised Himself from the dead, just like He said He would (10:18). In Lazarus' resurrection, someone had to take away the stone for Lazarus (11:39) and then unbind him from his graveclothes and from the napkin (11:44). That is because Lazarus had no power over death. By contrast, Jesus rose from the grave Himself, took off His grave clothes and napkin, neatly put them away, and then got out of the grave without ever moving the stone. At least, that is what probably happened, since Jesus said He would raise Himself from the dead, only John's account of the resurrection mentions the grave clothes and napkin, and John is writing to show Jesus as God.

Some say Jesus' folded napkin is a sign of His second coming, since a folded napkin at the dinner table meant that the master was not finished eating. That makes for a nice, little story, but it is completely made up. There is no evidence of any such Jewish custom, and the napkin was something Jesus' head was in (11:44; 20:7). It was not something to wipe your mouth with. These garments were of linen, and the high priest wore linen garments (Exodus 28:4), including a linen mitre with a holy crown on top of it (Exodus 29:6). Therefore, I think we are told of these garments to connect Jesus' sacrifice with His priestly ministry, offering Himself as the complete Passover Lamb to atone for Israel's sins.

When He comes back, He will have many crowns, because He is king over the whole earth (Revelation 19:12,16). Therefore, He lays aside His priestly garments (the linen clothes and napkin) to pick up His kingly garments in heaven. In fact, when the high priest sacrificed for the people's sins, he would "come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and...put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and...leave them there" (Leviticus 16:23). This may explain why John did not go in to the tomb at first. I may be giving John too much credit here, but, if he remembered the scripture and thought of Jesus as the Passover Lamb sacrifice when he saw the grave clothes, he may have thought he was not allowed to go into this holy place, lest he die. But, then, when he saw Peter go in and not die, John then went in himself, seeing that it was safe to go in.

**20:9** Despite all that Jesus had told them, they still did not believe that He would rise from the dead until after Jesus had already risen from the dead. This shows that the gospel of the kingdom that the disciples preached (Luke 9:6) could NOT have been to believe in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection as atonement for sins, because they never knew that would happen until at least two years after they began preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Instead, the disciples believed all along that Jesus, as their Messiah, would overthrow the Romans and establish God's kingdom on earth with Israel ruling over the nations right then.

**20:10** Even though their Lord had risen from the dead, the disciples were still running in fear (20:19). Peter and John just stayed long enough to see the tomb and then got out of there. Since their Messiah has the power over death, why would they be scared of what man could do to them (Psalm 118:6)?

**20:11** This Mary is Mary Magdalene (20:1,18), not Mary, the mother of Jesus. She came to the grave to weep, and that is what she does, even though Jesus has risen from the dead! Jesus' mother is probably in the disciples' home under lock and key. After all, Jesus asked John to take care of her for Him (19:26-27).

**20:12-16** Mary Magdalene needs a LOT of evidence before she will believe that Jesus rose from the dead. She saw the stone rolled away (20:1). She saw an angel, who told her that Jesus had risen from the dead (Matthew 28:2-6). She saw Peter and John go into the sepulchre, and John believed Jesus rose from the dead (20:6-8). Now, Mary goes into the sepulchre herself and sees two angels. After all of that, her response is "they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Then, she sees Jesus, and she asks Jesus where Jesus is! It is not until He speaks that she finally realizes that Jesus is alive. The sad thing is that Mary is one of Jesus' believers. How, then, did unbelievers react to Jesus' resurrection?!

**20:12** The two angels sit at the head and the foot of "where the body of Jesus had lain." Jesus was the complete Passover Lamb, giving His life for the sins of Israel. On Yom Kippur, when sins were atoned for each year, the blood was put on the mercy seat in the holy of holies where God dwelt (Leviticus 16:14-15 and Exodus 25:22). There were two cherubim, one on each side of the mercy seat (Exodus 37:8). We have a picture of this holy of holies here. The sacrifice (Jesus' body) was on the ground, and now two angels sit on either side of where Jesus' body was.

**20:13,15** Both the angels and Jesus ask Mary why she is weeping. If she believed that Jesus would die and rise again for the sins of Israel, she would be rejoicing that "it is finished" (19:30), instead of weeping.

**20:16** Jesus said, "the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out..., and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" (portions of John 10:3-4). Mary may not have believed Jesus' words and all the evidence showing that He had risen from the dead, but she did recognize the good shepherd's voice when he called her by name. Therefore, she is one of God's sheep. She makes for a good picture of a sheep, because sheep are pretty stupid animals, yet they know the shepherd. So, too, Jesus' followers were pretty stupid spiritually just after Jesus' resurrection, but at least they know their shepherd.

**20:17** Jesus tells Mary not to touch Him because He has not yet ascended to His Father. Yet, 8 days later (20:26), Jesus tells Thomas to "reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side" (20:27). But, Acts 1:3 tells us that He was on the earth for 40 days after His resurrection. Therefore, Jesus must have ascended to His Father shortly after His resurrection, came back to earth and spent time with His disciples, and then ascended back to heaven in front of all of them at the end of

the 40 days (Acts 1:9).

The reason Jesus did this was because He had to offer His blood as atonement for sins in the holy place in heaven. Hebrews 9:11-12 says that “Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His Own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Hebrews 9:24 says, “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Therefore, Jesus rose from the dead and then ascended to heaven to offer His blood in heaven as high priest for Israel so that their sins might be atoned for in the true tabernacle in heaven. He then came back to earth, restored the little flock, and instructed them further concerning things of the kingdom so that they might be ready to endure unto the end of the tribulation period and enter into God’s eternal kingdom on earth. The disciples could not touch Him until He did this, as they were not cleansed to handle the sacrifice. Only Christ Himself was pure and could bring His Own blood as the payment for sins into the true tabernacle in heaven. Only John mentions Him doing this, because only God could be high priest in heaven, and John shows Jesus as God (Hebrews 7:1-3).

Note also that Jesus makes a point of telling Mary that the Father is still the disciples’ Father and God. They may be in unbelief at this point, but Jesus knows that their faith will soon be restored, which is what John will spend the rest of his book telling us about.

**20:19** Jesus must have ascended to the Father, offered Himself as the payment for sins, and then returned to the earth, all between verses 18 and 19. If Jesus had not done this, He could not give them the Father’s peace, for man has no peace with God apart from Jesus’ shed blood (Romans 5:1). Also, the parallel passage in Luke has Jesus telling His disciples to “handle Me, and see” (Luke 24:39), which could only happen after Jesus’ ascension to the Father (20:17).

Note also in this verse how the disciples are still afraid of the Jewish religious leaders, but Jesus gives them peace. This is a picture of what will happen with the little flock during the tribulation period. They will be hiding from apostate Israel so that they are not killed, but they will have peace during that time through the Holy Ghost being in them.

Finally, note in this verse that Jesus came “and stood in the midst” even though “the doors were shut.” I Corinthians 15:20 says that Christ is “the firstfruits of them that slept.” Therefore, Jesus has the same resurrection body that we will have, which means we will also be able to dematerialize in one place and materialize in a different place once we receive our new, glorified, uncorrupted bodies. We also saw, from 20:14-16, that Jesus’ glorified body looked a little different from His previous body, but He is still recognizable as Jesus. That is because the curse of sin, not being on the glorified body, makes it look a little different due to its clothing of light (Psalm 104:2).

**20:20** Although John saw the empty tomb and believed that Jesus rose from the dead (20:8), he was not glad until he actually saw the Lord. Similarly, the tribulation saints will believe that Jesus is alive, but they will not actually be glad until they see Him at His second coming.

**20:21** Jesus sends the disciples with the same commission that the Father gave Him, which means that they are sent only “unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24). They are to preach the gospel of the kingdom (“Repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38)) and cast out devils and heal the sick (Mark 16:17-18) so that the lost sheep may become found sheep. With responsibility comes right, and so Jesus will also appoint them a kingdom as the Father had appointed Jesus a kingdom (Luke 22:29).

**20:22** It does not appear that they receive the Holy Ghost at this time because Jesus tells them, in Acts 1:28, that “ye SHALL receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” The “power” is to remit or retain sins (20:23). Thus, this breathing on them is probably a demonstration to the disciples of what receiving the Holy Ghost will be like, as Acts 2:2 says that the Holy Ghost came upon them with “a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” Jesus’ breathing on them, then, let them know that, when this “rushing mighty wind” comes in, it would be the Holy Ghost coming upon them.

**20:23** Christians say that John is the only gospel writer without “the Great Commission,” but it is right here in this verse. Each gospel writer gives the aspect of the Great Commission that coincides with his portrayal of Jesus. Matthew portrays Jesus as King; therefore, He uses His power (Matthew 28:18) as King to send the disciples to “all nations” and teach them the King’s commands (Matthew 28:19-20). Mark portrays Jesus as servant; therefore, He sends the disciples out to serve by healing the sick and casting out devils (Mark 16:15-18). Luke portrays Jesus as man; therefore, the disciples preach the gospel, which is what man must believe to be saved (Luke 24:47). John portrays Jesus as God; therefore, He gives the disciples the power to forgive sins, which is something only God has the power to do (Matthew 9:2,8) until given to man.

Jesus gave them this power because the nation of Israel, as a whole, was subject to God’s wrath for killing their Messiah. If members of Israel believe the gospel, their sins are forgiven them so that they do not experience God’s wrath at His second coming. The disciples only had the power to forgive sins through the power of the Holy Ghost residing in them (20:22), because they need the Holy Ghost for them to know who has believed the gospel and who has not believed.

It is this power to forgive or retain sins that Jesus was talking about when he told Peter that He would give him the keys to the kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19). A failure to rightly divide the word of truth is why the Catholics say that they have this power today. Fundamental Christianity looks at the Catholics and thinks they are crazy. However, the Baptists are just as crazy for trying to apply the

commission of Matthew 28:19-20 to themselves today, when that commission will not be in force until Jesus' millennial reign. Both groups, the Catholics and the Baptists, try to use these verses today so that they can get more money from their followers (I Timothy 6:10).

**20:24** It seems that, once Jesus was crucified, Thomas had stopped believing the gospel, because Thomas was not with the disciples when Jesus first appeared to them. It is as if the other 10 had to convince him to come back. Since Jesus would not lose any of the sheep given Him (17:12), Jesus later made a special appearance to the disciples just so Thomas could be restored (20:27).

**20:25** For this statement, Thomas is known as "Doubting Thomas." However, he was not any worse than the other disciples, because the other disciples, with the exception of John, also had to handle Jesus before they believed (Luke 24:39). Moreover, you could make a case for Thomas having greater faith at one point than the other disciples did because he led the disciples to Jerusalem, even though he thought they would be killed along with Jesus (11:16).

**20:26** Eight is the number of resurrection or a new beginning. Thomas now gets a new beginning thanks to Jesus' resurrection. How appropriate, then, that Jesus appears to him eight days later. Note the lack of boldness of the disciples in that they are still meeting behind closed doors. This shows that they did not receive the Holy Ghost in 20:22. Contrast this with Acts 4:1-3 when the Jewish religious leaders actually arrested Peter and John, and their response was to pray for even more boldness to preach the gospel (Acts 4:29). This boldness came from the Holy Ghost (Acts 4:31). Here, though, before the Holy Ghost's descension upon them, they are scared of these same religious leaders even though they have yet to arrest them. Note again that Jesus, in His new, glorified body, is able to appear in the middle of His disciples, having gone through walls to get to them. As in 20:21, His greeting is "peace be unto you." This is not some pious, holy greeting, as religious leaders use it today. Rather, it means that God's peace is extended to them as a result of Jesus' death on the cross for their sins.

**20:27-28** Jesus has specifically appeared to the disciples so that Thomas will be restored. Remember that He told the Father that He kept all that the Father had given Him—"none of them is lost" (17:12). Jesus appears, then, to Thomas, so that he will not be lost. Thomas' reaction is that he believes. As a result, he is a type of Israel at the end of the tribulation period. At that time, they will "look upon [Jesus] Whom they have pierced" (Zechariah 12:10). "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zechariah 13:1), just like a fountain of forgiveness was opened for Thomas here.

**20:29** In Matthew 5:3-11, Jesus gives nine "Blessed" statements, which are a reference to positions of authority that the tribulation saints will receive in God's kingdom on earth for preaching the gospel of the kingdom unto the end, as summed up in Matthew 5:12 with regard to the great reward they will receive. During the tribulation period, the little flock will not see Jesus' physical body.

They will have to rely upon God's Word to them over the lies of the Antichrist and apostate Israel. If they do this, they will be blessed in the kingdom, as Jesus promised in Matthew 5:3-11. This is the meaning of Jesus' statement here that "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

People view Jesus' statement, here, as a rebuke of Thomas, which it is. However, in Luke 24:36-41, Jesus appeared to the disciples in a similar manner, and they believed not. Therefore, it seems that, of the 11 disciples, Thomas is the only one who believed when he first saw the risen Lord, even to the point that he proclaimed, "my Lord and my God" (20:28). While Jesus uses Thomas to show that others are blessed for believing without seeing, if Thomas' reaction would have been the same as the other 10 disciples' reaction in Luke 24:36-41, he would not have believed and Jesus could not have used him as an example of belief. Therefore, if anything, Thomas should be called "Believing Thomas," rather than "Doubting Thomas."

**20:31** This verse tells you John's purpose for writing his book. John shows Jesus as God. However, he is also trying to get people to believe the gospel of the kingdom (repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38)). In Acts 2:14-36, after the Holy Ghost had come, Peter preached Jesus as the Messiah to show Israel they are subject to God's wrath, leading to the gospel of the kingdom for those wanting to escape God's wrath. Therefore, John writes his book so that Israel "might believe that Jesus is the Christ" so that they might believe the gospel of the kingdom and "have life through His name," instead of condemnation for killing Him (Matthew 27:25; Acts 2:23).

**21** In spite of Jesus' appearances to them, the disciples have stopped following Jesus (v. 3). Jesus brings them into a state of believing again (v. 12). Then, He restores Peter as their leader (vs. 15-17), and He instructs him to follow Jesus to the death, even if other members of the little flock will not be killed (vs. 18-23).

**21:1** Tiberias is the sea of Galilee (6:1). It was at the sea of Galilee that Jesus first called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be His disciples (Matthew 4:18-22). Now that the disciples have given up on following Jesus, they are back on the sea of Galilee, and Jesus has to call them again to be His disciples.

**21:2-3** Although Jesus has appeared to the disciples on a couple of occasions and promised them peace and the Holy Ghost, they have still given up on working for the kingdom of God. We see only 7 of Jesus' disciples together here, and they have decided to go back to living the life they were living before Jesus came. This shows how difficult it is to go against religious beliefs that are engrained in your mind. Not even the physical appearance of the Lord after His resurrection was enough for them to go back to following Jesus. Similarly today, it is very difficult for people to go against Christianity's teachings of salvation that is either earned or kept by works and believe in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection alone as atonement for sins.

Jesus had said that “no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). They were to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24). That is exactly what the disciples did. In Luke 5:6, we see Peter get the biggest catch of fish he had ever had, yet Peter, James, and John “forsook all and followed Him” (Luke 5:10-11), because Jesus said He would make them “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). Now, though, Peter goes back to fishing and the other disciples follow him. This shows two things: 1) The disciples have gone back on their promise to forsake all and follow Jesus, even though Jesus has risen from the dead and appeared to them, and 2) The disciples follow Peter as their new leader, because Jesus had appointed him as such (Matthew 16:18-19). Therefore, Jesus must appear to Peter to restore him to believing the gospel of the kingdom and preaching it to the lost sheep of Israel, rather than going back to the world by fishing. Otherwise, Peter will be lost, the little flock will follow him into the lake of fire, and the rest of Israel will not be saved. God’s entire plan of reconciling the earth back to Himself through the nation of Israel at that point in time now rests on Jesus getting Peter to stop fishing!

**21:3-4** Peter’s fishing all night and not catching anything represents the majority of Israel who will spiritually sleep during the tribulation period (Matthew 25:5), not preaching the gospel of the kingdom during that time. Then, the morning’s coming represents Jesus’ second coming at the end of the tribulation period when He restores spiritually sleeping Israel so that they enter the kingdom (Matthew 25:10). The fact, that the disciples do not recognize Jesus, shows that they are in spiritual darkness, which is all the more reason Jesus has to come and restore them.

**21:5** In 15:14, Jesus told the apostles that they are His friends, if they do whatsoever He commands them. Because the apostles are in unbelief at this time and have disobeyed Jesus, He calls them “children,” here, rather than friends.

**21:3,6** We can see the parallels between this story and the story in Luke 5:4-11. When Jesus first called Simon, he had been fishing all night and caught nothing (Luke 5:5). Then, Jesus had him catch the greatest amount of fish he had ever caught (Luke 5:7) and told him that he would now “catch men” (Luke 5:10), meaning that he would preach the gospel of the kingdom to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. At Jesus’ arrest, Peter had completely abandoned God’s work, going back to fishing. Therefore, Jesus has to call him again. Again, Peter caught nothing all night (21:3), and again he catches a great multitude of fish at Jesus’ command (21:6), which shows that Jesus is now restoring Peter to his position of catching men for the kingdom.

The instruction by Jesus to cast their net on the other side is symbolic of how the little flock has to do things God’s way in order to save the lost sheep of Israel. They cannot add or subtract from the gospel, as Christianity does today.

**21:7** Note that Peter is so lost that he does not even recognize that it is the Lord. It takes the eyes of faith to recognize, and John believes (20:8). Therefore, John recognizes the Lord. II Corinthians 5:7 says, “we walk by faith, not by sight,” and



that is what John is doing here. John did not recognize the sight of Jesus (21:4), but He did recognize the work of Jesus as being from the Lord. That means that John walked by faith, since faith is the “evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Peter then believes when he hears the word from John and swims out to meet Jesus on the shore.

Peter’s nakedness represents his unbelief. When Adam and Eve sinned, “they knew that they were naked” (Genesis 3:7), and they were ashamed because the Lord God had a clothing of light that they did not have (Psalm 104:2). Similarly for Peter, he was fine with his nakedness, until the Lord came in His clothing of light. Peter then recognized his nakedness and clothed himself. The problem is that Peter used his own clothes, much like Adam clothed himself in fig leaves (Genesis 3:7). We are told that Peter “girt” the coat unto him, which indicates that he tied the coat around his waist to cover his private parts. Similarly, Adam and Eve clothed themselves with an apron of fig leaves. It should not surprise us that Mormons also wear aprons as sacred garments for their priests. What Peter really needed was God’s clothing, which is what Jesus is about to give him spiritually by restoring him as the leader of the little flock (21:15-17), much like God gave Adam a clothing of animal skin (Genesis 3:21).

**21:8,11** Peter caught the fishes, but he left them behind. Yet, the fishes were safely brought to land, even though the net was not strong enough to hold 153 fishes. This is a sign of how the little flock will “catch men” during the tribulation period by preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and God will keep them safe so that none of them is lost (17:12), even though the little flock does not have the capacity to keep them safe themselves, as shown by the inadequate net.

**21:9-13** You may think that the analogy of equating the fish to men is lost when Jesus is seen frying fish, but it is not. Note carefully that the disciples bring the fish they caught, but they do not eat those fish. Rather, they dine on the meal that Jesus has already prepared for them—meat and bread, representing His body and blood, sacrificed for the sins of Israel. Yet, Jesus has them bring the fish to the supper. As such, this is a type of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7). At the end of the tribulation period, Jesus prepares a cleansing meal for the little flock to enter God’s kingdom, and the little flock comes to the supper along with those whom they have gotten to believe the gospel of the kingdom, as represented by the fish they brought to Jesus here.

Also note that they did not catch the fish on their own. On their own, they caught nothing (21:3). It was only by obeying God’s instruction that they were able to catch fish (21:6). So, too, in the tribulation period, the little flock will only bring the lost sheep of the house of Israel into God’s kingdom by preaching the gospel of the kingdom that God has given them and by performing the miracles of casting out devils and healing the sick that God has given them to perform. If they try to work on their own, they will not bring lost sheep into God’s kingdom.

**21:12** The disciples now know that it is the Lord, while they did not know this at first (21:4). This shows them going from unbelief to belief. Now, Jesus has a little flock of believers again, and He will reinstate Peter as their leader (21:15-17).

**21:14** This is Jesus' third appearance to His disciples, and He prepares a meal for them. This probably means that Jesus will have the Marriage Supper of the Lamb at His third appearance after the end of the tribulation period, as well. His first appearance is in the clouds (Revelation 19:11). His second appearance is probably when He gathers the little flock into His arms (Isaiah 40:11). His third appearance, then, would be the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

**21:15-17** With the little flock being restored to belief in Jesus (21:12), Jesus now restores Peter as the leader of the little flock (Matthew 16:18-19). To overthrow Peter's three denials of Jesus (18:17,25,27), Jesus has Peter say three times that he loves Him. Since Peter loves Jesus and Jesus has appointed him as the leader of the little flock, Jesus instructs him three times to "feed My lambs" or "feed My sheep." A lamb is a young sheep. Since the little flock is young, spiritually speaking, at first, Jesus says to "feed My lambs." Then, they grow, and Peter is to "feed My sheep." This is why, when the dispensation of grace starts with Paul, Peter agrees to go "unto the circumcision," while Paul goes "unto the heathen" (Galatians 2:9). Peter sticks with the saved Jews, because Jesus had commissioned him to feed God's sheep.

Also, Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter in relation to him becoming the leader of the little flock (Matthew 16:17-19). Since Peter is not the leader again until after 21:17, due to his previous denials of the Lord, Jesus addresses him as "Simon" all three times in these verses.

**21:18-19** Jesus prepares Peter to "feed My sheep" by telling him he will suffer for doing so. Peter will be taken away to be crucified just like Jesus was taken away to be crucified. Although we are not told in scripture, history says that Peter was crucified upside down because he did not want to die in the same manner as Jesus died. Therefore, Peter follows Jesus in that he is crucified to death. Note that Peter, like Jesus, glorifies God in his death because others will see that he is willing to die for the cause of Christ, which will help those remaining to press on in building God's kingdom.

**21:20-23** Jesus has told Peter that he will be crucified for Christ. Peter asks what will happen to John. Jesus' response is that Peter should follow Jesus regardless of what happens to John. The point is that each member of the little flock should be willing to die for Jesus in the tribulation period, and not think it is unfair when they are being killed for Jesus while other members of the little flock are not killed.

In 21:23, John is very careful to clarify what Jesus said. The reason is because, if Israel accepts the kingdom, the tribulation period would have started in Acts 7, and Jesus would have come back about 8 years after Jesus' statement here. However, since Israel did not accept the kingdom, the dispensation of grace began in Acts 9, and the tribulation period has been put on hold for 2,000 years and

counting. Therefore, if Israel accepted the kingdom, John would not die, but he did die because Israel did not accept the kingdom. Because the dispensation of grace was a mystery until revealed to Paul in Acts 9, Jesus could not discuss the latter possibility. Therefore, He just said, “If I will that he tarry till I come” (21:23), and John emphasizes this, in 21:23, so that no one can accuse Jesus of lying, since John died before Jesus came back.

**21:24** This verse is used to support the view that, when John refers to “the disciple whom Jesus loved” or “another disciple,” he is referring to himself. That is likely the case.

**21:25** Jesus did so many things in His 3 ½ year earthly ministry that it could not all be written down. The purpose of the book of John is not to be an exhaustive biography, or even a biography at all, of Jesus. Rather, it is written to show “that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” so that Israel might have life through believing the gospel that He taught them (20:31). That is why these certain miracles and sayings of Jesus are recorded, while others are not. In other words, these miracles and sayings are sufficient evidence to show that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

John says that the world could not contain all the books that would be written if God gave an exhaustive biography of Jesus. People say this is hyperbole. However, John is not just referring to listing all miracles or all things He said. Rather, He is referring to explaining everything that He did in relation to the spiritual realm, as well as the physical realm. As such, it would probably exhaust all paper and ink to explain thoroughly how Jesus triumphed over Satan and his forces and made an open show of them with the cross (Colossians 2:14-15). Therefore, I believe John’s statement is true. It is not hyperbole. This means that we get to spend eternity learning the details of God’s love for us through the cross!