

Through the Bible Book by Book

New Testament

by Myer Pearlman

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JOHN John 1 to 6

Theme: The Gospel of John is an accumulation of testimony to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. It was written by John in response to an appeal from the Church - already possessing the other Gospels - for the deeper truths of the Gospel, and written with a view to furthering the spiritual life of the Church. It contains the substance of John's preaching to the Church of those spiritual truths that he had received from the Lord. John's purpose in this Gospel is to present Christ to all Christians as the incarnate Word of God.

Author: John the apostle. Reliable writers of the early centuries tell us that John wrote his Gospel at the end of the first century, and that it was substantially the embodiment of his preaching of the deeper truths that he had learned from intimate communion with Christ.

Of all the apostles, John enjoyed the closest intimacy with the Master. He belongs to the inner circle consisting of himself, Peter and James, the members of which alone Jesus permitted to be present during the great crises of His ministry - such as the transfiguration and the agony in Gethsemane. It was John who leaned upon his Master's breast during the Passover Supper; he it was, who, when the other disciples had fled, followed his Lord to the judgment (John 18:15); of all the apostles, he was the only one who stood by the cross to receive the Lord's dying message. John 19:25-27.

This intimacy and communion with the Lord together with a half century of experience as a pastor and evangelist, well qualified him to write that Gospel which contains the most spiritual and sublime teachings concerning the person of Christ.

To Whom Written: To the Church in general.

The Gospel of John was written many years later than the other Gospels. The latter, speaking generally, contained an evangelistic message for unspiritual men; they were missionary Gospels. After churches had been established by the labors of the apostles, there came a request from Christians everywhere for a statement of the deeper truths of the Gospel. To meet this demand, John wrote his Gospel. That this Gospel was written primarily for Christians may be seen by the following facts:

1. The teaching it contains concerning some of the profoundest themes of the Gospel - the preexistence of Christ, His incarnation, His relation to the Father, the person and work of the Holy Spirit - indicate that it was written for spiritual people.

2. The writer takes for granted that those to whom he is writing are acquainted with the other three Gospels, for he omits most of the well-known incidents of the Lord's life, excepting, of course, those relating to the passion and resurrection, without which no Gospel could be complete.

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I. The Foreword. 1:1-18

1. Christ's manifestation in eternity. 1:1-5.
2. Christ's manifestation in time. 1:6-18.

The Synoptics begin their history by recording the earthly origin of Christ. Matthew and Luke both record His virgin birth.

John takes it for granted that Christians everywhere are acquainted with these facts, and omitting the record of His earthly origin, describes His heavenly origin. Although John does not give a direct account of the virgin birth of Christ, he refers indirectly to it in verse 14. Notice the name by which John refers to Christ - the Word. Christ is called the Word, because, as our words are the expression of our thoughts and character, so Christ was the expression of God's thought for us and of His character, yea, of His very essence.

How did the world receive its Creator (v. 10)? Which may be called the saddest verse in the Bible (v. 11)? What was given to those who did receive Him? To what event does verse 14 refer (Compare Philippians 2:6-8)? What did John say the disciples received (v. 16; Compare Colossians 1:19; 2:9)? What contrast is brought out in verse 17?

II. Christ's Manifestation to the World. 1:19 to 6:71

1. John the Baptist's testimony. 1:19-34.
2. Testimony of the first disciples. 1:35-51.
3. The first miracle and first cleansing of the temple. Ch. 2.
4. Interview with Nicodemus. 3:1-21.
5. John's testimony to his disciples. 3:22-36.
6. Jesus' ministry in Samaria. 4:1-43.
7. The healing of the nobleman's son. 4:43-54.
8. The healing of the impotent man, followed by discourse. Ch. 5.
9. Feeding of the multitude; discourse on the Bread of Life. Ch. 6.

John, like the other evangelists, mentions the ministry of John the Baptist. Since the Baptist was attracting large crowds by his ministry and was ministering a rite which was new to the Jewish religion; - namely, baptism, - the Jewish authorities felt it their duty to investigate the claims of this new preacher. They sent a delegation to question him as to his identity and authority. He humbly confesses that he is nothing but a voice crying in the wilderness (1:23); that his mission is that of the engineers of that day before the coming of an Eastern king; namely, the preparing of the roads before him (1:23); that his baptism was only symbolical and typical of the baptism to be administered by the Messiah (1:26, 27, 33). The next day, John, like a true minister of the Gospel points his hearers a way from himself to Jesus, saying “**Behold the Lamb of God which taketh a way the sin of the world.**” He then reveals one of his reasons for baptizing the Lord; namely, that he might have a revelation of His deity (v. 33).

There is no jealousy in John the Baptist.

The next day he repeats his message and encourages his followers to follow Jesus. One of the two who heard the message was Andrew, the brother of Peter. The other whose name is not mentioned may have been the author of the Gospel, John.

Andrew shows the reality of his spiritual experience by leading his brother Peter to the Messiah. Jesus, seeing in this last-named person one who was destined to become the first living stone of His church, gives him the prophetic name of Cephas (1:42). Jesus then calls Philip, who with enthusiasm, testifies to Nathanael that he has found the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Nathanael can hardly believe that the Messiah has come out of the despised Galilean town. of Nazareth, but he is quickly convinced by Jesus’ supernatural knowledge that He indeed is the King of Israel.

A marriage at Cana gives Jesus an opportunity to manifest His power. His attendance at such a function shows His love for mingling with the people and sanctifying their gatherings with His presence. The joy of this marriage in particular was in danger of being marred and the giver of the feast being disgraced, for the wine had run out.

Mary, knowing her Son’s miraculous powers, and desiring with natural motherly pride to see Him manifest them, informs Him of the fact that there is no wine, this reminder carrying with it the indirect suggestion that He supply some.

Jesus tenderly reminds her that though He has been subject to her until the time of the beginning of His ministry, their relations are now changed (2:4). He is now guided by His heavenly Father, who has timed every event in His life.

The Jews had allowed the spirit of commercialism to violate the sanctity of the temple precincts for scattered over the Court of the Gentiles, were sellers of sacrificial animals and money-changers. Such a desecration of His Father’s house causes Jesus to drive out these merchants from the temple.

Since only a prophet or the Messiah Himself could cleanse the temple, the leaders ask the Lord to prove His authority by a sign. He gives them the sign of His death and resurrection. His words respecting this sign were later made the basis of a false charge. Matthew 26:61.

Jesus' miracles had gained Him many followers (2:23), but Jesus did not trust a faith that depended merely on signs.

One of those who had been impressed by His miracles was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He begins his conversation with Jesus by acknowledging that He is a teacher come from God. Jesus ignores this compliment and abruptly tells Nicodemus that he must be born again. It seems that Nicodemus was convinced that the kingdom of God that Jesus was proclaiming was about to be ushered in and therefore wished to join it.

Our Lord therefore explains that he must be born into it. Nicodemus, sharing the common Jewish view, believed that the kingdom would come with outward show. Jesus shows him that it comes by the mysterious working of the Spirit in the heart (3:8).

Nicodemus believed, together with other Jews, that the kingdom was to be ushered in by the glorious appearing of the Messiah. Jesus taught him that it must be ushered in by the death of the Messiah (3:14).

John the Baptist's disciples, seeing the crowds leaving him and going to Jesus, complain to their master (3:25, 26). John tells them that this is entirely according to God's plan. He was only the friend of the bridegroom; i.e., the one, who according to Jewish custom asks for the hand of the bride and arranges the marriage. His mission was to lead the bridegroom (the Messiah) to the bride (the Jewish nation) (3:29); this done, his mission was ended (3:30).

Chapter 4 records Jesus' interview with a woman of Samaria. Dr. Torrey draws an interesting contrast between her and Nicodemus:

A woman.	A man.
A Samaritan.	A Jew.
A prostitute.	A teacher of Israel.
Came at noon day.	Came at night.
Confessed Jesus at once.	A secret disciple.
Brought a whole city to Christ.	Brought (?) to Christ.

A common need - the Holy Spirit. John 3:5; 4:14: "**There is no difference.**"

Chapter 5 records the beginning of Jesus' conflicts with the Jews respecting His divine claims. He is criticized for healing a man on the Sabbath day. He defends Himself by affirming that God His Father is associated with Him in the work of healing on the Sabbath (5:17). Because of that fact, and because He did nothing apart from the Father (v. 19), He was perfectly justified in healing suffering humanity on the Sabbath.

Jesus then makes some astounding claims. He claims to be the raiser of the dead (vv. 21-29); the One having equal honor with the Father (v. 23); the Judge of all men (vv. 22,27). As witnesses to His claims He appeals to John the Baptist (v. 33); to His works (v. 36); to the Father (v. 37); to the Scriptures (v. 39); to Moses (v. 46).

The feeding of the multitude recorded in chapter 6 marks the culmination of Christ's popularity.

So convinced are the people that He was the Prophet they had been so long waiting for, that they attempt to make Him King. But Jesus refuses this honor for He has come not to reign but to die. In the discourse following this incident (vv. 26-65), Jesus strikes a death blow at His popularity, for while they believe that their salvation is to be brought about by a glorious Messiah, He teaches them that it was to be effected by a dying Messiah.

He first of all rebukes them for seeking for the natural food instead of the spiritual (vv. 26, 27).

On their asking Him what they were to do in order to obtain this true food, He replies that they were to believe in Him (vv. 28, 29). The people then ask for a sign in order that they might believe Him (v. 30), and they mention the fact that Moses gave them the manna from Heaven (v. 31). Our Lord tells them that the manna was simply a type of Himself, the true Manna (vv. 32, 33, 35). He tells them that as Israel rejected the earthly manna so they have rejected the heavenly (v. 36). But though the nation at large has rejected Him, there is a faithful remnant that will come to Him (v. 37), and these He will not cast out, for it is His Father's will to give them everlasting life (vv. 38-40).

The Jews murmur that the Son of a carpenter should claim to come down from Heaven (v. 42).

Jesus tells them that a divine revelation is necessary to convince them of His deity (vv. 44, 45). He then shows how they may obtain eternal life - by eating His flesh and drinking His blood; i.e., by believing in Him as the atonement for their sins.

The Jews do not understand this figurative language; they take it literally (vv. 52, 60). Jesus then tells them that His words are to be taken not literally, but spiritually (v. 63).

Notice the result of this discourse - a sifting of Jesus' disciples (vv. 60-71).

III. Rejection of Christ's Claims. Chaps 7:1 to 12:50

1. Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles. Chap. 7.
2. The woman taken in adultery. 8:1-11.
3. Discourses on the Light of the World, and spiritual freedom. 8:12-59.
4. The healing of the man born blind. Chap. 9.
5. The discourse on the Good Shepherd. 10:1-21.
6. Jesus at the Feast of the Dedication. 10:22-42.
7. The raising of Lazarus. 11:1-46.
8. The final rejection of Christ by the nation. 11:47 to 12:50.

The brethren of Jesus urge Him to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem and manifest His works before the people; for they reason that if He really is the Messiah, He ought to make a public proclamation of His claims instead of lingering in an obscure Galilean town (7:1-5).

As yet they did not believe His claims, although the time came when they did. Acts 1:14.

Jesus replies that the hour for His going to Jerusalem had not yet come. He later goes to the feast in secret (7:10), in order to avoid the caravans of Galilean pilgrims who would recognize Him and perhaps make a public demonstration.

As Jesus begins teaching in the temple, the people are astonished at His preaching, for they know that He had not passed through their theological schools (7:15). Jesus explains that His teaching comes direct from God (v. 16), and if anyone be really willing to do God's will he will find that His teaching is true.

Jesus then defends His sincerity, showing that He is not seeking His own glory (v. 18).

Looking into the hearts of the people, He sees their hatred for Him, and accuses them of the violation of Moses' law (vs. 19). He then defends His action in healing the man on the Sabbath day (vv. 21-24; compare Chap. 5). Seeing Jesus speaking so boldly, some of the people wonder whether the rulers have accepted Him (v. 26). Others cannot believe that He is the Messiah for they know the place of His residence and parents (v. 27). Jesus acknowledges that they know these things, but He tells them that they are ignorant of the fact that He was sent by God (v. 28).

Some of the people, remembering Jesus' miracles, are inclined to believe that He is the Messiah (v. 31). The Pharisees hearing this, send officers to arrest Him (v. 32). Whereupon Jesus tells them that their desire to get rid of Him will shortly be gratified (v. 33); but that the time will come when they will seek a Deliverer and will not find any (v. 34).

During the Feast of Tabernacles, it was customary for the priests to go to the Pool of Siloam and draw water in a golden pitcher, at the same time chanting Isaiah 12.

The water was then poured out upon the altar. This was considered commemorative of the water given in the wilderness, and typical of the future outpouring of the Spirit upon Israel. It was probably at this point that Jesus arose and proclaimed Himself the Fountain of living waters, the Rock smitten that the whole world might drink (vv. 37-39). On hearing this claim many people acknowledged that He was the Messiah (v. 40), but others objected that He could not be He for He came from Galilee.

The officers of the temple, impressed and awed by Jesus' majestic utterances, do not arrest Him (v. 46). The Pharisees rebuke them, saying that none of the rulers had believed on Him, but only the ignorant people (vv. 47-50). At this point Nicodemus defends the Lord, whereupon the Pharisees angrily affirm that according to the Scriptures, no prophet came out of Galilee (7:52). This was untrue for both Jonah and Elijah were from that region.

The scribes and Pharisees bring before Jesus a woman caught in adultery and ask Jesus whether or not she should be visited with the penalty laid down in Moses' law. This was an attempt to involve the Lord in a dilemma. If He ruled that the woman should be freed it would be a contradiction of His statement that He had not come to destroy, but to fulfill the Law of Moses. Matthew 5:17.

If He ruled that the woman should be stoned according to the law, it might be considered a contradiction of His statement that He had come not to judge, but to save sinners. Our Lord settles this question by transferring the case to the court of their conscience. At that court, His questioners found out that **“all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”**

Jesus then proclaims Himself the Light of the world - a claim truly Divine (8:12).

The Pharisees object that His own testimony does not prove the truth of His claims (v. 13). Jesus answers that He is able to bear witness of Himself for He has a perfect consciousness of His Divine origin and nature (v. 14).

He then refers them to His Father's testimony (v. 18); i.e., to the miracles by which God had confirmed His Son's word. Jesus then accuses the Pharisees of ignorance of the Father (v. 19). Though they reject Him, the day will come when they will seek a Messiah (v. 21), but will not find one. He tells them that after His crucifixion and resurrection, when the Spirit should have been outpoured and mighty works wrought in His name - then they would have abundant evidence of His deity (v. 28).

These sayings caused many of the people to believe on Him (8:30), but Jesus, seeing the weakness of their faith exhorts them to continue in His teaching, which teaching would set them completely free from sin (vv. 31, 32).

Some of the disciples take offense at this saying, for as Jews, they considered themselves free men (v. 33). Jesus explains that the servitude He referred to was the servitude of sin (vv. 34-37). He then shows that they were not Abraham's seed, because they did not perform Abraham's works; namely, the work of faith (vv. 37-40).

He proves the falsity of their claim to be the children of God, by showing them they have rejected God's representative (v. 42). He tells them that their repugnance to the truth and the hatred in their hearts show them to be the children of the devil (v. 44). He challenges them to either convict Him of sin or believe His claims (v. 46).

On His promise of exemption from spiritual death to those who believe on Him, He is accused of exalting Himself above Abraham (v. 53).

Jesus tells them that Abraham foresaw His coming (v. 56). This statement astonishes the Jews who cannot understand how He and Abraham could ever have met (v. 57).

Jesus then affirms His preexistence (v. 58). The Jews understand this to be a claim to deity, and attempt to stone Him as a blasphemer (v. 59).

Jesus' healing of a blind man on the Sabbath day again draws upon Him the hatred of the leaders. After an attempt to prove Jesus a sinner, they are confounded by the arguments of the poor, unlettered man who had been healed (Chap. 9).

Possibly to draw a contrast between the false shepherds who had cast out the healed man from the synagogue (9:34), and the true shepherds, Jesus utters the discourse recorded in 10:1-21. Read Ezekiel Ch. 34 in this connection. In verses 1, 2, He has reference to true pastors, who enter the fold through Himself the door; meaning those who have a Divine call. In verses 8, 9, 12, Jesus evidently refers to false messiahs and prophets who had misled the people and caused their destruction.

At the Feast of the Dedication, the Jews come to Jesus asking Him whether He is the Christ (10:23,24). Jesus tells them that His works and words have proved Him to be the Christ (v. 25), but they have not believed for they are not of His sheep; they have not obeyed the voice of the Divine Shepherd (vv. 26,27).

Jesus then describes the security of His sheep, and concludes with a claim of oneness with God (v. 30).

The Jews attempt to stone Him for claiming to be equal with God. Jesus vindicates His right to call Himself the Son of God by an Old Testament reference. He maintains that in those days rulers and judges were sometimes referred to as gods (vv. 34,35; Psalm 82:6). Therefore if unjust judges, who were temporary representatives of God were called gods, why should not He who was the righteous and eternal Judge call Himself the Son of God (v. 36)? He tells them that they need not believe Him if His works are not divine (vv. 37,38).

The sensation caused by the raising of Lazarus (Chap. 11) brings the priests and Pharisees together in council for the purpose of determining on Jesus' death (11:47).

Caiaphas wishes to put Jesus out of the way for political reasons. He argues that if Jesus is allowed to continue His ministry, His popularity will cause a popular tumult which will excite the suspicion of the Romans, and which will result in the loss of power and office on the part of the rulers, and calamity on the part of the nation. He therefore reasons that it is better for one man to suffer, rather than the whole nation (vv. 49, 50). This is what He meant by His words in verse 50. But God meant them as a prophecy of the atoning death of the Messiah (vv. 51, 52).

Chapter 12 records two events mentioned by the other Evangelists: the anointing of Jesus, and the triumphal entry. During the Feast of the Passover, a request of some Gentiles to see Him (12: 20) calls forth a prophecy of His death which was to bring salvation to the Gentile world (v. 24). He then marks out the path which His disciples must follow - that of self-denial and even death (vss. 25, 26).

Though the thought of a shameful death is utterly repulsive to Him, yet He does not shrink from it (v. 27). He announces His death to be the judgment of the world (v. 31), the defeat of Satan (v. 31), and the means of attracting sin-sick humanity (v. 32).

Chapter 12:37-41 records the general result of Christ's ministry to Israel - rejection of the light followed by spiritual blindness on their part.

The remaining verses of this chapter contain Jesus' last appeal to the nation.

IV. Christ's Manifestation to His Disciples. Chaps. 13-17

1. Farewell discourses. 13-17.
2. Intercessory prayer. Chap. 17.

Chapter 13:1-17 contains the supreme example of Christ's humility.

With full knowledge of His deity (v. 3), He stoops to the most menial of tasks, the washing of His disciples' feet. The reason for this act is explained by Him (vv. 13-17); it was done in part as an example to His followers that they should humble themselves and serve one another. And they needed that lesson. (See Luke 22:24).

There is room for much doubt whether our Lord intended to establish an ordinance of literal foot-washing for all time, particularly since it was the custom of the day for the host to provide water and towel, with a servant to wash his guests' feet, in view of the fact that open sandals were worn and naturally the feet would become soiled by the journey over the dirty street or dusty road.

A much deeper meaning seems to lie here, because what Christ did was altogether in view of His cross and His subsequent session as our High Priest and Advocate at the Father's right hand. **"When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father"** (v. 1), **knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God; He riseth from supper and laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself"** (vv.3,4).

The context here, then, clearly shows that what He did was a type of His future redemptive and priestly work. We take it that He here enacted symbolically this ministry of His to keep clean the feet (the daily walk) of His saints. **"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."** (1 John 2:1).

He says to Peter, **"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."** Peter surely knew that Christ was about literally to wash his feet, but the Lord indicates that the meaning of this act, he would not understand till later in his experience.

Peter, after his terrible lapse in denying Christ, knew then what Christ's words, **"I have prayed for you that your faith fail not,"** really meant, when he was cleansed and restored to fellowship with his Lord.

After the announcement of His betrayal, and the exit of the betrayer, Jesus reveals the spirit that is to characterize the relations of His disciples to one another during His absence; namely, love (v. 34). This fact that they love one another is to be the badge of Christian discipleship (v. 35).

After hearing about the Lord's coming death and departure, the disciples are saddened. It is then that He speaks the comforting words mentioned in chapter 14.

As a cure for their troubled condition, He suggests three things:

- That they have faith in Him (v. 1);
- The fact that He is going to prepare a place for them (v. 2);
- The fact that He is coming again (v. 3).

In reply to Thomas' question as to the way to heaven (v. 5), he replies that He Himself is the way. He is the way because He is the image and the Revealer of the Father (vv. 7, 9). His complete union with the Father is shown by the fact that even the words He spoke and the works He wrought were through the direct power of the Father. And such was to be their union with Him that the disciples were to perform the same works (v. 12). This was to be accomplished through prayer (v. 13).

Obedience to His commandments and love toward Him would result in His sending to them the Comforter, who was now dwelling with, but who would later be in them (vv. 16, 17); it would also result in the Father and the Son manifesting Themselves to them (vv. 21-25). In verse 26 He explains the ministry of the Spirit in relation to the disciples. He makes His last legacy to His disciples - His peace (vv. 27,28).

In the next chapter Jesus explains the relation of the disciples to Him during His absence - a vital, organic union typified by a vine and its branches. He shows how this true vine is kept clean and fruitful; namely by taking away unfruitful branches, and purging the sound branches (v. 2).

They have already been purged by His teaching (v. 3), but He exhorts them to abide in Him in order to maintain this vital union (vv.4-6). He shows them how their prayers may be answered; by abiding in Him, and His words abiding in them (v. 7).

If they bear fruit two results will follow:

- The Father will be glorified,
- They will prove themselves to be true disciples (v. 8).

He exhorts them to continue in His love (v. 9), this to be accomplished by keeping His commandments (v. 10).

Unity among themselves is to be maintained by the spirit of love (vv. 12,13). By keeping His commandments, they come into a closer relationship with Him that of friends (v. 15). Contrary to the usual order, He, the teacher has chosen them His disciples (v. 16). He has chosen them for a specific purpose that of bearing fruit and enjoying a peculiar fellowship in prayer with the Father (v. 16).

The remaining verses of Chapter 15 reveal the attitude of the world toward the disciples. In order that they may not be thrown into consternation and discouragement when persecutions arise, He tells them what to expect from the world (Chap. 16:1-4). They are sad at His leaving them, but it is necessary that He go in order that the Comforter might come (v. 7).

For while He is in the flesh, He can be present only in one place at a time, but seated at the right hand of the Father and sending forth the Spirit, He can be present with everyone of His followers, “**even unto the end of the age.**”

He then explains the threefold ministry of the Spirit in relation to the world:

- He will convict the world of the fact that unbelief in Him is a sin;
- He will reveal the fact that He, the Crucified, is the righteous One; though the evil may prosper and the righteous suffer,
- He will convince the world that there is a judgment to come that will set things right (vv. 8-12).

He then explains the ministry of the Comforter in relation to the disciples (vv. 12-15). Jesus tells them that His departure in death will make them sad but that they will see Him again and their mourning will be turned to rejoicing (vv. 16-22).

They would see Him again first after His resurrection; second, with the eye of faith; and finally, face to face.

After His ascension, it would not be necessary to make their requests to Him (v. 23), neither would it be necessary for Him to ask on their behalf (v. 26), for they would have direct access to the Father (vv. 23, 27). Chapter 17 records the great high priestly prayer of Jesus. We give a simple outline of this prayer:

I. Prayer for Himself. vv. 1-5.

1. For His own glorification.

II. Prayer for His disciples. vv. 6-19.

1. For preservation. v. 11.
2. For sanctification. v. 17.

III. Prayer for all believers. vv. 20-26.

1. For unity. vv. 21,22.
2. For their presence with Him. vv. 24 .

V. Christ’s Humiliation and Glorification. Chaps. 18-21

1. The betrayal and arrest. 18:1-18.
2. The trial before Caiaphas and Pilate. 18:19 to 19:16.
3. The crucifixion. 19:17-42.
4. The resurrection. 20:1-10.
5. The appearances of Jesus to His disciples. 20:10 to 21:25.

Jesus is first brought before Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas for a preliminary hearing (18: 19-23). He is questioned as to His doctrine because they believed that He had been spreading dangerous secret teachings. Jesus defends Himself by asserting that all His teaching has been done openly and in public (vv. 20,21). He is then sent to the high priest for the formal trial, which is described by the other writers.

After His condemnation for blasphemy (Matthew 26 :65), Jesus is led to Pilate for the execution of the sentence. The Jews evidently hope that Pilate will ratify their sentence without asking questions, but he is in no mood to gratify the desire of the priests whom he heartily despised. He tells them to judge Him according to their law; he does not care to judge religious cases (v. 31). But since the power of inflicting capital punishment had been taken away from the Jews years before, they could not now execute the sentence of death (v. 31).

Jesus had been accused of declaring Himself king. Luke 23:2. This was a serious offense in the eyes of the Romans. Pilate therefore questions Jesus concerning His kingdom (vv. 33-35). Our Lord makes it clear that His kingdom is a spiritual one, not a temporal one (v. 36) and that the members of His kingdom are those whose hearts are open to the truth (v. 37).

Pilate makes several attempts to release Jesus, but the determination of the Jews to crucify Him, is stronger than his determination to release Him, and upon the Jews' threatening to report him to the emperor, he yields (19:12, 13).

John, in his account of the crucifixion, mentions some details additional to those found in the other Gospels; namely, Pilate's writing of the accusation (vv. 19-22); the parting of Jesus' garments (vv. 23,24), the committing of His mother to John (vv. 26, 27), the two utterances on the cross (vv. 28,30) and the piercing of Jesus' side. Sometimes the bones of crucified criminals were broken in order to hasten death. In Jesus' case this was not necessary for He was already dead. A fulfillment of prophecy was involved in this incident (vv. 36,37).

The fact that Jesus had died so soon, seems to show that it was spiritual sufferings and not physical, that caused His death, for persons crucified usually lingered for about three days (See Mark 15:44). Physicians tell us that the water and blood issuing from Jesus' side indicated a broken heart.

Note how John, in his description of the empty tomb is careful to mention sufficient details to refute the false report that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body. Matthew 28:11-15.

We shall notice here the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection.

1. To Mary Magdalene. 20:11-18.

2. To the apostles, Thomas being absent (20: 19-23). In order to convince the fearful and unbelieving disciples of the reality of His resurrection, Jesus shows them His wounds. He then gives them their commission (v. 21), their equipment (prophetically and symbolically, v. 22), and their authority (v. 23). Note that the last mentioned verse refers to church discipline. (Compare Matthew 18:15-18).

3. To the apostles, Thomas being present (vv. 24-29). Though loyal in character (11-16), Thomas is skeptical. He will not believe until he sees. His unbelief had evidently delayed the disciples' going into Galilee. Matthew 28:7. Though a skeptic, Thomas' heart is honest; he wants to know the truth. Jesus meets his desire, and Thomas becomes as intensely believing as he was once unbelieving.

4. To the Seven at the Sea of Galilee (Chap. 21). After the miraculous draught of fishes and the meal, Jesus gives Peter his commission as shepherd of His sheep. The thrice-repeated question may refer to Peter's three denials. Verses 20-24 of the same chapter were written by John to correct a false impression that had been produced among the disciples by Jesus' words to Peter (v. 22). It was believed that Jesus meant that John should not die (v. 23). John shows those words did not mean that he should not die, but that, if Jesus willed that John should tarry till He comes, it was none of Peter's concern.

~ end of John ~

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