LUKE AND JOHN

Leader's Guide

Dear Bible Study Leader,

I am so excited about the privilege of beginning this study of the New Testament and of the life, ministry and miracles of our Lord and Savior with you. If you have been through the Old Testament with us as a group leader, you need to know that we are now more than halfway through our journey through the Bible. If you are just joining us now, welcome, to what I call "The best books in the Bible!"

We have surveyed the 39 books of the Old Testament and now come to the challenge of surveying the 27 books of the New Testament. In this course, we begin studying the four Gospels, which will challenge us to share God's Good News. I have often said, "This is my favorite book" or "This is the best book or section of the Bible." I say this frequently because they are special favorites when I am studying them. But now when we come to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, I can honestly, sincerely and emphatically say that we are now coming to the heart of the Bible. I can say this because the Bible is all about Jesus, and these little books are the biographies of Jesus' life. His life was the greatest revelation of truth the world has ever been given (John1:18). Everything Jesus Christ was, everything He said, and everything He did was the greatest revelation God has ever given to this world!

I remind you that we are doing a practical devotional survey study of the New Testament. We will only have time to look at some of the key passages. My prayer is that these studies will help you and those you will be leading to **get into God's Word and get God's Word into you in a way that will make it possible for wonderful and miraculous things to happen in your hearts.**

It is so very important for us to study. Paul told his young disciple Timothy to "…study to show yourself approved unto God, a **workman** that will not be ashamed because he was rightly teaching the Word of God." If we understand the Greek word Paul used for "study" in this passage we realize that it means "to exert yourself, to burn mental energy, to be a workman when you study." I want to challenge you to read and then **study** all the New Testament as we survey this part of the Bible.

As we read and lead others through the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament we want to look for the devotional application of God's Good News to our lives. As we study and teach others we want to consistently be asking and answering the questions:

- What does this say? (Observation)
- What does it mean? (Interpretation)
- What does this mean to me and to those I am leading? (Application)
- What does it mean to God? (Divine Perspective)
- Where else does the Bible teach this truth? (Correlation)

As we move through this study it is my prayer that you will grow to know Jesus like never before and that you will be able to introduce Him to others who desperately need to experience the love, grace, and power of His life in their lives.

God bless you and make you a blessing to others as you become a workman with no need to be ashamed at the judgment seat of Christ because you correctly taught the Word of God.

Dick Woodward
Pastor and Author of Foundations

LEADING THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Foundations has prepared this devotionally practical survey of the foundational books of the Bible. Your role as leader is to guide your group through the study sessions and exercises, helping them to understand the truth, discover the eternal principles, and, most importantly, apply them to their lives. This is a survey study that will take about three months and is designed to be more than just a course. This study is part of a strategic plan to provide you with the tools to nurture and grow personally and to help your church grow both spiritually and numerically.

To help you, we have provided the following tools:

- This Leader's Guide
- Report forms
- Audio of the Luke–John series (Audio Lessons NT 19-30)
- A study booklet on Luke–John
- A set of workbooks

Before class

- Personally start inviting people to come to this spiritual banquet. "'Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests" (Matthew 22:9-10).
- Prepare yourself in prayer for those who will attend. If possible, pray for them by name. Only God can change the hearts of people, and prayer is the most powerful tool. "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1).
- Ask for help. Do not try to do everything yourself. Invite one or two people to help with music, singing, greeting, and keeping records.
- Review the lesson and understand the lesson objective.
- Become familiar with the material; listen, read, and study each lesson and memorize the Bible verse before class time.
- Be sure all materials are ready for each class.
- Make sure the meeting area is adequate and comfortable for the class.

During Class

(Remember to try to keep the class time to one hour and a half.)

- Greet everyone as they arrive. Remember how nice it is when you are welcomed? Extend God's welcome to all. Have someone serve as the greeter and introduce people to one another if they are not already acquainted.
- Open with a time of worship and prayer, asking God to help you and each one understand and apply God's Word to your lives.
- Recite the memory verse.
- Listen to the audio lesson.

- Work through the workbook, inviting discussion with a focus on application. We trust the questions will raise interesting discussion and understanding that will lead to application. If the group is large (more than 10), consider dividing it into smaller groups of three or four people to encourage discussion. Be sure to monitor the time and be careful that the conversation does not detract from the focus of the lesson and the study of God's Word.
- Thank all for coming and encourage attendance at the next class.
- Challenge the students to invite others to join the Bible study.
- Encourage the students to memorize the biblical passages of the lessons each week.

After Each Class

- Gather up all materials.
- Restore the meeting room to the proper order. Leave things more orderly than you found them.
- Fill out and file report forms.
- If you are meeting in someone's home, be sure to thank them for their hospitality.

Special Instructions for Teaching Auditory Learners

It is important to remember that those who cannot read and write learn and retain information differently than those of us who are literate. The auditory learners learn from listening and telling what they have heard. Illiteracy was not an obstacle in Jesus' day. It is good to remember and even tell those in your class that most of the disciples and the majority of the people who first shared and spread the Gospel could not read or write.

In many ways, auditory learners have a greater capacity to learn what they hear than we who must write something down to remember it. Take the time, therefore, to allow your students to hear the Scripture and the lessons, pausing the message and even going back to listen again to a portion if it was not understood, and then allow them to respond to questions. When auditory learners can "story back"—tell in their own words what they have heard and learned—it indicates that they have properly grasped the principle. Therefore, use the study questions to guide the study time as they will help in the learning process. Ask the questions out loud and encourage all to participate. This will lead them into a deeper understanding of God's Word and a stronger relationship with His Son, Jesus the Christ.

The Manifesto of the Messiah

Chapter 1
Audio Lesson: New Testament #19

Objective: To introduce the author, the purposes, and the major themes of the Gospel of Luke.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
—Luke 4:18-19 (Isaiah 61:1-2)

We have now studied the Gospel of Matthew and will move on through the other Gospels, but we will not be specifically studying the book of Mark because everything that is found in Mark is also found in the other three Gospels. Now we begin studying the Gospel of Luke, a well-educated man, a doctor who often traveled with the apostle Paul and learned about the life of Jesus from many eyewitnesses. He was not one of the 12 apostles and probably wasn't even Jewish. He was Greek and addressed his Gospel to Theophilus—which means "lover of God"—a man who was also Greek. Luke was a gifted writer and wrote a very orderly and accurate history.

Luke is the favorite Gospel of many because its portrayal of the Messiah emphasizes Jesus' humanity as the God-Man. It shows His compassion and how He identified Himself with us. All the way through Luke's Gospel, we see the human touch of Jesus.

Luke's Gospel is unique. Many of Jesus' best-known parables, like the stories of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, are found only in Luke. Luke tells us more about the birth and early life of Jesus than any other Gospel writer. Luke gives us a description and a mental picture of Jesus Christ that contributes so very much to the record of the Son of God and the Son of Man as He truly was, and as He really is today. And Luke gives us Christ's manifesto—the clear statement of His mission, the key to the ministry of the Messiah.

1. True or **false**? Luke was one of the 12 disciples.

2. **True** or false? Luke not only wrote the gospel of Luke, he also wrote the book of Acts.

3. True or **false**? Luke was not very well educated, and his writings show that he was not a very accurate historian.

4. True or **false**? Jesus said in His "manifesto" that He came to preach good news to the poor, to set captives free, and to give sight to the blind, but He never really demonstrated these things.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Match the following gospels with each one's special emphasis on Jesus.

a. Matthew **(3)**	1. Jesus as a servant
b. Mark **(1)**	2. Jesus as God
c. Luke **(4)**	3. Jesus as King
d. John **(2)**	4. Jesus as human

6. What other aspects of Jesus' ministry does Luke emphasize? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Judgment
b. Healing
c. Social concerns
d. Long sermons
e. The Holy Spirit

7. What was the Spirit upon Jesus to do?

a. To heal, preach, and set people free
b. To improve people's income and their standard of living
c. To set political prisoners free
d. To start a revolution

8. How did Jesus respond to a man whose friends lowered him through a roof to see Jesus?

a. He rebuked them for damaging the roof.
b. He told them they would have to wait their turn.
c. He forgave the man's sins and then healed him.
d. He told the man to repent first, and then he would consider healing him.

9. Why did Jesus heal the man who was lowered through the roof?

a. To show he really cared and wanted to cure everyone
b. To prove to the friends they had done the right thing
c. Actually, He just made it look like a miracle; the man was not paralyzed.
d. To prove He was God and had the authority to forgive sin

What aspects of Jesus' ministry—His healing, preaching, and setting people free—do you think you most need to experience right now? Is there anything from which you need to be set free and place before God? Is there any area of your life that needs to be healed? Is there any aspect of God's will and His ways about which you need to learn more? If so, what?

_____

_____

_____

Now, is there anyone for whom you need to be a friend and bring them lovingly to Jesus? Who?

_____

_____

Thank God for sending Jesus to show compassion to His people and to free them from the bondage of sin, disease, and darkness. Ask Him to help you understand Him better through this study of Luke and John. Also ask Jesus to meet your needs according to His will and to help you meet the needs of others in His name.

Going Deeper

1. After Jesus declared His manifesto (Luke 4:18), how did He prove that manifesto in Luke chapter 5? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. In what ways did He practice His manifesto, and who were the poor to whom He preached the Good News? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. In what ways did He challenge others to participate with Him in the implementation of His manifesto? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. How does the context in which Jesus gave His discourse about the lost things in chapter 15 demonstrate His challenging of people to participate with Him in the implementation of His manifesto? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. How is the Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16) a positive illustration of someone accepting His invitation to participate with Him in the implementation of His manifesto? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. How is the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus a negative illustration of that same truth? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. In what ways does Luke demonstrate the humanity of Jesus, the fact that He was a Man as well as God? _____
_____
_____
_____

Catch Men

Chapter 2
Audio Lesson: New Testament #20

Objective: To further explore the Gospel of Luke, to understand Jesus' invitation to partner with Him in ministry, and to understand three parables from Luke 15.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

—Luke 5:10-11

"Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. I tell you that in the same way there will more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not repent."

—Luke 15:6-7

Jesus proclaims His mission in chapter four, proves it in chapter five, and then practices His mission in the rest of the book of Luke. Jesus was continuously teaching and training His disciples and challenging others to become partners with Him in His mission. The first clear example of this was the way He recruited Simon, called him Peter, and asked him to follow and become a "fisher of men." Jesus had been teaching by the shore using Peter's boat as a platform. When He finished preaching, He told Peter to put his boat out into deep water and let down his nets—even though Peter had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. When Peter obeyed and his nets were full, he realized that the real fisherman was Jesus—that Jesus can accomplish anything through His servants.

Jesus demonstrated His mission in three parables in Luke 15 about seeking and saving lost people. As a shepherd seeks his lost sheep, a woman seeks a lost coin, and a father seeks a lost son, Jesus came to save sinners and bring them into His kingdom. He invites everyone to join Him in this mission and share His good news with those who are lost.

1. True or **false**? Jesus does not need or want people to partner with Him in His mission. He must do it by Himself.

2. True or **false**? Jesus chose Peter to follow Him because Peter was so well qualified and spiritually mature.

3. **True** or false? When we attempt to lead someone to Christ, we are attempting something that is impossible for human beings to do on our own.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What kind of ministry does Jesus want to accomplish through us?
   a. The same kind of ministry He did on earth
   b. Only what is humanly possible
   c. Only to teach His truth, but not to heal or set people free
   d. None of the above

5. Why was Peter able to catch fish when Jesus instructed him to?
   a. Because he was a skilled fisherman who never failed to catch something
   b. Because of his knowledge of the sea and its currents
   c. Because he never gave up, even when he got tired
   d. Because Jesus was with him

6. How are we filled with God's Spirit?
   a. By fasting and meditating for at least 40 days
   b. By allowing God to have total control of our lives
   c. By memorizing enough scripture to recite it in any situation
   d. By becoming sinless through our obedience to the law

7. When Jesus got into Peter's boat, it pictures our lives being filled with the Spirit. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?
   a. We can catch lots of men.
   b. We can speak in tongues.
   c. We can perform miracles.
   d. We are controlled by the Spirit.

8. How does God view sinners?
   a. As enemies
   b. As people without any hope of redemption
   c. As lost sheep
   d. As people who have become unimportant to His kingdom

9. Why did many of the religious leaders disapprove of Jesus' eating with sinners?
   a. They were concerned for His reputation.
   b. They were concerned for His safety.
   c. They were jealous that they were not invited to the feast.
   d. They did not understand His mission to seek those who were lost.

10. Whom does Jesus authorize to do the work of ministry?

a. Everyone who believes in Him
b. Only those who are ordained as priests and ministers
c. Only those with the proper education
d. Only the righteous who have kept all of God's laws

11. What truths did Peter have to learn? *(choose all that apply)*

a. I am not a fisher of men, but Jesus is
b. I cannot catch men, but Jesus can
c. I do not even want to be a fisher of men, but Jesus wants me to.
d. I did not catch men, but Jesus did because He was with me

In what ways have some of Jesus' followers ministered to you? In what ways can you minister to other people? Jesus is still calling and seeking the lost; have you been found?

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Have you learned the four truths that Peter learned? Jesus is still calling us to come and join Him in catching people. Will you allow Him in your "boat"—your life?

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Thank God for sending Jesus Christ to seek and to save those who are lost. Ask Him to guide you as you seek to join Him in His mission and to give you opportunities to share His good news with others.

Going Deeper

1. As recorded in Luke 5:1-11, why did Jesus tell Peter not to be afraid because he would catch men? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. What did Peter fear, and why did he tell Jesus to go away from him? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. How can you relate this story in Luke 5:1-11 to Matthew 4:19, and also to the very familiar 19th and 20th verses of the third chapter of the book of Revelation? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. In what ways do the two words of Jesus to Peter, "*catch men,*" make a short version of the Great Commission of Jesus, which is given at the end of each Gospel and at the beginning of the book of Acts? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. What four spiritual principles did Peter have to learn before he could be a catcher of men and not just fish? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. Have you learned or are you learning those four spiritual principles yourself today? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. When you realize that Jesus came to minister to the blind, the bound and the brokenhearted when He had a body of His own, how do you think He wants to minister to those people through you and me and all those who are His body today? _____
_____
_____
_____

Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggar, Thief

Chapter 3
Audio Lesson: New Testament #21

Objective: To further understand the Gospel of Luke, the manifesto of the Messiah, and two parables about rich men in Luke 16.

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So, if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

—Luke 16:10-13

Jesus told two parables about rich men in Luke 16 which many times are misunderstood. Both these parables should be seen in the context in which Jesus taught the parables of the lost things in chapter 15. Jesus addressed these two parables to His disciples, but He obviously intended these two stories for the Pharisees as well. The first parable, known as "The Parable of the Unjust Steward," seems like a negative illustration, but it is really a positive statement about participating with Christ in His mission, the Nazareth manifesto. The second story, "The Rich Man and Lazarus," is a very negative statement about a man who was the absolute opposite of the partners Jesus was recruiting.

There are at least two personal applications of these parables: First, we can learn that while we are in this life, we are only stewards or managers of all that God has given us and we should use it all wisely for eternity. Second, these parables teach us to view everyone who intersects our life as the blind, bound, and broken people for whom Jesus came. We should see the people of this world as the lost sheep, coins, and sons. As Lazarus lay at the gates of the rich man, lost people lie at the gates of the Church. If we realize that the Christ who lives in us would like to reach out to these people through us, we can become part of His solution and respond to their needs in this life and in eternity.

1. True or **false**? Jesus expects us to give Him only ten percent of our lives. The rest is for us to control.

2. True or **false**? Jesus taught that to be effective stewards, we might need to be dishonest with other people.

3. **True** or false? God wants us to plan wisely for our future, not just in this life but especially for eternity.

4. True or **false**? Jesus taught that wealth is evil and His followers should give it all away.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. When Jesus teaches about stewardship, which aspect(s) of our lives is He talking about?
   a. Ten percent of our money
   b. Ten percent of all of our resources
   c. All the money, talents, and time we devote to Him at church
   d. All of it—everything God has given us in every area of life

6. Why are we to make wise use of our financial opportunities?
   a. So we can earn our way to heaven
   b. So we save not only ourselves but others
   c. So heaven, our eternal dwelling, will be a welcome experience
   d. So we can become wealthy

7. What does God promise us if we are faithful with the little things like our money?
   a. He promises to make us wealthy and happy.
   b. He promises to protect us from injustice and evil.
   c. He promises many rewards here and in heaven.
   d. He promises to trust us with real riches, spiritual treasures.

8. How can you tell if money is your Master?
   a. You worry about it and spend a lot of time caring for what you have.
   b. You do not do what you should do only to earn more.
   c. You have a very difficult time giving money away.
   d. All of the above

9. What does the parable of the rich man and Lazarus teach us?

a. Rich people go to hell and poor people go to heaven.

b. Participating with Jesus in His "manifesto" involves treating people with great compassion.

c. It is possible to be saved after we die.

d. In eternity, we will not remember anything from this life.

10. Which approach to life did Jesus recommend in His parable of the Good Samaritan?

a. What is mine is mine, and what is yours is yours.

b. What is mine is mine, and what is yours is also mine.

c. What is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.

d. What is yours is yours, and what is mine is yours whenever you need it.

11. If we follow Jesus as an example, what kind of compassion will we have for people?

a. Spiritual compassion only—we will pray for them.

b. Physical compassion only—we will meet their physical needs.

c. Every kind of compassion—we will try to meet whatever needs people have.

d. None—people who suffer are paying the consequences of their sins, and we must not interfere with that process.

12. Which of the following are you to faithfully manage? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Your time	e. Your education	i. Your position
b. Your talents	f. Your job	j. Your plans
c. Your wealth	g. Your emotions	k. Your abilities
d. Your family	h. Your health	l. Your mind

Money is a hard and deceptive master. In what ways can you let God be your Master?

_____

_____

_____

In what ways can you show compassion to people in need? In what ways are you participating in Jesus' "manifesto"—His mission to teach, heal, and deliver?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God for the compassion He has shown to us by meeting our needs and saving us from our sins. Ask Him to meet any needs you currently have according to His will, and ask Him for opportunities to be part of Jesus' mission and ministry, and show His compassion to others in need.

Going Deeper

1. How do you apply the basic and essential meaning of the word "steward" to the personal applications of the Parable of the Unjust Steward in Luke 16? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. In what ways does the concept illustrated by this parable apply to more than your money? ___
_____
_____
_____

3. What are the awesome applications of Jesus to this story? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. What are the "true riches" Jesus tells us will be withheld from us if we are not faithful managers of money and all that to which this parable applies? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. Who are the friends we are to make in the next life by the faithful management of money in this life? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. Does this parable teach that it is a sin to be rich, or does it teach the opposite? Explain. _____
_____
_____
_____

7. How does this parable contrast with the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus? _____
_____
_____
_____

Christmas Thinking

Chapter 4
Audio Lesson: New Testament #22

Objective: To understand the miracle of the first Christmas—the birth of Jesus—and to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus when He comes again.

There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

—Luke 2:8-11

According to Luke, when God intersected human history and became a man, He invited certain people to participate in His great miracle. He sent an angel to tell a priest, Zacharias, and his wife, Elizabeth, that they would have a son who would prepare the way for the Messiah. He sent an angel to tell a young woman named Mary, who was still a virgin, that she would give birth to the Messiah. And on the night that Jesus was born, God sent angels to tell shepherds to go see the newborn King. All of these people experienced the miracle of the greatest event in human history. The miracle of Christmas is that God became man so that He could bring salvation to mankind.

The Old and New Testaments tell us that Jesus will physically intersect human history again in the miracle of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Just as the first Christmas was the only hope we have for salvation, His Second Coming is the blessed hope of the Church and the only hope of the world. We must follow the example of the shepherds and tell everyone this Good News before we see it for ourselves.

1. **True** or false? John the Baptist was the last of the prophets whose prophecies pointed toward the Messiah.

2. True or **false**? When Zacharias heard the angel Gabriel's announcement that John would be born, he believed God and rejoiced greatly.

3. **True** or false? When Mary heard Gabriel's announcement that Jesus would be born, she believed it but was confused and wondered how it could happen.

4. True or **false**? God never allows us to question anything He says but demands immediate, blind faith.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. What did the Old Testament prophet Micah accurately prophesy about Jesus?
   a. Where He would be born
   b. When He would be born
   c. How He would be born
   d. Who would give birth to Him

6. According to the angels who announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds, for whom was Jesus born?
   a. Jews
   b. Those who are sick and oppressed
   c. Righteous people
   d. Everyone

7. How many people knew Jesus was the Messiah when He was born?
   a. Almost everyone in the Roman Empire
   b. All Jews, but no one else
   c. Only a few people
   d. Only His parents

8. What is the only hope for this world?
   a. Human nature continues to improve.
   b. History has shown us that we can overcome all of our problems when we work together.
   c. Science keeps making significant discoveries that will eliminate our problems.
   d. Jesus gives us new life today and will come again one day.

9. When will Jesus come again?
   a. He will return as soon as everyone in the world becomes a Christian.
   b. No one knows for sure, but we are always supposed to be ready.
   c. Nearly all theologians agree that He will come immediately after a period of great tribulation.
   d. Nearly all theologians agree that He will come immediately before a period of great tribulation.

10. Which people in the Christmas story are good examples for us to follow in telling others the good news? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Zacharias
b. Shepherds
c. Simeon
d. Mary

Are you telling others about the hope we have because of Christmas? Are you ready for Jesus to come again? Why or why not? What can you do to prepare for His return?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God that He has given the world hope through Jesus. Ask Him to give you courage to share the hope with others. Ask God to help you be prepared for Jesus' return and to be bold about telling people about Jesus' first and second coming.

Going Deeper

1. According to the accurate historian Luke, why did God tell each of the people He included in the miracle of the first Christmas the good news that the miracle of the first Christmas was going to happen? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. What did most of those people have in common? How were the shepherds different? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. How can we apply this to the glorious reality that God is going to intersect history again by the return of Jesus Christ in His Second Coming? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. How do you personally apply the "Christmas that was," the "Christmas that shall be," and the "Christmas that is"? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. When it comes to the "Christmas that shall be," are you like Zacharias, like Mary, or like the shepherds? Explain your answer. _____
_____
_____
_____

6. In what ways is the "Christmas that shall be" the only hope of the world? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. In what ways is the "Christmas that shall be" the blessed hope of the Church? _____
_____
_____
_____

Christian Thinking

Chapter 5
Audio Lesson: New Testament #23

Objective: To understand how Jesus' teaching transforms us and to learn how to think like a follower of Jesus.

"Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

—Luke 7:47-48

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

—Luke 8:8

"*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*

—Luke 11:9-10

Many of Jesus' parables teach us how to approach and how to respond to His teaching. Jesus used metaphors from common, everyday life that His listeners would understand to show them that His teaching would not fit their expectations or agree with the teachings of the religious leaders of His time. In fact, most of the religious leaders would reject His teaching and oppose His work. With many metaphors and illustrations, like new wine in new wineskins or new material for mending garments, Jesus shows us how to hear and obey His Word. Jesus' teaching is intended to transform our minds, our lives, and our values.

1. True or **false**? Jesus always praised and respected the religious establishment in His teachings.

2. **True** or false? Jesus' teaching will often put pressure on us to change the way we think and act.

3. **True** or false? Jesus refused to compromise His message to please the religious leaders.

4. **True** or false? Many of Jesus' teachings are not easy for us to hear and obey.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Which of the following pictures did Jesus *not* use to illustrate His teaching?
   a. Wine
   b. A manger
   c. Seed
   d. A patch for a garment

6. Why were the religious leaders critical of John the Baptist and Jesus?
   a. Because John and Jesus were not as righteous as the leaders
   b. Because John and Jesus came from low-status families
   c. Because John's and Jesus' teachings did not fit well with the teachings of the religious leaders
   d. Because John and Jesus did not eat the same foods or listen to the same kind of music

7. Why did the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears love Him so much?
   a. She knew she had been forgiven of much.
   b. She had spent a lot of time with Him and was one of His best friends.
   c. She knew that if she showed enough love, she might be saved.
   d. Jesus had promised to give her great status and many possessions.

8. Why did Jesus side with Mary when her sister, Martha, rebuked her for not helping?
   a. Mary had already completed her chores on time and did not need to help Martha with hers.
   b. Mary had chosen the most important thing, which was listening to Jesus.
   c. He thought Martha was wasting her time because it is not very important to serve others.
   d. Even though Martha was right, she spoke too harshly to Mary.

9. Which kind of person is more important in God's kingdom?
   a. Those who are like Mary
   b. Those who are like Martha
   c. Neither is more important—both are necessary

10. What did Jesus teach about persistence in prayer?

a. We should be persistent in our prayers by faith because God will answer.

b. We can ask several times, but if God has not answered within a week or two, we should assume that He has said no.

c. We should only pray about something once and then wait for God.

How does God want us to respond when we hear His Word? Have you found it easy to accept His Word as truth? Why or why not? Which of Jesus' teachings challenge you the most?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God for His Word and for the truth it has taught us. Ask God to help you get into His Word and put His Word into your heart, and to help you be both a good hearer and a good doer of His Word.

Going Deeper

1. How should we personally apply the metaphor of Jesus about His teaching being new wine and our minds like wineskins? (Luke 5) _____
_____
_____
_____

2. What is the personal application for you to the contrast between Mary and Martha? (Luke 10)
_____
_____
_____

3. Can you give any examples of how you personally applied the parable of the friend visiting at midnight? (Importunate or repeating the same prayer request.) _____
_____
_____
_____

4. How should you personally apply the parable of the children playing games in the marketplace? (Luke 7) _____
_____
_____
_____

5. What is your personal application of the metaphor of Jesus about the two men who were in debt, one with a large debt and the other with a small one, when both debts were forgiven? (Luke 7) _____
_____
_____
_____

6. Why did Jesus side with Mary when Martha complained that she had to do all of the preparations for the meal when Jesus visited these two sisters? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. What is the primary application of the Mary/Martha examples in the church today as you relate this question to the election of the first deacons in the New Testament Church? (Acts 6)
_____
_____
_____

Repentance

Chapter 6
Audio Lesson: New Testament #24

Objective: To understand the kind of heart that can receive God's mercy and to learn what Jesus taught about repentance.

"God, be merciful to me a sinner." . . . "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

—Luke 18:13-14

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

—Luke 19:10

Jesus told a great parable that tells of repentance and of the refusal to repent. He showed us a picture of true repentance through His encounter with a tax collector. The parable describes a Pharisee and a publican—a tax collector—praying at the temple. The Pharisee was focused only on himself and his own righteousness, while the tax collector humbled himself and begged for God's mercy. Jesus said that only the tax collector was justified in God's sight. Only the sinner who repents is forgiven.

Jesus encountered a repentant tax collector named Zacchaeus when He travelled through Jericho. After spending the day with Zacchaeus, the tax collector showed what repentance looks like. He changed his ways and promised to pay back everyone he had defrauded. Because Zacchaeus' acts of repentance demonstrated what had happened in his heart, Jesus said salvation had come to his house.

1. **True** or false? According to the Bible, those who spend all of their time planning for this life without thinking of eternity are fools.

2. True or **false**? The story of Jesus and the ten healed lepers—one who thanked Jesus and nine who did not—teaches us that our gratitude is not very important to God.

3. True or **false**? We know we are pleasing to God if we are satisfied with our own righteousness.

4. **True** or false? Humility is an essential attitude in our relationships with God and others.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, what did the Pharisee ask for?
   a. Salvation
   b. A closer relationship with God
   c. More wealth and status
   d. Nothing—he only spoke of himself.

6. What did the tax collector ask for?
   a. Righteousness
   b. Success in his business
   c. Mercy
   d. The opportunity to become a Pharisee

7. To whom did Jesus tell the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector?
   a. Those who were confident of their own righteousness
   b. Those who needed to be more righteous
   c. The leper who thanked Him
   c. Only His disciples

8. Who can be justified—cleansed of sin?
   a. Anyone who does enough good works
   b. Those whom the church accepts into its fellowship
   c. All who humble themselves with a repentant heart and ask for God's mercy
   d. No one can ever be completely justified and cleansed from all sin.

9. Why were people angry that Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house?
   a. Because Zacchaeus was a dishonest tax collector
   b. Because they wanted Jesus to hurry to Jerusalem
   c. Because Zacchaeus was plotting evil against Jewish leaders
   d. Because Jesus had promised to spend the day with the religious leaders and then changed His mind

10. What does repentance mean? *(choose all that apply)*

a. To change one's mind
b. To change one's heart
c. To change one's behavior
d. To add Jesus to one's other beliefs
e. To turn around and go a different direction in life
f. To live in perfect righteousness and never sin again

Is there anything you have learned from Jesus' teachings that causes you to realize a need to repent? What do you need to repent for? How would your life change if you repented the way God wants you to?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God for His mercy that justifies us and cleanses us of sin through Jesus and does not depend on us. Ask God for the courage and faith to repent of anything God does not want in your life. Ask God to help you leave behind whatever does not fit with His will and to fill your life with everything that does fit with His will for you.

Going Deeper

1. Compare and contrast the two men in the parable of Jesus about the Pharisee and the publican, as recorded in Luke 18: 9-14. _____
_____
_____
_____

2. Compare and contrast the two prayers prayed by these two men. _____
_____
_____
_____

3. What were the two pronouncements of Jesus regarding these two men and these two prayers?
_____
_____
_____

4. Explain any possible connection between this incident and the day Jesus spent with Zacchaeus, as recorded in the next chapter. _____
_____
_____
_____

5. Compare and contrast the interview of Jesus with Zacchaeus to His interview with the rich young ruler, as recorded in Luke 18: 18-25. What did these two men have in common, and in what solemn ways were they different? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. In what ways could the second half of the 10th verse of Luke 19 be the key verse to the Gospel of Luke, or of any and all of the four Gospels? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. The Pharisee asked for nothing and the publican was declared "justified" by Jesus because he asked for "mercy." What is mercy, and why is it found 366 times in the Bible? What does the word "justified" mean, and where else is it found in the Bible? _____
_____
_____
_____

The Sign Language of John

Chapter 7
Audio Lesson: New Testament #25

Objective: To introduce the Gospel of John and understand its major themes and purposes.

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

—John 20:30, 31

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

—John 1:12-14

The Gospel of John is the favorite gospel of millions of people because of how God has used it to bring them to faith in Jesus and to show them who He really is. It is unique in many ways; its purposes, its literary style, and its content are different from those in the other gospels. The author—the beloved disciple named John—used the language of signs and images, giving us portraits of Jesus not found in the other gospels.

To understand John's gospel, we need to realize that although it was written to strengthen and educate believers, it was also specifically addressed to those who do not believe in order to bring them to faith. John presents a theological argument about Jesus and answers basic questions about who Jesus is and why He came. John records many signs or miracles that encourage and strengthen faith and prove that Jesus is God's Son. He also presents many beautiful portraits of Jesus. One can read the Gospel of John at a surface level and learn much about Jesus, but the gospel is also written at a deeper level that one can explore for a lifetime and still not fully comprehend.

Notice as we study the Gospel of John that he answers three questions: Who is Jesus; What is faith; and What is life? As you read, look for John's answers to these questions in each chapter.

1. True or **false**? The Gospel of John is very similar to the other three gospels and includes many of the same stories.

2. **True** or false? In addition to his gospel, John also wrote the book of the Revelation and three New Testament letters.

3. **True** or false? The Gospel of John was written later than the other three gospels were.

4. True or **false**? John wrote his gospel exclusively to believers, not to unbelievers.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Why did John include many "signs" or miracle stories in his gospel?
   a. To prove that Jesus is God's Son and encourage people to believe in Him
   b. To make his story more exciting
   c. To show that true believers will always experience miracles if they have enough faith
   d. To get people to read his gospel more than the other gospels

6. In what ways is the Gospel of John unique? *(choose all that apply)*
   a. It has a systematic argument.
   b. It is written both to believers and unbelievers.
   c. It gives many more details about Jesus' birth and childhood years.
   d. It is written at two levels—an easily understood surface level, and a deeper level with profound messages.
   e. It focuses on Jesus' appearances to the disciples and the early church after His resurrection.
   f. Most of its content is not found in the other gospels.

7. What major questions does the Gospel of John seek to answer? *(choose all that apply)*
   a. How did Jesus fulfill prophecy?
   b. Who is Jesus?
   c. When will Jesus come again?
   d. What was the early church like?
   e. What is faith?
   f. What is life?

8. Which of the following portraits of Jesus are found in the Gospel of John? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Living water
b. A harsh judge
c. The good shepherd
d. A burning bush
e. The light of the world
f. The bread of life
g. The resurrection and the life
h. The vine
i. The lamb of God
j. A mighty fortress
k. A servant
l. A high priest
m. A kernel of wheat

9. What does John call Jesus in the first chapter of his gospel?

a. A brilliant thinker
b. The Word of God in the flesh
c. A great teacher
d. A great spiritual leader

10. The first chapter also tells us what other things about when Jesus came? *(choose all that apply)*

a. The Jewish people rejected Jesus
b. Jesus gave authority for anyone to receive him
c. All who receive Jesus will be healed
d. All who believe and receive Jesus are born again

How did many of the Jewish people respond to Jesus? How does Jesus want you to respond to Him? What step of faith can you take right now to move toward Jesus and demonstrate trust in Him?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God for giving us this book that tells us everything we need to believe in Jesus, very God made flesh, and that through trusting in Him we have eternal life. Ask Him to show you what abundant life truly means and to lead you into deeper faith as you study the Gospel of John.

Going Deeper

1. According to the last two verses of the 20th chapter, why did John share so many signs with us? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. In what way is John's gospel directed to the unbeliever? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. What is a "sign," and what does the last verse of John's Gospel tell us about the number of signs Jesus gave us? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. According to his first 18 verses, what does John clearly let us know he is going to tell us in his Gospel? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. What does John mean when he tells us that the Word was in the beginning, the Word was God, the Word created everything, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us so we could see His glory? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. What does John mean when he tells us that those who received Him, even those who believed in Him, were born of God? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. When John writes of those who "received Him" in the right way, does he mean that when Jesus was here in a body people bowed their heads and asked Him to come into their hearts? Explain. _____
_____
_____
_____

Born Again: What, Why, and How?

Chapter 8
Audio Lesson: New Testament #26

Objective: To understand the importance of Jesus' first miracle and to learn what it means to be born again.

"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'"

—John 3:5-7

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him."

—John 3:14-17

Jesus' first recorded miracle occurred at a wedding banquet when the host ran out of wine. Jesus turned large pitchers of water into wine, allowing the celebration to continue. This miracle symbolizes the new birth and shows that Jesus can take any difficult and impossible situation and turn it into a cause for joy. It is a picture of what happens when we believe in Him. He takes the ordinary, and miraculously transforms us, giving us new birth.

In the second chapter, John tells us that many believed when Jesus did miracles, but they did not follow Him. And because they did not commit to Jesus, He did not commit to them. There are different kinds of faith: not everything that professes itself to be faith is saving faith. Many only had an intellectual faith, not a faith to follow. Also in chapter two, Jesus predicted His death and resurrection on the third day.

In John 3, Nicodemus, a leading teacher, came to Jesus at night to ask Him questions. Jesus told this teacher that the only way to see God's kingdom is by being born again. Those who experience the new birth can recognize Jesus as their Lord. The way to experience this new birth is through faith. Jesus made it very clear in this conversation with the teacher that He was very God, God's only Son, and that through believing in Him we can be saved—born again. Once born again spiritually, we will see God as our king.

1. **True** or false? According to the Gospel of John, the first miracle of Jesus occurred at a wedding reception.

2. **True** or false? The purpose of Jesus' miracles included manifesting His glory and causing people to believe.

3. **True** or false? In scripture, wine is often a symbol of joy.

4. **True** or false? In scripture, water is often a symbol of God's Word.

5. **True** or false? What we believe, we do. All the rest is only religious talk.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

6. Using the miracle at the wedding as an allegory or illustration for being born again, number the following steps in their proper order:

_4_ Letting the new birth apply to your relationships
_1_ Confessing that you are not born again
_3_ Putting God's Word into practice
_2_ Filling your "vessel" with Scripture

7. Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus to ask questions?

a. He was impressed with what he saw Jesus do and wanted to hear His teaching.
b. He wanted to trick Jesus into saying something wrong.
c. He wanted to memorize Jesus' words and then preach them to others, pretending that he had come up with this amazing new message.
d. He was ordered by the rulers of Jerusalem to spy on Jesus.

8. In John chapter 2, what sign did Jesus promise to give to prove He was God?
   a. He would bring peace to all.
   b. He would bring healing and prosperity to all.
   c. He would be destroyed and raised again in three days.
   b. He would do many miracles.

9. What did Jesus say a person has to do in order to enter the kingdom of God?
   a. Obey the law
   b. Memorize the truth
   c. Sell all possessions
   d. Be born again

10. What does it mean to be born again?
   a. To become a physical baby again
   b. To convert to a new religion
   c. To have a spiritual birth in which we see God as King
   d. To die and come back to life as another person or in another form

11. How can we be born again?
   a. Imitate Jesus.
   b. Believe in Jesus.
   c. Become perfect.
   d. Detach from the world.

12. Who is Jesus in John chapter 3? *(choose all that apply)*
   a. God's only Son
   b. God's only Savior
   c. God's only solution
   d. The light sent from God
   e. The promised Christ, the Messiah
   f. The One who must be lifted up on a cross

Are there any problems in your life that you would like for Jesus to transform into joy like He transformed the water into wine? If so, what are they? What do you need to surrender to Him today?

_____
_____
_____

Have you seen God as your King and entered into His Kingdom? If not, then according to Jesus you have never been born again. Is there anything that prevents you from believing in Jesus as God's only provision for your eternal salvation? What is Jesus saying to you?

_____
_____
_____

Thank God for His offer of new life to all those who believe. Pray that He would help you recognize Him as Lord and King in every area of your life. Ask God each day to help you live in obedience to His Word.

Going Deeper

1. In what way is the first sign Jesus performed at a wedding reception (chapter 2) an allegory of four dimensions involved in being born again, and how could the same four principles be involved in the spiritual renewal of those who are born again? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. How do the second and third chapters of John answer the three questions, "Who is Jesus," What is faith," and "What is life"? (Consider especially John 2: 18-25; 3: 14-19) _____
_____
_____
_____

3. How should we personally apply the reality that Nicodemus came to Jesus because he was impressed with what he had seen Jesus do and <u>then</u> wanted to hear what Jesus had to say? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. According to what Jesus told Nicodemus in verses 3 and 5, what is the end to which being born again is the means? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. What is the Kingdom of God, how do we see it now, and how do we enter into it right now? (Consider also 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 18) _____
_____
_____
_____

6. Based on the most dogmatic statement Jesus ever made (3: 14-19), who and why are those who are condemned, and who and why are those who are saved? (Consider also 2 Corinthians 5: 18, 19) _____
_____
_____
_____

7. What is Jesus trying to explain allegorically to Nicodemus in John 3:14 by referring to the snake in the wilderness event in Numbers 12:8? _____
_____
_____
_____

The Woman at the Well

Chapter 9
Audio Lesson: New Testament #27

Objective: To see how Jesus ministered to people in the Gospel of John and to further understand the new birth.

"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." . . . "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

—John 4:13-14, 24

In John 4, we see another example of a person who was born again by responding properly to Jesus. He encountered a Samaritan woman at a well and offered her the kind of water that would quench her thirst forever—the water of His truth and His life. Not only did this woman accept His offer, she became a spring of water from which others would come and drink. In other words, she was born again and showed the people of her village how to receive eternal life by coming to Jesus.

In the next chapter, Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, and then told the man to pick up his bed mat, which violated the rules of the religious leaders. This healing begins a hostile dialog with those leaders that will continue for several chapters in the Gospel of John. In this interaction with Jewish authorities, Jesus made bold claims about Himself—that He is the Son of God, that He does what only God can do, and that the scriptures testify of Him. His words left the people with a choice: they either had to reject Him or believe in Him. We are confronted with that same choice today when we read His words.

1. True or **false**? Jews and Samaritans were very close and loved each other like brothers.

2. True or **false**? Jesus demonstrated that He was just as prejudiced as any other human being.

3. True or **false**? Jesus told the woman at the well exactly the same thing He told Nicodemus. He used the same approach with everyone..

4. **True** or false? The woman at the well was changed forever through her encounter with Jesus.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Which characteristics did Jesus demonstrate in His conversation with the woman at the well? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Condemnation
b. Prejudice
c. Discernment
d. Sensitivity
e. Acceptance of sin
f. Acceptance of people

6. Which of the following did Jesus point out in His conversation with the woman?

a. Her problem
b. Her solution
c. Her Savior
d. All of the above

7. What did Jesus suggest that the woman should ask Him for?

a. Something to drink
b. A new husband
c. Living water
d. Another profession

8. What did Jesus ask the man at the pool of Bethesda?

a. “Why is God punishing you with this sickness?”
b. “Do you want to get well?”
c. “If I heal you, will you promise to be good?”
d. “How much are you willing to sacrifice in order to be healed?”

9. Why did the religious leaders get angry with Jesus for healing the lame man?

a. Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath day.
b. They thought the man deserved to be lame.
c. Only they were allowed to heal people.
d. They believed the man was only pretending to be lame and that Jesus did not really heal him.

10. Why did Jesus only heal one of many at the Pool of Bethesda?
    a. Jesus only wanted to heal people who had been sick a very long time**.**
    b. This one man was perhaps the only one who had given up on the pool.
    c. Jesus could not heal everyone.
    d. Jesus did not want to cause an argument with the religious leaders.

11. What does the pool of Bethesda represent?
    a. Jesus as the Living Water
    b. The world full of problems
    c. All the things or places we go to find healing
    d. That to be saved we must be at the right place at the right time

12. Where can we find eternal life?
    a. At the pool of Bethesda
    b. In our own righteousness
    c. In psychiatric help
    d. In wealth
    e. In health
    f. In relationships with other people
    g. In pleasure and comfort
    h. Only in Jesus

13. When we examine Scripture, we must come to which conclusion about Jesus?
    a. Jesus is either a liar or a lunatic, or He was who He said He was—God.
    b. Jesus was a very good man and we should follow His example.
    c. Jesus was a prophet sent by God to tell us how to earn eternal life.
    d. Jesus was a fictional person who tried to teach good morals.

What do you thirst for? In what ways can Jesus fulfill your thirst? How can you become a spring of living water and help others have their thirst quenched in Jesus?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God that Jesus is our only hope and that He will not let us be satisfied with any lesser hope. Ask Him to satisfy you fully in your relationship with Him and to give you opportunities to share your hope with other people.

Going Deeper

1. Since Jesus was only passing through Samaria, what was His strategy for reaching all of Samaria after He had passed through that area? (Compare this with His strategy when He was passing through Jericho as recorded in Luke 19) _____
_____
_____
_____

2. What is the personal application of this "one drink of living water that becomes in us a spring of water from which others come and drink"? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. How can we apply what is, in many ways, the greatest verse in this interview, verse 28, "*The woman then left her water pot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 'Come, see a Man...*'"? In that culture why would this woman have spoken to the men in her village about Jesus? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. How are we to apply the exhortation of Jesus to His disciples to lift up their eyes before they look on the fields (this woman), which are overripe and ready to be harvested? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. Since chapter 5 emphasizes the reality that there were a great multitude of people beside the Pool of Bethesda, why did Jesus heal this man, and how did Jesus make this a strategic healing?
_____
_____
_____

6. This healing results in a hostile dialogue between Jesus and the religious leaders, which relocates and continues as recorded through the end of chapter 8. Make a list of all the claims Jesus made about Himself in these four chapters, and then answer the question "Who is Jesus?"
_____
_____
_____

7. When you have finished your list, what choice do you have concerning Jesus? Is He a liar, a lunatic or Lord? _____
_____
_____
_____

You Will Not to Come

Chapter 10
Audio Lesson: New Testament #28

Objective: To understand the nature of true faith and how to respond appropriately to Jesus' teaching.

"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. . . . You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

—John 5:24, 39-40

"I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. . . . I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

—John 6:47-48, 51

After healing the lame man at the pool of Bethesda and making bold claims about Himself, Jesus told the religious leaders that they had enough evidence to recognize Him as the Son of God, the promised Messiah. He said that Moses, John the Baptist, God's voice from heaven, and scripture all supported His claims.

After Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 people, He preached one of the most difficult sermons to understand—the "Bread of Life discourse." He claimed His words are Spirit and life, that He is the true bread that came down from heaven, and that only those who "eat His flesh" and "drink His blood" can have eternal life. Jesus meant that those who seek life must accept all that He taught—appropriate it and make it part of who we are—and must believe in the meaning of His death on a cross. Many of His listeners could not fully understand what He meant. These words were so difficult to accept that many of His followers left Him. But those closest to Him, His 12 disciples, committed to remain with Him.

Jesus did not teach that we must understand everything He says before we obey Him. He taught that those who come to Him with a willingness to do what He says will know that His teaching comes from God.

1. True or **false**? The religious leaders were overjoyed to see a miracle of healing when Jesus told the man who had been lame for 38 years to take up his pallet and walk.

2. True or **false**? Jesus never claimed to be anyone special.

3. **True** or false? Jesus said that all authority had been handed over to Him by God.

4. **True** or false? Although most of the religious leaders opposed Jesus, many other people accepted Him as the Messiah, the Son of God.

5. **True** or false? The religious leaders of Jesus' day knew the Bible very well.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

6. For what primary reasons did the religious leaders really reject Jesus?
   a. They did not have enough evidence to believe in Him.
   b. They did not want to accept Him, so they ignored the evidence.
   c. He insulted them so often that they were too offended to believe.
   d. They were ignorant and could not understand what He said, even though they tried.

7. Whose approval did the religious leaders seek?
   a. God's approval
   b. Each other's approval
   c. Only the common people's approval
   d. No one's approval

8. Why did many people leave Jesus after He said to "eat His flesh" and "drink His blood"?
   a. His words were difficult to understand and even sounded offensive.
   b. His demands for obedience were too difficult to fulfill.
   c. He contradicted God's law, so everyone thought He was a false prophet.
   d. They wanted to go tell their friends the good news He has spoken.

9. What kind of faith does God ask us to have?
   a. To believe only when we see a miracle
   b. To believe whatever we are told by anyone
   c. To believe only when we understand Him
   d. To believe even when we do not understand Him

10. Where did Jesus say His teaching came from?
    a. His own opinions
    b. His years of education
    c. The counsel of His disciples
    d. God

Has God taught you anything that you do not understand but know you should obey? If so, what? How does God want you to respond to that teaching? How do you think He will respond if you obey Him?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God for revealing Himself, His will, and His ways to us. Ask Him to give you a heart of obedience and also a mind for understanding His Word. Ask God for strength and wisdom to do all that He calls you to do.

Going Deeper

1. After listing many evidences these religious leaders had that proved the claims Jesus was making about Himself, He told them they did not come to Him because they willed not to come. (5: 39, 40) How should we apply this reality to our lives? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. Why would Oswald Chambers, a great spiritual leader, say that the verses within parentheses above are the key to understanding the entire Bible? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. How can we apply the reality of why it is that people like the Pharisees, who were Scripture experts, will not to come to Jesus? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. Why is the feeding of the 5,000 hungry families the only miracle of Jesus recorded in each of the Gospels? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. In what ways is this miracle "A Parable of the Missionary Vision of Jesus Christ"? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. How can we apply the reality that Jesus strategically placed His disciples between Himself and His provision for the multitude (which is a symbol of the world) when He passed that provision through their hands into the hands of the hungry families? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. What is the application to the question, "What is faith?" that is presented by the reality that, even though many disciples dropped out when Jesus gave His most difficult Bread of Life Discourse, the apostles like Peter did not drop out, even though they did not understand the discourse?_____
_____
_____

Three Phases of the New Birth

Chapter 11
Audio Lesson: New Testament #29

Objective: To understand Jesus' conflict with the religious leaders and to recognize Him as the Light of the world, the good Shepherd, and the Resurrection and the Life.

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." . . . "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

—John 8:12, 31-32

"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

—John 10:9-10

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."

—John 11:25-26

After Jesus showed mercy to a woman caught in adultery, He spoke very harshly to the religious leaders, calling them "children of the devil." Some of these leaders believed in Jesus, and He assured them that the truth would make them free. After giving sight to a blind man, Jesus preached that He was the Light of the world. Many of the religious leaders realized that He was accusing them of rejecting Him, the Light, so they could remain in their sin. He explained that He gives sight to those who know they are blind.

Jesus compared Himself to a good shepherd and told His followers that His sheep recognize His voice. Jesus assured them that as the only gate to the sheep pen, the Good Shepherd would protect them from harm.

One of Jesus' most dramatic miracles occurred when He allowed three people to experience life's two most unsolvable problems — sickness and death. He wanted His friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus—and all who read their story—to learn that He is the victory over death and the key to eternal life. Those who believe in Jesus and live in union with Him will never truly die.

1. **True** or false? Jesus never denied that the woman caught in adultery had actually sinned, but He treated her with compassion anyway.

2. **True** or false? God never forgets that we are sinners, but He chooses to forget our sins.

3. True or **false**? Jesus taught that all human beings have come down from heaven and will return to heaven.

4. True or **false**? Even though Jesus always spoke the truth, He never spoke harshly to anyone.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Number the following phases of the new birth in their proper order:
   _3_ Experience
   _2_ Follow
   _1_ Believe

6. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Before Abraham was born, I am"?
   a. That He was an old soul who had lived many lifetimes
   b. That He was God and therefore eternal
   c. That He knew the Old Testament as well as if He had lived in that time
   d. That time is only an illusion and does not apply to those who are enlightened

7. According to Jesus, why was the blind man born with his blindness?
   a. He deserved blindness because of his sinful nature.
   b. His parents had sinned, and he was cursed with the consequences.
   c. He had blinded someone in a previous life, and this was his punishment.
   d. God wanted to display His work through this man's life.

8. What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the Light of the World"? *(choose all that apply)*
   a. He has no darkness or sin in Him; He is God.
   b. He gives spiritual sight to those who are spiritually blind.
   c. He removes the darkness of sin.
   d. His life and light illuminate one's sinfulness.

9. What does it mean for us that Jesus is the gate to the sheepfold? *(choose all that apply)*

a. His rules confine us to a narrow place in life with no freedom.

b. He is the only way into the Kingdom of God.

c. He wants to keep us separate from the world so it cannot influence us and we cannot influence others.

d. He protects us from predators.

e. He keeps undesirable people from entering His kingdom.

10. Why did Jesus stay where He was when He heard that His friend Lazarus was sick?

a. He did not realize that Lazarus' illness was serious.

b. He did not care if Lazarus died because death is only an illusion.

c. He wanted to demonstrate His victory over disease and death.

d. He wanted to try to heal Lazarus from a distance but could not.

11. How should we respond to Jesus when we are going through a difficult time in life?

a. Stay close in our relationship with Him and continue to trust Him.

b. Get angry that He has allowed us to suffer.

c. Pretend that we are happy anyway, even when we do not feel like it.

d. Realize that His ways are so mysterious that we will never really be able to relate to Him.

12. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Whoever believes in me will never die"?

a. His true followers would not experience physical death like others.

b. His disciples would be reincarnated with good and high positions.

c. All those who believe and put their faith in Him would never spiritually die.

d. No one knows—He said that only to get more followers.

Are you experiencing any difficulties in your life right now? If so, how does Jesus want you to respond to Him in the midst of those difficulties? In what ways might He be working to draw you closer to Him through your circumstances?

_____

_____

_____

Have you ever placed your faith in the Light of the World, in the One Who is the resurrection and the life, in Jesus? If you have, then how should that reality impact the way you live? If you have not, then place your faith in Jesus Christ today.

_____

_____

_____

Thank Jesus that He is the solver of life's most unsolvable problems. Ask Him to deal with your problems and to help you trust Him completely. Ask Him to draw you closer to Him in every situation you face in your life.

Going Deeper

1. How can you compare and apply John 7: 37-39 with what Jesus told the woman at the well about how the one drink of living water becomes a spring (in the one who drinks it), from which others will come and drink? _____
_____
_____
_____

2. Based upon John 8: 30-36, what are three phases of the new birth, according to Jesus? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. How can you explain and apply the clear statement of Jesus in John 9: 41 that, if you were blind or had no spiritual light at all, you would have no sin? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. How can you compare and apply John 10: 9 with John 14: 6? _____
_____
_____
_____

5. As reported in the tenth and eleventh chapters of John, why did Jesus stay where He was, making three people that He loved experience life's most unsolvable problems of sickness and death? _____
_____
_____
_____

6. Describe and apply the <u>two</u> conditions given by Jesus in John 11: 26, upon which we base the conviction that even when we die we will live? (Whoever <u>lives</u> in Me and <u>believes</u> in Me.)
_____
_____
_____

7. As recorded in John 12: 23-28 Jesus explained that a seed does not bear fruit until it dies as a seed. He says that He came into the world for this hour and then prays, "*Father glorify Yourself*!" I have heard this prayer paraphrased, "Father, glorify yourself and send me the bill. Anything Father, just glorify Yourself!" Have you ever prayed pray that prayer, or are you now willing to? _____
_____
_____
_____

The Last Christian Retreat

Chapter 12:
Audio Lesson: New Testament #30

Objective: To understand the "Upper Room Discourse" of Jesus and to explore the deep truths He shared with His disciples on the night before His crucifixion.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

—John 13:34-35

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

—John 14:6

"The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

—John 14:26-27

Chapters 13-17 of the Gospel of John tell us about the last night that Jesus was with His disciples before His crucifixion. In His longest recorded discourse, He spoke with His disciples in an "upper room" about many very important truths. He had begun His ministry with "the first Christian retreat"—His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew—and in John He ended it with "the last Christian retreat." This meeting began with Jesus—their Lord and teacher—washing His disciples' feet. During His conversation with them, He gave them a new commandment to love each other, promised that their relationship with Him would continue even after He was gone because of the Holy Spirit He would send, and told them that they would be fruitful if they were properly related to Him. He compared Himself to a vine and His disciples to branches—branches that bear fruit because of the life that is in the vine.

Then in chapter 17, at the end of the time with his disciples, Jesus prayed a lengthy prayer for His followers. Jesus prayed for His "branches"—for His 12 disciples, for the work they would do, and for all who would believe in Him throughout history. Jesus prayed for His church to live in unity with Him and with each other and to know and demonstrate His love.

1. **True** or false? The "upper room discourse" is the longest recorded discourse of Jesus.

2. True or **false**? When Jesus told the disciples He was going away, He invited them to come with Him.

3. **True** or false? Jesus said every true disciple of His will be fruitful.

4. **True** or false? When it was time to go to the cross, Jesus did not try to avoid pain and death, but simply asked that God glorify Himself.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Which of the following questions does the Gospel of John most clearly seek to answer? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Who is Jesus?
b. What is faith?
c. What is life?
d. When is Jesus coming again?

6. Why did Jesus wash His disciples' feet?

a. They had just come from a long journey and were dirty.
b. He wanted to demonstrate His love for them and be an example of how they were to love one another.
c. He wanted to establish a new ritual for churches to observe.
d. No one knows—the Bible never explains this strange act.

7. What "new commandment" did Jesus give His disciples?

a. To love God—even though that commandment had been given centuries earlier
b. To love their families and friends—just as the rest of the world does
c. To love each other—even though they were very different and not natural friends
d. To go on an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem

8. Which of the following credentials of a disciple does Jesus give us in chapters 8, 13, and 15 of the Gospel of John? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Continuing in His Word
b. Giving away all possessions to the poor
c. Attaining a higher consciousness
d. Loving one another
e. Obeying God's laws perfectly
f. Bearing His fruit

9. According to Jesus, how can we see God the Father?

a. Only by dying and going to heaven
b. Only by fasting and praying
c. Only by being enlightened
d. By looking at the life and ministry of Jesus

10. What must we do for the work of God to be done through us?

a. Fast and pray for 40 days
b. Be united by faith with Jesus and His Spirit
c. Become sinless as Jesus was
d. Work very, very hard

11. Why must Jesus followers be fruitful? *(choose all that apply)*

a. Because we earn our salvation through fruitfulness
b. Because there is no such thing as a fruitless disciple
c. To show the world those who are His true disciples
d. To glorify God
e. To prove that God loves us more than He loves other people
f. To provide real joy
g. Because He chose the disciples to be fruitful
h. Because He is the Vine and the disciples are the branches, the branches bear fruit when they are united with the Vine.

12. What does fruitfulness accomplish in our lives? *(choose all that apply)*

a. It gives us a feeling of superiority over other people.
b. It causes joy.
c. It demonstrates that we are Jesus' disciples.
d. It causes us to become complacent and stop working.

In what ways has Jesus shown His message of love to you? In what ways can you show His message of love to other people? What can you do to "wash the feet" of others?

Is the Lord producing fruit in your life? What fruit do others see in your life?

_____

_____

_____

Thank God for the love He has shown us, for the promise that we can spend eternity with Him, and for the Holy Spirit He sends to be with us and in us. Ask Him to continually fill you with His Spirit, to help you show His love to one another, and to bear His fruitfulness in your life. Ask God to help you deeply know the peace that comes from knowing and following Him.

Going Deeper

1. How are we to personally apply what Jesus told the apostles about His relationship to them being more intimate after He left them than it had been while He was with them in bodily form? (Consider the question of Jude and the answer of Jesus in 14: 22-23) _____
_____
_____
_____

2. How are we to relate and apply the explanation of Jesus for His washing the feet of the apostles in 13: 12-15, to the New Commandment He gave them in 13: 34-35? _____
_____
_____
_____

3. Based upon the first 16 verses of chapter 15, how are we to personally apply the six reasons why Jesus told the apostles they simply must be fruitful? _____
_____
_____
_____

4. How are we to personally apply the four separate dimensions of the Vine and the branches metaphor of Jesus? (The Vine, the branches, the fruit, and the Vine Dresser Who cuts back or prunes the branches) _____
_____
_____
_____

5. What is your own application of John 15:16 to your personal life and ministry for Christ?
_____
_____
_____

6. According to chapter 16, what are the specific roles and functions of the Holy Spirit? _____
_____
_____
_____

7. What is the personal application we should all make of John 17:4? (Consider also John 4:34; 9:4; 19:30) _____
_____
_____
_____