

## I. Introduction to the Gospel of John

The Bible comes alive for you, and what we have tried to do is come through book by book to give you an understanding of what you are looking for. We have come through Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and now we are going to look at John.

So far, you have found out that Matthew portrays the Lord Jesus Christ as the King of the Jews. We talked about how we started, how scholarship, for some reason—and I have been in the ministry for many, many years and I have found this to be so true—I do not understand why scholarship has to always take the position that the Bible is wrong and that scholarship is always right. You see the same thing in Jesus' day with the scribes and the Pharisees. They talk about the synoptic gospels, how they do not match, and how it proves that the Bible is unreliable. All this stuff you hear when you go to Bible college, and all the things that I have been subjected to all of my life in trying to learn the Bible and reading books and getting material. I have found a bias against the Bible for the common ordinary man and woman to just really have a relationship with the greater God and, of course, a relationship with Christ.

When you find the book of Matthew, you will find that Matthew writes portraying Christ as the King of the Jews. When Mark writes, you will find Him portrayed as a servant. When Luke writes, you will find Him portrayed as the Son of Man. But in John, we find John portraying Him as the eternal Son of God. These are four different aspects of the Lord Jesus Christ that do not match because they were not intended to match exactly. Each one puts the emphasis on Christ, giving us Christ from another aspect.

I told you that the number one key word in figuring out the Bible is the word "consistency." You are going to find that the Bible is always consistent. Just as God has given you four accounts of the first coming of Christ—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—in the book of Revelation, He has given you four accounts of the second coming of Christ. Again, every time He comes through those four accounts in Revelation, He will put the emphasis on something different, just like He does in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. So far, we have learned some great lessons. I have showed you not only an outline that really helps you put your Bible together book by book, but I have given you an incredible amount of resource information to go back and take some great studies.

Not only do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John portray Christ differently, but the men themselves match up to the different aspects that they write. God, in everything that He does, lays it out in such a fine-tuned manner.

- Matthew: The King
- Mark: The Servant
- Luke: The Son of Man

➤ John: The Son of God

## II. The Apostle John: A Picture of the Perfect Christian

Briefly, I want to talk about John for just a moment and his writings to help you get a perspective of this great Gospel. In the Bible, there are men and women and children and just about everything that lays out a picture for us. We sometimes call them types. In a man's life or a woman's life, you will find great spiritual illustrations that we can identify with as a child of God. The Apostle John is probably the greatest picture in all the Bible, outside of Christ Himself, as the perfect Christian.

I do not know how much time you spend in the Word of God or where you are at in studying it. But when it comes to the first coming of Christ, you have twelve apostles. Those twelve apostles really represent for us, in many ways, Christianity. You are going to find within that twelve, one of them was a phony. I do not believe for a moment that everybody who says that they are saved is really a Christian. I do not have a right to judge anybody, and I do not. But I know this: I know there are many, many people who claim to be a child of God who do not live the way a child of God should. I know also that in the world that we live in today, it is very easy to believe on Christ. Many people make emotional decisions based on their emotion rather than based on the facts of the Word of God. So I understand today that in the body of Christ, Jesus Himself said that in that day, not everybody that said, "Lord, Lord," would enter into the kingdom. There are people who are not truly saved who either do not know it, have gotten caught up in all the religious things that go on, whatever the case. But we find that.

Out of the eleven that are left, there are three that really stand out: Peter, James, and John. You will find that Peter, James, and John experience the power of God in a much greater way than the other eleven. That is true of Christians. You are going to find that there are Christians who just go to church, do their thing, and they never really experience the power of God in their life. When all the great miracles are done in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you look sometimes, it is always Peter, James, and John that really make up the inner three. But out of those three, there is only one that stands alone, and that is John. Even Peter and James, the other two of the three, did not make it all the way to the end.

I have found that John is a unique writer. When he writes his books—the Gospel of John, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, and the Book of Revelation—he writes these sometime around 85 to 90 AD. In other words, his books are the last books that are written. John has a perspective on the Word of God that nobody else who writes in the Word of God does. That perspective is simply this: when he writes, he has everything else that was written, Old Testament and New Testament, before him. So he has a unique perspective when he writes. God chose him to write to portray Christ as the Son of God, to lay out the intimate details of Christ in eternity, Christ's eternalness, and Christ as the eternal Son of God, because he represents what your life and my life should be.

You realize in John 13:23 that John is the only apostle that Jesus says He loves. I know He loves them all, but John is the only one in particular that He says He loves. John is a unique man because he does something that nobody else in the Word of God has ever done. When they are

sitting at the Last Supper and talking about some things, the Bible clearly says that John, in John 13:25, lays his head on the breast of the Lord Jesus. That is something that, to me, has always been an amazing thing. To me, that represents what my life and my relationship should be as a New Testament Christian. What John did was lay his head on the breast of the Son of God and hear the very heartbeat of God. That is exactly what every child of God's job is today. First and foremost, it is for you and for me to understand God's heart, to get the heartbeat of God. John did that, and by John doing that and many of the other things that John did, he represents for us exactly what our lives should be.

I told somebody last week, in our leadership group that we are starting to teach people how to teach people the Bible, I told them, "Twenty years ago in the ministry, when you were building a church, I came to the conclusion after many years that you probably had to go through at least five people to find somebody that is going to stick with it." Because of the circumstances around us, I think it was John, was it not you who told me that your boy, who is an independent cop (he was a detective for a number of years and now he is back on the street), said that in that short, what, three or four years, the city of Independence, if you live there, sorry to tell you this, has just gone to pieces. He could see a radical difference between the way it was when he left and when he came back. Is that not true? Yes. I am sure that is true everywhere.

I look at that in Christianity and I see the same thing. Twenty years ago, if it took one in five people, if it took five people to find somebody who wanted to do what is right—what I mean by that is this: people come to church all the time, people get saved all the time. In churches, people get saved, they come down there, "I really got saved, praise the Lord!" And then you never see them again. Back then, you had to go through five of those on average to have one that stayed, grew, got in the Word of God, and really did what they were supposed to do. Today, some fifteen, twenty years later, I promise you that number is probably one in twenty today. Our society has so eroded. It is so easy to do the wrong thing today. It is so easy for God's people not to do what the Word of God says. When I look at these twelve apostles, I see the standard is probably one out of twelve that is going to make it and really do something for God. I realize that in different churches, maybe you have more concentrated people that want to do what is right. But if you lay this thing out, the average that God gives us in John is one in twelve. John does what every one of us should do in our lives to live our Christian life victoriously, and that is lay his head on the breast of Jesus and hear the very heartbeat of Almighty God.

When they are sitting around that table, Jesus says, "All right, one of you is going to betray Me." If you study that passage in John 13 or Matthew 26, you will find that the moment Jesus says, "One of you is going to betray Me," every one of the apostles turned to Jesus and says, "Lord, is it I? Lord, is it I? Lord, is it I?" They all were worried that they were going to betray Him. John looks Him right in the eye and says, "Lord, who is it?" John did not know who it was, but John knew who it was not going to be: it was not going to be him.

I preached this message a number of years ago, and I talked about how Jesus had a special love for John. Some dear old sweet lady came up afterward, pointed a little finger at my face and says, "You know what? God so loved..." She missed the point exactly. I told her, "You know why Jesus had a special love for John? It is simple: because John had a special love for Jesus."

Christianity is a two-way street. You only get out of it what you put into it. John is someone who puts it in the way we should. He goes all the way to the crucifixion. He is there at the feet of Jesus when He is being crucified in John 13, when everybody else takes off and leaves Him.

In John 19:26, when Jesus is hanging on the cross, He gives His mother to John. Mary is a picture of the nation of Israel. The symbolism of Jesus giving His mother to John, a type of the church, is a picture of the church taking the watch care of the nation of Israel during the church age. Of course, you get that from Romans chapter 9 and Romans chapter 11, the great two chapters that deal about God's dealing with the nation of Israel, our relationship with the church, and then of God restoring them at the end of the tribulation period.

### III. Structural Outline of the Gospel of John

Yes, John lays out Christ as the Son of God. You are going to find that it is an incredible concept. You will find in the book of Revelation that John is revealed the things of the end time. That tells me that when you get in the Spirit of God and get your head down on the breast of the Lord Jesus and hear the heartbeat of God—something that you and I can do through the Word of God, which is the heart of God—you too will find the intimate secrets of the second coming of the Lord Jesus. Not to say that you are going to figure the date and the time; we are not talking about that. But you will understand exactly where you are at in relationship to Christ coming to better understand what your job is. So when John writes the Gospel of John, he gives us an incredible insight into Christ as the eternal Son of God and really completes the Gospels for us.

Let me give you this little outline. This is very easy, but it is very good. The breakdown of the Gospel of John is built around the three years of His public ministry. For three years, John records what Jesus does, and it is built around the Passover.

- Introduction and First Passover
- Second and Third Passovers
- Crucifixion and Resurrection

That is basically how it breaks down. I am going to bring you through chapter by chapter, showing you how this thing works.

### IV. John 1-3: The Eternal Word and New Birth

In John chapter 1, you have another genealogy. In Matthew chapter 1, we saw a genealogy running back to the kingly line because in Matthew He is portrayed as the King of the Jews. In Mark, we found no genealogy because He is a servant, and a servant has no genealogy. In Luke, we found His genealogy running back through the bloodline of Mary, going back to His human side because in Luke you will see the humanity of Christ. But when we come to John, we find that His genealogy goes back to the beginning.

*John 1:1-5*

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

*The same was in the beginning with God.*

*All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

*In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

*And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

This runs it right back to God and in the beginning. What John chapter 1 shows you is that He is eternal with God and also that the Word of God and the Son of God are one and the same.

Around John 1:14, where it talks about, "In the beginning was the Word," and "the light shineth in darkness," John 1:5, "and the darkness comprehended it not," you can relate all that back to Genesis chapter 1. But in John 1:14, it says this: Jesus Christ and the Word are one. You find that time and time again in the Word of God. In fact, you will find the similarities between the two are quite incredible to study.

You will find that both have two natures: the Word of God and the Son of God. The Word of God is written by men, but it is written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. Just as God used human instruments to bring forth the Word of God, God used humans (Mary) to bring forth the Son of God. But both were not tainted by anything that was sinful in this world. You will find that both are hated. There are men who love God and there are men who hate God. There are men who love the Word of God and there are men that hate the Word of God. You will find that they are both loved. You will find that they are both hated. You will find that both will save you. You will find that both will damn you. You will find that both will last forever. You will find that both are alive and without beginning. You will find that both will judge you someday. And you will find that both will bear the marks of man in trying to discredit them from being what God intended them to be. Christ bore the marks of man all down when He was on the cross, fresh wounds on His body where sinful man took and marked that beautiful body that was sinless with the filth of this world and tried to get Him not to be what God intended Him to be because of their rejection. Man has done the same thing to the Word of God. The history of the world is nothing more, much of it, than man trying to get around the most precious book that God ever has given. Many a child of God has paid for that book that you are holding in your hand with their life's blood. Down through the Dark Ages, the Albigensians and the Waldensians and the Huguenots and the Polysians and the Lysians and the Anabaptists, all the way down the line, there was religion in this world that would kill anybody, made it a capital offense, punishable by death for anybody that held the Bible that you have in your lap today. We see it all down through. Man just cannot leave it alone.

One of the greatest verses in John is John 1:18, which says this:

*John 1:18*

*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

Scholarship tells you that "begotten" should not be in there. Many scholars take it out and put in that Jesus Christ was the "begotten God." Some of them take out the word "begotten" completely. Back in the second and third century, there was a man by the name of Arius. Arius, you might know, was a pastor in Alexandria, Egypt. He brought up the great theological teaching that Jesus Christ was not God, that He was a demigod, that He was a created God. So he altered the teachings that Christ was very God, and we find that creeping in today to our theology, and today, to not say that Jesus Christ was very God. The word "begotten" is a very important word in your Bible, and it is in your Bible, and it says that He was the only begotten Son. He was not a begotten God; He was a begotten Son. You will find that laid out in Hebrews chapter 1 and numerous other places throughout the Bible.

Then we come to John chapter 2, and in John chapter 2, we find the first miracle that He does at a wedding at Cana. We have studied the concept of the third day as we have come through, how the third day always is a picture of the second coming of Christ. What you have here is a legitimate marriage, but what you also have here is a picture of the second coming of Christ, Christ coming back on the third day, and, of course, the marriage supper of the Lamb. The material is quite incredible. This is the first miracle you will find in your Bible, and I always call John chapter 2, where Jesus turns the water to wine, the "boozers' chapter" because that is where everybody likes to go to prove that it is okay to drink alcoholic beverages. I do not care if you do or you do not, but I know you cannot go to John chapter 2 to prove it.

I know that you are going to find that in the Bible there is a new wine versus an old wine. When you study the consistency of the Bible, you are going to find that the first miracle in the New Testament is somebody turns water to wine. The first miracle in the Old Testament is somebody turns water to blood, and there is a connection between the two. You are going to find in Deuteronomy 32:14 that grape juice, or what is in a grape, is called "the pure blood of the grape." You are going to find a little further in your study that grape juice in the Bible is a type of blood, a type of Christ's blood. That is why at the Last Supper, Jesus said, "I will not drink any more of this fruit of the vine until I drink it new in My Father's kingdom." He was drinking grape juice. That is what the Word of God says. You are going to have to lay it out and go through it yourself. We have talked about that on Thursday night before.

In John chapter 3, the great study of Nicodemus, one of the greatest studies in the Bible, is going to help you understand the mindset of unsaved men if you are ever going to work with people.

*John 3:1-6*

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:*

*The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

*Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*

*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

This is a great series of verses, a great passage, because not only does this begin to show you how the religious mind works, it shows you how God looks at it. Here is a man that—and I have used this passage many, many times when I am talking or witnessing to somebody about their soul.

1. The first thing I want you to see about Nicodemus is that he is religious.
2. The second thing I want you to see is that he is a good man.
3. The third thing I want you to see is that he recognizes who God is. He believes in who He is. In fact, he even gives Him His proper credentials when he says, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God, because no man could do these miracles that you do except God be with him." He believes in God. He is a good man. He is a moral man. He is a righteous man. He believes in God, and he believes in what God is doing. Yet, he is as lost as he could be, because those things do not save you.

Jesus turned right around and said, "Nicodemus, those are great things, but you must be born again." He begins to talk to him about being born of the water and of the Spirit. Here is where we get into a good one, because the whole world wants to take "water" and say, "You see there? There is baptism. That means you have got to be baptized to be saved." Of course, here again, I have told you this many, many times, that the Bible always interprets itself. You and I do not have to worry about interpreting the Scriptures. The Bible is its own dictionary. It is its own commentary. If you just stick with the book that God gave you and let the Word of God do the work for you, it is pretty easy.

Look at John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now watch how John 3:6 defines for you what John 3:5 is talking about: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." There is the water, a physical birth. "And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Spirit did not change, but He defined the water as flesh, showing you that the water is your physical birth. What He is saying, Nicodemus, is, "You have got to be born the first time, and you have got to be born the second time." Your first birth puts you into a sinful life. The second birth puts you into salvation through the Son of God. That is exactly what He is saying. What does scholarship do? All the new scholarship, putting out all the new translations, runs in the footnote and tells you that water is baptism. Of course, it is not. Just stick with the book.

## V. John 4-5: True Worship and Spiritual Impotence

Then we come to John chapter 4, and the great study of the Woman at the Well. I have always liked to compare John chapter 3 and John chapter 4, because John chapter 3 shows you Nicodemus, a man who absolutely, totally cannot grasp Biblical concepts. It proves my point. I do not know where we got the idea that the more education you get, the closer you get with God. I am telling you something, your education—though I believe you need to get as much education

as you can—do not mistake and think that anything other than your attitude of heart of love for God makes any difference between your relationship with God. It is not how much you know, it is how much you believe. It is how much you trust Him. It is how much you build a personal relationship. No greater place in the Bible is that laid out than in comparison between John chapter 3 and John chapter 4.

Nicodemus is a ruler of the Jews. He is a Pharisee. He is a political muckety-muck. He is a religious leader in the nation of Israel. Jesus Himself says, "Are you not a master in Israel and you cannot grasp these things?" He could not. You know why? Because he suffers from things that most of us suffer from. He is educated beyond his intelligence. He has come to the place that he forgot the great concept that education without salvation is damnation. Salvation will always take precedence over anything that you know. Paul was a member of the Sanhedrin. Paul was a great leader in the nation of Israel. When he got saved and later on in his life when he got into the Word of God, he said, "All those things that I learned," he said, "you can take them." He said it is like dung compared to what he got in God's Word.

The great comparison in John 4 and 3: Nicodemus cannot grasp it. The woman at the well, do you want to see a picture of most of you and me getting saved? Here it is. It is Jacob's well in John 4:6. That is very instructive because Jacob's well, the Bible says in John 4:22, that "salvation is of the Jews." You and I cannot get saved without the Jews. Salvation comes from the Jews because in the Old Testament, God brought up a theocracy, and then He brought Christ from the Jews. Every writer of the books were Jews. Even though God right now is dealing with the Jews because of their unbelief, you could not get saved without a Jewish man named Jesus. That is how it all works.

So you find this woman, and keep in mind now, she is a Samaritan. She is not just a full-blown Jew. She is half and half. She shows up down here at Jacob's well. She is trying to satisfy her thirst because she keeps coming to this well like everybody else to get water. She has to keep coming back. That is a picture of the watering holes that you and I drink at in this whole life. They do not satisfy. Nothing in this life will satisfy you. You will keep having to come back to get more because just like water and this woman at the well had to come back and refill her pitcher all the time, it is a picture of this old world and what this old world has to offer will never satisfy you and me. It will always leave us thirsty.

In John 4:11-14, this woman, what she needs is the water of life. That is the Word of God. That is what she needs. She needs the eternal water from God. You know the one that Ponce de Leon was looking for down in Florida? The fountain of youth. That is what everybody wants to go. Those Spanish conquistadors were going down through Central America, South America, and everywhere else. He dropped through the Florida Everglades trying to find a fountain of youth that he could drink up and live forever. Those guys down there in South America and Central America and Mexico, they were looking for El Dorado, the city of gold. All that stuff that they are looking for physically is in your Bible spiritually. They just got reading the wrong books.

Just like this woman, you and I, at some time in our life, before you were saved, you were going to this world drinking from it, and you were coming back because it did not satisfy you. Then

one day you met a Man, and He said, "Drink this." That is what she said. She says, "I will take it. I want it," John 4:15. That is great because in John 4:15 and John 4:18, she now wants it, but the first thing she has to deal with before she gets it is her sin issue. So Jesus says, "Go call your husband." She says, "I do not have a husband." He said, "No, you have five husbands, and the one you are hanging out with right now is not your husband." She looked at Him and says, "I perceive you are a prophet." Yes, He was a prophet. Before you get the water that He wants to give you, you have got to deal with your condition. Her condition was she was a sinner. She, just like you and I, when she is confronted with it, the first thing she does is she tries to redirect His question to a religious issue to avoid her sin issue. So she breaks into a song and dance, tap dance routine about, "Our fathers worship in this mountain." He brings her right back on track and He talks about true worshippers have to worship in spirit and truth.

In John 4:28, she gets saved. How do I know that? Because she ran off and left her water pot. She was not coming back to get any more water. The Bible said she left her pot and went away. Why? She got the water that satisfied. She is not coming back there to drink anymore. She found what she needed. She got saved. Then what does she do? In John 4:29, she comes and tells, "Come see a man that told me everything about myself that I was." She tells everybody. The last thing we see in this great chapter, John 4:34, is the great concept of a personal witness. Her past life becomes the focus of her witness. But she does not run around bragging about how she did this or how she did that. She does not go around telling others what God will do for them. A real witness of a Christian is telling God what He did for you. I mean, I can make it general and say, "Well, God will do this for you and God will do that for you." But it is different when you say, "Let me show you what God did for me." That is the difference. That is where it is at.

Then we get to John chapter 5, another great story. I wish I had the time to get into this in detail. This is a great Thursday night Bible question. You have the picture, one of the greatest stories in the Bible, of showing the condition of not only the nation of Israel, but the body of Christ. If there ever was a place in the Gospel of John that showed the picture of the Laodicean church, it is here. You have this man down here that the Bible says that he is impotent. He is blind. He is halt. And he is withered. All these kinds of people are laying around here, around this pool. Yet it is a picture of the way we are in Christianity today. By the way, this great passage here, you will find that the scholars tell you in all the new footnotes that this story really was not in your Bible, that it was added later and it is not very reliable.

What you have here is a picture of sick Christianity, all laying around the pool, waiting for the moving of the water. The water is a type of the Holy Spirit of God in the Bible.

- Impotent: They are powerless.
- Blind: They are spiritually blind.
- Halt: They have no walk with God.
- Withered: They have no work for God.

They are laying around here waiting. If that is not a picture of Christianity today, and yes, it is also a picture of the nation of Israel during this time, but the practical application is so clear that that is where we are at today. I am sure most of God's people would like this passage not to be in

the Bible because it points a finger and says, "That is off. We are powerless. We are spiritually blind. We have no walk with God and we have no work for God." That is the people around here, one of the greatest studies that you will ever take through the Word of God.

## VI. John 6-7: Christ as Bread and the Scribes' Opposition

Then we come to John chapter 6. John chapter 6 is the great chapter on Christ as the Bread of Life. There is some great material here that you want to take some time and study. I do not have time to get into it all. The greatest verse is John 6:33 that says, this is the key to the whole chapter:

*John 6:33*

*For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*

That is talking about Christ and the Word of God. One of the great parallels, you will see in John 6:49, is He says, "And our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness." That would be back to Exodus chapter 16. When you go back to Exodus chapter 16, you will find that God rains the manna down on the children of Israel. That manna coming down is a picture of Christ coming down and the Word of God coming down. The manna was supernatural. It was a gift from God. It was used to strengthen them in the wilderness where nothing else would strengthen them. It was used to feed them when nothing else would. It came to the place where God brought it right to where the people were. All the parallels in John chapter 6, as Christ is the Bread of Life coming to man and bringing the Word of God to man, just like in the Old Testament, the manna, which is a picture of the Word of God, came to the people that were starving in the Old Testament.

Then we have John chapter 7. John chapter 7 is one of those great chapters of insight for me in the Bible because it really takes you behind the scenes and shows you the scribes and the Pharisees, what their deal really is. Did you ever wonder what their problem was? Here is Christ coming down here. He claims to be of God, and He is. The scribes and the Pharisees claim to be believers in God, and they are not. They have a religious thing going down here that has all the appearance of being with God, but it is not. They are going through the motions, but they have nothing to do with God. When Christ shows up, who claims to be the Son of God to bring in the kingdom to Israel, they do not want any part of it because they know that they are all going to lose their jobs if He shows up and does it. So there is great adversity. John chapter 7 is the great behind-the-scenes mindset of the scribes and the Pharisees, of what really, really ticked them off.

Here is Jesus teaching in the temple. This is great because you are going to run into this when you start to deal with people. I have run into it all my life. He is teaching in the temple. The first thing the scribes and the Pharisees are upset about is found in John 7:15-16, where they simply say, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" They were not happy with His educational background. It did not match theirs. Here is a common ordinary man, or so they think, who is a carpenter's son, who has never been to the great universities, who has never been to the great theological seminaries of the world, who was never trained in the traditions of the scribes and the Pharisees. All He was was a walking, talking Bible. The question is, "How in the

world can this man know anything if He has not been taught by us?" These men love education. Education becomes their god. They do not look at time spent walking with God as time that counts.

How do I know this is true? I have been in this business for thirty-five years, because every church I have ever been associated with or ever heard about, when they look for a new pastor, the first thing they are concerned about is where he went to school and not how close he walked with God. That bothers me. I do not care where you have been to school. Have you been walking with God? Because you do not learn to walk with God in school. You learn to walk with God through life. That is what the scribes and the Pharisees are all about. They say, "How does this man know letters, having never learned?"

The next thing they did not like, John 7:17, was His doctrine. The Bible says that He had authority, which the people loved, but the scribes and Pharisees did not have it. In John 7:31, He was successful. People were believing on Him. They do not like that. You are going to find this in your life. I know this happened two thousand years ago, but I am telling you, the scribes and Pharisees did not pass off the scene with Jesus' death. They are alive and well today.

A number of years ago, in a church I was with, I was just part of the scenery back then. I was just trying to grow it. I had a Sunday school class of about five hundred, six hundred people. I was in charge of singles and college and career. Across the church, they had a thing where you had a night, Sunday night or Wednesday night, I forget when it was, but everybody took classes and the whole church decided where they wanted to go. It was like an educational thing. It was a good concept. All the different men and leaders of the church taught different classes. I will never forget. I had a Monday night Bible study, and any question you wanted to ask about the Bible, people were getting saved, and we were having a great time, and everything was growing. So we signed up for all the classes. I did not know what was going on. I came back down there, and I was looking through the sheets up here, and I was going to teach the book of Revelation, and this guy was going to teach the book of Daniel. Somebody else was going to teach this, and I came down through there. I had three hundred fifty-some people sign up for my class.

We had a guy in our church back then that was the resident scholar. He and I did not get along, as you might imagine. I did not get along with anybody, but he did not like me. He did not like me because I just believed the Bible is all you need. I am just old-fashioned that way. I am an old-fashioned Bible-believing preacher, and that is just the way I have always been. Back then, I was only twenty-some, and I was still old-fashioned because I put in a lot of overtime. I will never forget. He pulled me aside one day. This guy had syrup dripping out of both sides of his mouth. He was just the softest, soapiest guy, but he absolutely hated the Word of God in any concept of the Bible. He had been to Bible college. He went to one of the Bible colleges in town here, and his big deal was prophecy, and he was an expert on the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation.

He pulled me aside one Saturday afternoon or one Sunday afternoon, I forget what it was. He put his arm around me, and he says, "Bob, I want to talk to you for a moment." I said, "Well, thank you. I appreciate that. Before you go in there, I do not need any. I cannot afford any more

friends, so what exactly do you need?" He put his arm around me, and he said, "No, I want to help you." I said, "I need help." He was teaching the book of Daniel. He had six people signed up in his class. You see where this thing is going? I am not saying that I am anything great because I am as dumb as a stump. I am so... I am dumb, but I am not stupid. I am not stupid, but I am dumb. I am just dumb enough to believe God wrote a book and can take care of it, and that is all that I need. But I am not stupid. There is a difference. I do not like the word "stupid," but unfortunately, there are stupid Christians. I do not like the word. I never called my kids stupid. I never called my wife stupid. I do not call anybody stupid because I do not like the word. I am not stupid, but I am dumb.

So he put his arm around me, and he says, "Hey," he says, "I want to talk to you. I want to help you out." I said, "I need some help. That is good. I am always looking for help." He says, "Bobby," he says, "you need to get some education." He said, "Preaching the way you preach and saying the things you say, you just really need to get polished a little bit. You need to get the rough edges knocked off." He says, "You just really need to get some higher education." He says, "I really think it would help your ministry." He says, "I have got some great brochures of these schools here in town, and you could go, and these men know much more about the Bible than you do, and they can help refine you," was the word he was using. That is the word. I said, "Well, Darrell, let me ask you a question. Let me see if I get this straight. I need some help. I have no problem with that. I know I have got some rough edges. You say I need more education because I really do not grasp the Bible here, and I need to get more education like you have got to get an education, right?" He says, "You get me, Bob, that is right." I said, "Okay, let me see this. I need to get more education. I need to be more like you. And then I can run a six in my Bible study like you do. Is that what you are saying? I get it now. That is good. I can be like you." He did not like that.

The problem was jealousy. He should have gone and got his money back. He spent all those years and all that money and came out not believing the book. Why do I want to go someplace that all they are going to tell me every day is I cannot trust the book that God saved me with? I just have a tough time with that. You can see that is the problem with Christ. They did not like the fact that people were believing on Him. The common man said in John 7:46, "Never man spake like this man." The scribes answered back in John 7:48, "Well, it may be so, but do you see anybody else believing on him?" "Be like us. Do not follow him." They cannot stand it. Mark 15:10 says that it was envy that was the problem.

## VII. John 8-12: The Reliability of Scripture and Lessons from Life

I like John chapter 7 and John chapter 8 being right next to each other because we get to John chapter 8. There is a great study here of the woman taken in adultery. I would love to lay this great story out and this great teaching out, but I cannot because I picked up the wrong Bible this morning, and right there in my Bible is a little footnote that says, "According to the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and other ancient witnesses, this story from John 8:1-11 should not be in my Bible." I do not want to teach anything unreliable, so I just cannot preach that story to you

today. But I like it being close to John 7 and John 8 because it brings up and illustrates what I was saying in John 7. All the new translations say that John 8:1-11 should not be in your Bible. It may be in there, but there is a thing between the two of them that says, "This should not be there."

I want to show you the fun thing. I love this. This is where God shows you exactly that the dumber you are, the better you are. I have heard all of them. "What about King James? He was a rascal." Do you think King James really had anything to do with the Bible? Do you think I went out to the mall the other day and saw a pipe tobacco, Prince Albert? Do you think Prince Albert had anything to do with the pipe tobacco? No more than King James had anything to do with the translation. But it is okay. Now, watch this. First of all, I understand why all the modern-day Pharisees do not like this story and want to get it out, because it shows you the scribes and Pharisees in dishonor, because they set Him up in this thing. But I want to show you something. This is being dumb. They are stupid. I want to show you dumb versus stupid.

"Okay, Dr. Bugwit, let me see if I got this thing straight. You say John 8:1-11 should not be in my Bible. Is that correct?" "That is right, young man. According to the most earliest and most reliable manuscripts and other ancient witnesses, that is not a proper text, and it should not be in your Bible. So we put this note in here, so you would not rely on it." "Okay. So you are telling me then, John 8:1-11 should not be in there, and my chapter then should start at John 8:12. Is that right, doctor?" "That is right." Will everybody just look at John 8:12? If John 8:12 is where it starts, it says:

*John 8:12*

*Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

How in the world did He speak again if He did not speak the first time through John 8:1-11? I do not know what to do with that. How in the world, if John 8:1-11 should not be in my Bible, and it should start in John 8:12, and John 8:12 says, "Then Jesus spake again," how in the world did He speak again if He did not speak the first time in John 8:1-11? It does not make any sense, but that is the difference between stupid and dumb. I am dumb enough to know that it ought to be in there.

Our country, our government, sells you and me short. They think we are stupid. They really do. They are always the last ones to find out. They walk around pretending that the UN is a good organization, that it is not corrupt. Kofi Annan, or whatever his name is, just got caught up and he just did not know what was going on. Every common ordinary nine-to-five man and woman knows that that is not true. I know it is not true. They cannot get it. They just cannot get it. You know why? Because they have another agenda. Probably some of them are getting kickbacks from it. Nobody has yet come out and said, "Well, now we know why the United Nations did not want to become part of the coalition forces that went to Baghdad because they were getting kickbacks from that guy over there, Saddam Hussein." Nobody has said that. Is everybody here understanding the point? Why will not somebody get up and say it? They have an agenda. It is political. Many times preachers and high religious leaders get other agendas. In those agendas, it

is not always for you. But the common ordinary guys like us can see right through it. You know why? Because "the entrance of thy words giveth light." When the Holy Spirit of God opens up your understanding, just like I can sit and look at my government, which I love and I pray for, and I am not anti-government, I just look at the government and all the things. Like when I was a kid, I used to look at Wile E. Coyote and Bugs Bunny and all of that. It is entertaining. But anything going on there does not mean anything because the book says when Christ comes back, He is going to kick the snot out of everybody anyhow. So what is your point? I will just stick with that. It is one of those things, but they never get it. We figure it out. We know there is corruption. When the Democrats come up and say, "Well, let us do it," or "George versus that," "Oh, do we want Bill Clinton back to what we want?" It does not mean anything. But they think we are stupid. We are not stupid. We are dumb, but we are not stupid. We see right through that stuff. That is just the way that we are going to get it.

Many times pastors, many times Bible college professors or whatever, they get another agenda. Not all of them, but they get another agenda and they will tell you that this should not be here. Then they will never even look at John 8:12. You know why? Because they have such an agenda against that Bible. They hate it with such fervor that God could write a book and preserve it that would teach you about God without them being involved. They cannot stand it. You do not need me. You do not need me. In time, you might have just got saved and might be learned in the Bible, but I am just an instrument to get you to the place where you do not need anybody but you and God and that book. I will never dangle you out there forever saying, "Oh, you have got to let me tell you what this means. You will never make it on your own. I am the one that really understands." No, no. In five years' time, if most of you are not smarter than me when it comes to the Word of God and know that book better than me, then you better check your own life or there is something wrong with it. That is the way God intended it to be.

In John chapter 9, we have the story of the man born blind. This is a great insight into the tragedy of his life because many times things happen, and people ask why. Here is a case where the man was born blind. God heals him, and His disciples asked Christ, saying, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" You see, automatically when something bad goes down, we either blame God for it or think that there is some kind of sin involved. Jesus shows us the great concept here that that is not always true.

*John 9:3*

*Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

Sometimes God allows tragic things to happen so that God can get the glory out of it. God's people need to be close to God like John, head on the very breast of Jesus, listening to the heartbeat of God, understanding that.

In John chapter 10, the great study of Christ as the Good Shepherd. We see Christ and His sheep, and Israel and the church, both in this thing.

*John 10:14*

*I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*

This refers to Israel.

*John 10:16*

*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

This refers to the Gentile church, future. John 10:16 continues, "them also," the Gentiles, "I must bring and they shall hear my voice and shall be one fold and one shepherd." That is the church, Jew and Gentile in one body, Ephesians chapter 4. He is laying out in that chapter that He is a great shepherd. He is the Shepherd of Israel, but He is going to be the Shepherd of the church. It is going to be a day when both come into one and become one body called the body of Christ, laid out in the book of Ephesians, but particularly Ephesians chapter 4.

A great study is on sheep. One time I used to go out to Montana every year; I used to preach out there. There are gigantic ranches out there that span hundreds of thousands of acres, millions of acres. I remember one time going out on a frosty morning and looking up about five miles away, maybe seven or eight miles away, on a hill way over there, and there was a whole herd of caribou. If you had a .50-caliber machine gun or a mortar, you could have dropped the thing down there and got your limit from that far. They were just all over the place. These ranches went on and on. Some of them were cattle, and a lot of them were sheep. I really liked the sheep because I liked to watch the sheepdogs work. Sheepdogs are the most amazing thing in the world to me. They really know what they are doing.

I got talking to an old sheep farmer because I knew my Bible a little bit, and I knew that sheep were likened to Christians. I also knew that Job 12:7 says that animals in the Bible will teach you something; you can learn from the beasts. So I got this old sheep herder who had been herding. This guy was not a Christian. He did not have a Bible. He did not know anything about the Bible that I know of. I witnessed to him. I never got anywhere with him. But he knew about sheep all his life, and I figured, "If the Bible is true and animals in the Bible teach us something and sheep mean Christians, I bet if I just asked this guy to teach me some things about sheep, I could learn some things about God's people."

I said, "Old-timer, you have been doing sheep, watching sheep and taking care of sheep for a long time, have you not?" He says, "About fifty-some years." He spit his juice out, it dripped down on his lip. He said, "Yeah." He had no teeth. This guy had been up on the mountain with his sheep, and bug juice all on his face. "Yeah, I sure have." I said, "Could you turn the other way and tell me about sheep a little bit?" He said, "Well, I will tell you something, young man. Sheep get lost four different ways. Never seen it five different ways, four different ways they get lost." I said, "Really, what is all that?"

4. "The first thing you understand, sheep are dumb. They are just dumb as a stump." I said, "Amen." He said, "What did you say?" I said, "Nothing. Go ahead."

5. "The first way they get lost is because they are curious. When they get looking places they should not look, they get lost." I said, "Amen." He said, "What did you say?" I said, "Nothing."
6. "I will tell you something else, young man. They get lost because they start looking for greener pastures and are not satisfied where they are at." I said, "Amen." He said, "What did you say?" I said, "Never mind."
7. "Sometimes they get scared because wild animals scare them." He said, "I will tell you something else. When a sheep gets sick, he will not follow the shepherd." I said, "Amen, brother. I appreciate that."

I said, "Now, how long does a sheep live?" He said, "Well, some of them sheep live ten, twelve, fifteen, sixteen. I had one time lived eighteen years." I said, "You do not kill the sheep. You just keep the sheep." He said, "Oh, no, we do not kill them. We bring them in every year. We get the wool from them and we sell that wool. I am the shepherd and they bring their wool to me." I thought, "Romans chapter 12, there it is, the sheep being a living sacrifice, giving the wool to the shepherd." That will work.

John chapter 11, the great raising of Lazarus. The great story, which is a picture of Lazarus as the nation of Israel, laid out in Romans chapter 9 and Romans chapter 11.

In John chapter 12, six days before the last Passover where He was crucified, this is Palm Sunday around the time, you find the story of Mary and Martha. Martha represents somebody that serves God. Mary represents somebody that worships God, two types of Christians. The great lesson here is on the lesson of serving versus worshipping, doing versus being, a work for God versus the work of God. It is all laid out in the story of Mary and Martha.

## VIII. John 13-19: The Last Supper and Crucifixion Events

With that in mind, we come to John chapter 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17. As I said earlier, we have come up to the last Passover now, right before, and all of these events take place on the night before, in the upper room at the Last Supper.

- John 13: The Revealing of the Antichrist
- John 14: The Promise of Restoration
- John 15: Christ the True Vine
- John 16: The Great Tribulation
- John 17: Christ's Prayer
- John 18: Betrayal and Trials
- John 19: The Crucifixion

## IX. John 20: Five Perspectives on Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection

Then we come to John chapter 20, which is the resurrection of Christ. We have been through the resurrection before. So what I want to do now is I want to give you five aspects of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. You want to learn these because it gives you five different ways that five different beings or people looked at the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

8. God's Perspective
9. Christ's Perspective
10. The Devil's Perspective
11. The World's Perspective
12. The Child of God's Perspective

## X. John 21: Building the Right Kind of Church Today

Then we come to John chapter 21, and we are done here. John 21:1-7 is one of the greatest lessons, I think, in all of the Bible on how to build the right kind of church today. If you know your Bible at all, you know that the New Testament is laid out in the early part of the book of Revelation in seven periods of church history. The worst one of those is the one that we are living in right now, called the Laodicean Church, a church that forgets all about the rights of God and as God's people are only concerned about their own rights. The greatest church period in that period of time was the Philadelphia Church, the one before ours. It is a time when literally the Word of God went around the world. It was a time that the Reformation broke the ties with the Roman Church of Europe, and the Word of God was just catapulted around the world through the little empire of England, later on through the early part of the United States. It is a great, incredible study to show, but we are living in a day and age that the Bible shows us why that happens and why we come into a church period that the Bible says that we are so big, we are so haughty, we think that we are so great, we do not have need of anything. We have all the buildings, we have all the property, we have all the riches. What we think is really the riches is really not the riches. In fact, Christ tells them, "I encourage you," He says, "to buy gold, tried in the fire." It is the only church in the history of the world where nobody has been persecuted for what they believe compared to the other ones. It is a terrible thing.

Yet we find men today who try to build churches. I learned a long time ago, just because you get a building with a steeple on top and you get a lot of people inside, does not mean you have a New Testament church. There are some things that have to go along with that. There are some things that you have to focus on. I find here in this great chapter, in the first seven verses, one of the greatest lessons on how to build a Philadelphia church in a Laodicean church age. I wish I had time to go through it today. But it is a thing of how to be today if you are going to build a church and you are going to touch people's lives, how to be successful.

In John 21:3, old Peter says, "I am going fishing!" This is a picture of soul winning. How many preachers have started out saying, "I am going fishing, brother, I am going to go win some people to Christ"? Jesus' question is the only question He asks in this story. His question is, "Children, have ye any meat?" You cannot soul win in a world where you do not have any doctrine. The Bible says that "meat" in the Bible is a picture of men and women who have a strong doctrinal basis in the Word of God. The church does not know what it believes today. Most of God's people do not know what they believe today. Trying to build a church built on no stability of doctrine will never be the church that Jesus Christ wants. All you will do is produce unstable Christians from an unstable church. Most pastors are unstable themselves, so they produce an unstable church that produces unstable people. That is why they split every three or four years. The pastor does not want anybody out there to know the Bible any better than he does, so he keeps his thumb on them, so to speak. He does not know the Bible very well. He is intimidated about everything, and anybody that tries to rise up to be a leader, he thinks it is going to be an intimidation on his leadership. So he tries to squash it, or gives him some menial job to do that has nothing to do with anything of learning how to put the Word of God. The bottom line is, I said it before, I will say it again, I have said it a thousand times: in five years' time from when you start this program, you ought to be better in the Word of God. You ought to have it all together in such a way that if I died off the scene, somebody could stand up and take my job tomorrow. That is the way it is.

He said, "I go fishing," and Jesus says, "Children," John 21:5, "have ye any meat?" Then He tells them how to catch fish. They are doing it their way, and that is the way we do it today, our way. Everybody comes down and buys every new soul winning gimmick that comes out on the market today. Every guy that comes down and says, "I have got the key, I have got the key, I will show you how to get a thousand people in your church in a day." They will bring him in and let him go because everybody wants the easy route. They got it their way and did not catch a thing, until Jesus said, "Do it this way." We live in a day and age where telecommunications is fast. You can be around the world in no time. We have laser printers that can put out fifty million Bibles a minute in every language on the face of the planet. We have telecommunications. We have multi-lingual, bilingual places that can do it. We have more resources today. We have more money. We have more ways to take this and that, get this here. We have more resources today in putting out the Word of God and reaching the world than ever in the history of the world. Yet we are not getting done what they did in the book of Acts when they had nothing but the Holy Spirit of God and the Word of God. You know why? Because we are doing it our way, not His way. He tells them how to do it. There is a great study there. We do not have time to get into it.

## XI. The Two Life-Changing Verses

The last thing I want to do is give you the second greatest verse. Last week I told you two of the greatest verses in the Bible that will change your perspective about the Word of God. When I saw these two verses and I found them about six months apart, the first one I gave you last week was in Luke chapter 24, and the next one I found was John chapter 21. These are the two verses that changed my whole life about the Word of God.

The first one was when I was going through a lot of things about higher education and getting blasted by a lot of people. God gave me this verse, and I gave it to you last week in Luke 24:45. It simply said this:

*Luke 24:45*

*Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.*

I showed you that was a verse that revolutionized my life about the Word of God because I realized that it was God's Holy Spirit that taught me the Bible. God can use men. God can use things that men wrote. But at the end of the day, it is your personal, intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit of God, and God opening up your understanding and teaching you the Word of God that counts. That meant that more than anything else in the world, I had to focus on my own personal walk with God to learn what the Word of God said.

The second greatest verse was in John chapter 21, the last verse, and I do not know of any other verse that changed my life more about the Bible than this. It says in John 21:25:

*John 21:25*

*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

When I read that, it hit me like—and I probably read that a hundred times before it sunk in. When I read that where it said, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written," I realized that there were many other things that Jesus said, many other things that Jesus did, probably many other people that got healed, probably many other people that were raised from the dead, probably many other events that took place that are not recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, or the Word of God. When I grasped that, I realized that that means simply that of everything else that was said and done, He handpicked what He wanted me to have. If that is true, and I believe that it is, then I can never look at the Bible the same way again, because now everything in it has been handpicked for me by Him. Of everything that He said and did, the Bible itself said that the world itself could not contain the books. He picked and chose what He wanted me to have in a book and then said, "Bob, here it is. This is for you."

That is why I have such a problem with some earthly, sinner man just like me telling me this does not belong in here, when I have a verse there that says out of everything that He did, He picked what He wanted in. If I have to choose between God and scholarship, there are some things in life I do not need to pray about. That verse tells me out of everything that He did, He handpicked. How dare you tell me, if that is true, that this passage, this verse, or this word should not be in my Bible, and it is not reliable? That is about as blasphemous as I could ever think of anything to say about God's Word, that God did not, in light of that verse, that said all the other things.

Very frankly, I know the issues of God preserved it, God inspired it. Let me tell you something. What good is it if God inspired a Bible somewhere, someplace, but He was not God enough to preserve it to me today? What good is it that once upon a time God inspired a book, but somewhere through the process of history lost it? The very concept of inspiration and preservation have to go hand in hand. The fact that God inspired it is the fact that God preserved it. How in the world could God judge me someday by a righteous standard, absolute and perfect, if He did not give me that standard to live by and know what it said today? He could not. He could not. So I believe it when it says many other things, which He did and what He wrote. The world itself could not contain all of them. He handpicked those things for me. This is my own personal written revelation of God to me. You can claim the same thing if you want. It all goes back to your attitude of heart of loving that book and loving God. Every head bowed and every eye closed.