

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

with Pastor Joe Meyer

PART 4

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“God So Loved”

**A Study of the Gospel of John—
Chapters Eighteen through Twenty-One**

**Pastor Joe Meyer
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church**

Chapter Eighteen—“God’s All-In Love”

Read John 18:1-14

This segment of John eighteen contains some amazing and extremely impactful narrative about the last hours of the earthly life/ministry of the Lord Jesus. As we read about what happened to Jesus as He was taken captive and tried illegally and ultimately sacrificed on the cross, we once again see the true love that Jesus had for His disciples and by extension then, has for us.

John tells us that Jesus and the disciples came out of Jerusalem and they crossed what is called the Kidron valley in order to go up onto the Mount of Olives and into the Garden of Gethsemane. Take a moment to Google-search the Kidron valley at this link: <https://www.generationword.com/jerusalem101/9-kidron-valley.html>.

Take note that Jesus often went to the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples and that Judas, being one of those disciples, knew that. I want you to think about all that Judas saw and heard from Jesus, including those things that you know Jesus imparted in the Garden of Gethsemane. Have you ever come across a person who was like Judas? A person confronted by the truth of the Gospel and yet completely rejecting the Lord Jesus? For an explanation of why this happens, look at Christ’s words in **John 3:16-21**. What do you do when a person you are witnessing to responds this way?

Verse six is one of the most amazing verses in the Bible! What in the world to you do with what is said there? How did Jesus knock people over with something He said? Consider what He said, and look at **Exodus 3:1-15**.

Peter is said to have taken out a “sword” here. Does that strike you as odd? In truth, it was a very dangerous time in history and most of them carried a “dagger,” which is what Peter had. Far more importantly, the servant of the High Priest is named for us. Why is that important? Consider it’s import and then look at **Isaiah 43:1** for some application. In other words, he wasn’t just a servant, he was in fact a human being and now forever known to the world through the Gospel. Second however, realize that Jesus healed Malchus right then and there in front of them all! Why is that important? Consider **John 10:22-42** in that regard.

Read John 18:12-18 and 18:25-27

Before we talk about Peter’s denial of Christ, let’s consider what Caiaphas said about Jesus, namely that “one man should die for the people.” Page back to **John 12:45-57**. Why is this prophecy from the High Priest so important?

Okay, so quite apparently John held some sway since he had access to the High Priest’s residence...kind of odd, yes? It worked out as he was able to get Peter in the door! Why? Regardless, they were both there and yes, though it was prophesied by Christ, Peter denied Jesus anyway. Take a moment to Google search the word “Gallicantu” which is the name given Caiaphas’s house and

the church associated with Peter's denial. Now, consider Christ's prophecy found in **John 13:36-38**. Why did Peter deny when he knew it was coming? Consider Paul's confession concerning the power of the sinful nature in **Romans 7:7-20**.

Read John 18:19-24

This segment presents an odd situation for us. There was only ONE High Priest at a time, but it's clear from this segment that there were two at this time. In fact, read **Matthew 26:14-16** in that regard. Why was that the case? (It might have had something to do with the Roman government...see this article: https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_1314.cfm) For more on the High Priest, check **Leviticus 16** but then also look at the mysterious character known as "Melchizedek" from **Genesis 14:17-20** and **Hebrews 7:1-3**.

Read John 18:28-40

This section contains the interesting and very famous dialogue between Jesus and Pilate. The Jewish leaders who brought Jesus to Pilate were simply attempting to appear loyal to Rome while getting Jesus killed nonetheless. They could have killed Him as evidenced by the stoning of Stephen in **Acts 7**. They also knew that Pilate had a history of violent suppression...check **Luke 13:1** for some info on that.

During this dialogue between Pilate and Jesus, the Governor wants to know if Jesus is a King but Jesus doesn't really ever answer that question here, and in fact, simply speaks of coming into the world to bring "truth". Don't be mistaken, Jesus did believe Himself to be The King however...check **Matthew 25:31-46**, particularly noting verse **34** in that regard. In fact, Jesus gets at that by His answer to Pilate "*My kingdom is not of this world...*". Beyond claiming His Kingship, why is that statement especially important for us? What does it tell us about our lives lived in this place? After discussion, remember Paul's famous words in **2Corinthians 5:6-9**. What does that "*My kingdom is not of this world*" also tell us about the Second Coming of Jesus? Check **John 14:1-6** and **1Thessalonians 4:13-18** for that.

Jesus also says something alongside "*My Kingdom is not of this world*" that helps us understand why His disciples did not understand who He was. What is that statement? Now, look at **Matthew 28:16-20** and in particular **verse seventeen**. Also consider what Jesus did for the disciples in **Luke 24:13-27**.

In this day and time, names carried meaning. The name of the man who was saved from execution was...? What does his name mean and why is that significant? Once you've processed that...answer this: Does God really work that way? Does God really use names and situations in this way? Consider Jesus' dialogue about Jonah in **Matthew 12:38-41**.

Chapter Nineteen—“God’s Sacrificial Love”

Read John 19:1-16

What is sad and yet interesting about this narrative is the humiliation that the Romans put Jesus through. With that in mind, what was the ultimate humiliation that the Roman officials put criminals through? Read **Luke 23:32-35** and **John 19:23,24** in that regard. Why do you think the Romans would do this to criminals...why not just kill them outright? What effect was brought about by crucifying individuals this way or even crucifying them period?

In fact, prior to stripping Jesus of all of His clothing, they put very specific clothing items on Jesus. What were they and why? What were they attempting to accomplish by those garments and props? And further, why is it sadly ironic that they chose His particular humiliation? Consider **Matthew 25:31-32**.

In **verse seven**, the Jews claim that Jesus “*made Himself the Son of God*”. Why is that both true and false? Check **John 5:17,18** verifying that Jesus did indeed do that, but then check **Hebrews 5:1-6** as well. What does it mean that Jesus, who is the Christ, didn’t take the honor for Himself?

Verse eleven is a whopper! How amazing is it that Jesus tells Pilate he has no authority over Him? What does that tell you about the situation Jesus was in? Let me ask it this way: Who was in charge, in command, here...Pilate or

Jesus? To that point, look at **Matthew 26:47-56**. What does that tell you about God's love?

Who is Jesus referring to when He said "*he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin?*" Is it Judas or is it...? See **John 18:28-32**. Why would that person be guilty of a greater sin?

In **verse fifteen**, the crowd says to Pilate, "*we have no king but Caesar.*" What mistake were they making in saying that? See **Psalm 47**. Is Jesus a "King" then? Check **Revelation 19:11-16** (wow...right?)

Read John 19:17-27

In **verse eighteen**, we're introduced to the two who were crucified with our Lord. These two had no idea the honor they'd been given...albeit a terrible honor. Check what Jesus said in **Mark 10:35-45** which is very likely speaking of the two men on the left and right of Jesus at Golgotha. The Lord is Sovereign and indeed, orchestrated everything...if you don't understand that, look at **verse twenty-four** again. Everything went exactly as Jesus foretold it and just as He had planned it.

In **verses twenty-five to twenty-seven**, we are given a very personal testimony to the love of Jesus as He takes time to provide for his mother. First, the fact that Mary was at the crucifixion speaks of Mary's love for Jesus. Look back at the interchange between Jesus and Mary in **John 2:1-5**. But make sure to notice Jesus' love for Mary...Jesus is dying on the cross with the weight of the sins of the world on His back and He's concerned for His "mama." Remember that Jesus was obeying the Fourth Commandment here, check **Ephesians 6:1-3** in that regard. But it's also the fact that He was Mary's eldest son and as such needed to provide for her since, likely, Joseph was dead at this point. To get a glimpse of sons providing for their mamas, look at **Luke 7:11-17**.

Read John 19:28-42

The first couple of verses in this segment are truly amazing. They are a sad reminder that Jesus was going through an intensely painful experience. Of course the greatest "pain" for Jesus was that the Lord was condemning Him for the sins of the world (**Isaiah 53:6**)...but He also had intense physical pain brought on by His torturous execution. That's what the "sour wine" was all about...pain relief, a source of numbing in a moment when that would be welcomed. Check **Mark 15:23** and the use of the word "myrrh" to describe what was mixed with the wine. What was myrrh? What effect would it have had then? What then does it remind us about the Christ? Probably better said, what does it then remind us about Jesus?

The far more important thing is from **verse thirty** and is written this way: *"When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."* Two important things here: 1) What did Jesus mean by "it is finished"? What was "finished" in that moment? See **Hebrews 10:1-10**, remembering those verses in light of what John the Baptist said in **John 1:29**. 2) Jesus didn't just "die" because He stopped breathing and because His heart ceased ticking. No, Jesus willingly, and according

to His own sovereign timing, “gave up His spirit”. Why is that important? Check the amazing words of Jesus from **John 10:14-18**.

In the segment from **verse thirty-one** to **verse thirty-seven**, we’re reminded of how people died during crucifixion. So...how did they die? The breaking of the legs gives us a hint by the way. But this leg-breaking, or non-leg-breaking in the case of our Lord, also reminds us that Jesus was fulfilling Scripture on the cross. What happened to Jesus would go down just as it had been written about Him in the Old Testament. Read **Psalm 22** and **Isaiah 53** for a couple of amazing instances. What does this reminder of Scripture given and Scripture fulfilled tell us about our Lord?

Chapter Twenty—“God’s Resurrection Love”

Read John 20:1-10

We come across a very poignant and very human part of the Christ-Story in these verses. We should take note that the last we heard about these two Apostles was when they were skulking about Caiphas’s house...or at least Peter was...in **John 18:15-18** and **18:25-27**. We now have a very different set of Apostles on our hands! As John writes it about himself and Peter, “...*for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise from the dead.*” Why didn’t they understand? And what was the Scripture? For an answer to the first question, look back at Christ’s discussion with Pilate and what He said as found in **John 18:36**. So..what was the Scripture about Christ’s resurrection? Look at **Acts 2:25-31**. By the way, why do you think John stayed outside the tomb?

Let’s briefly talk about the folded face cloth. Much ink has been spilled about this detail from the Apostle John and you can Google it and read all sorts of stuff. Some of it’s a stretch. In my opinion, this was simply evidence to the Apostles that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead and wasn’t snatched away by grave robbers. Someone stealing the body of Jesus wouldn’t have taken the time to fold it...but Jesus, Risen from the dead, just might do so. Jesus was proving to them that He rose and that’s an important proof for two guys who “...*did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise from the dead.*” With that in mind, consider then what Paul writes about the truth of the Resurrection in **1Corinthians 15:12-20**.

One last interesting tidbit...when Jesus did specific things he often took three disciples with Him. Who were those three? Look at **Matthew 17:1-8** for one instance. So...where’s the third guy?

Read John 20:11-18

This segment is so beautiful...I've preached on it for Easter many, many times. It begs the question, why was Mary Magdalene so loyal to Jesus? And no...it's not because they were husband and wife. In fact, let's deal with that ridiculous notion. Why can I for sure say Jesus wasn't married to Mary Magdalene? Look at the verse we've already dealt with in **John 18:36**.

Now, why was Mary so dedicated to Jesus? Look at **Luke 8:1-3** for the answer. How does what happened to Mary apply to you and me?

Last but not least, what does Jesus mean in by what He says to Mary in **John 20:17**? Go back to **Matthew 17:1-7** and Peter's proposal to Jesus about the tents for an answer. Take some time to think about what both Peter and Mary were attempting to accomplish with Jesus. How would you describe it?

Read John 20:19-23

The disciples were hiding and afraid but Jesus came to give them peace. What an amazing Lord and Savior we serve! But what was it specifically that Jesus did to bring them this peace? He showed them what? Why would that bring peace? Look at **Psalms 4:8** to see what faith in our saving Lord can bring you. In fact, check **Romans 5:1** for another instance and punch down to **John 20:30,31** for further explanation.

Read John 20:24-29

This is the very famous “Doubting Thomas” narrative. To begin with, was Thomas a “doubter” or is the word for where Thomas was at much stronger? (Yes, the Greek language is important here). How could that have been changed? Let’s make an application here: When Jesus showed up, Thomas was absent and was therefore doubting/unbelieving. The application for us is when we are absent when Jesus shows up, we can end up in the same place! But where does Jesus “show up” for us? Consider **Hebrews 10:19-25** and **Acts 2:42-47**. Also consider what Paul wrote to the young Pastor named Timothy in **2Timothy 3:14-16**. In fact, notice again how Jesus dispels not just fear but unbelief in **verse twenty-seven**.

Take note that when Thomas encounters the truth of the living Christ and the truth of the Gospel by touching/being touched by Jesus, He proclaims in faith “*My Lord and my God!*” Thomas went from unbeliever to believer because of the Gospel! And let me remind you, that’s still how it happens. Check **Romans 1:16,17** and **Romans 10:17** in that regard. (Oh...and remember again what we said about **verses thirty and thirty-one** in that regard.

Chapter Twenty-One—“God’s Restorative Love”

Read John 21:1-14

This is such an important story for understanding our Lord Jesus. He came to them in the upper room, but He clearly kept coming to them after that. Jesus was concerned for them and I think we can say especially so since the Holy Spirit had yet to be given to them. They needed Him and His presence. But notice how He comes...Jesus shows up in very ordinary, every day situations. He came to breakfast for goodness sakes. This story is a reminder that the Lord wants to walk with you every day and in every way...not just in corporate worship! Look at **Deuteronomy 6:1-25** for that truth.

Jesus has them cast the net a second time...what does this story remind you of and why did Jesus do this for the disciples? Consider that question in light of **Luke 5:1-11**. What was Jesus really telling them?

Why did Jesus eat? What was the purpose? Look at **Luke 24:36-42** for another instance and explanation.

Read John 21:15-19

This segment is so beautiful and so heartening...particularly because we often sin in the same way that Peter did. I write that because this was indeed about Peter denying Jesus prior to the crucifixion. Look at that narrative in **Luke**

24:54-62. As you've likely heard said, there were three denials and so three times Jesus said, "*Peter do you love me?*" This is a moment of restoration and a story that helps us remember the truth of **Luke 19:1-10**, particularly **verse ten**. We are reminded here that Jesus seeks us when we're lost to bring us to faith...but He also seeks us after He brings us to faith to bring forgiveness and restoration.

Read John 21:20-25

Just two brief things here:

1) Why did Peter ask about John, the beloved disciple? In my opinion, John was the youngest of the disciples and therefore Peter was concerned about him. That may have been why these two things were allowed to happen: **John 18:15,16** and **John 19:26,27**. In other words, John was likely no threat because he was viewed as too young to be a threat.

2) John reminds us at the end of his Gospel that Jesus did many other things and that they were so many that "*...the world itself could not contain all the books...*" if they were written down. That reminds us that when we read the Word, we don't have it all...BUT we do have exactly what God wanted us to have. In other words, while we don't have all the answers about our faith, we do have the answers that God thought necessary. I've often said it this way: "*The Bible doesn't contain everything about God...no book could...but it does contain everything God wanted us to know about Him.*" Rest in that truth.

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