

JOHN

JOHN — INTRODUCTION

The first three Gospels are called the synoptics, from two Greek words which means "a view together," the idea being that they set forth the same general view of the story of Jesus Christ, and contain much the same material although differently arranged. They were the earliest gospels, in circulation within twenty-five or thirty years of the Ascension, and did the work of an evangelist in carrying the knowledge of Jesus to peoples theretofore ignorant of Him. From among these peoples thus converted to Jesus, Jews, Romans and Greeks, the Christian church was founded, and to this latter body, composed of all three classes, the Gospel of John was addressed.

THE REASON FOR JOHN'S GOSPEL

Thirty years, more or less, had elapsed since the synoptics, and with the growth and development of the church had come up questions for settlement that the fourth gospel was designed to meet. These touched on the Person and work of Jesus as the Messiah, his nature and the significance of His death, so that in answering them John reveals the profoundest truth found in the gospels. For the same reason John's Gospel is nearly altogether new as compared with the synoptics. This is not to say that John invented what he wrote, or that the substance of his Gospel was unknown to the other writers, but only that, in the wisdom of God, the relation of such things as he records was held back until the period when it was particularly needed and could best be understood and appreciated. John was the last survivor of the twelve, dying near the close of the first century, kept on the earth by divine Providence, until, like his Master, he, too, had finished the work given him to do.

PROOF OF LATER DATE

The proof of the later date of John's Gospel is in such references as 1:32, and 3:24, which assume a previous knowledge of the facts on the part of his readers. It is found also in the omissions of all the material of the

synoptics down to the passion. There is only one exception to this, the feeding of the five thousand, which was retained in John probably in order to introduce the discourse on the Bread of Life (chap. 6).

There is a further evidence of the later date of John in that which, at the same time, affords an illustration of its profounder character, viz., the prevailing use of words belonging to the later rather than the earlier experiences of Christianity such as: sinner, repent or repentance, righteous, justify, believe, love, God as Father, world as renewed, humanity, truth, true, light, life and eternal life.

DEPTH OF ITS TEACHING

Further illustration of its great depth is found in the miracles it records, which show a higher degree of power than those in the synoptics, and testify the more emphatically to the divine origin of Jesus' message, and by inference to the Deity of the Messenger. Witness the turning of the water into wine (chap. 2), the healing of the nobleman's son in the same chapter and that of the impotent man in chapter 5. Also, the man born blind (chap. 9), and the raising of Lazarus (chap. 11).

The nature of the discourses in John's Gospel illustrates the same thing. They are on the profoundest themes which fell from the lips of our Lord. For example: The New Birth, The Living Water, The Honor of the Son, The Living Bread, The Good Shepherd, The Farewell Discourse.

Consider also the doctrines emphasized in John's record. Take those related to the Godhead alone. Observe how he speaks of God in the abstract, 1:18, 4:24, 5:37. No such teaching about God is found anywhere in the Bible outside of the epistles of this same evangelist and those of Paul. Observe how he speaks of God as Father: 3:16; 5:36; 6:37; 8:18; 10:30; 17:11. Of the person of Jesus Christ as related to the Father: 1:1; 14; 18; 5:17-18; 26; 14:9-10; and as related to man, 1:4, 6:46, 8:40-46. Of the Holy Spirit: 3:5; 4:14; 7:38; 14:12; 16; 26; 15:26; 16:7. Of course, in these instances it is often Christ Himself who is speaking and John simply reporting or quoting Him, but the point is, it was left for John to do this, to report Him in these deeper and profounder utterances which are so important for the church to know.

QUESTIONS

1. Why are the other gospels called the synoptics?
2. What was their accomplishment?
3. How much later than they was this gospel written?
4. What was the particular object of this Gospel?
5. How does it compare in character and contents with the others?
6. What was the date of John's death?
7. Have you examined the proof texts as to the date of this Gospel?
8. What further evidence of a late date can you indicate?
9. Give one or two illustrations of the profundity of this Gospel.
10. Name some of its great discourses.

JOHN 1-2:12 — DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

This portion of the Gospel is chosen as a lesson because it gives an opportunity at one view to consider the Deity of Jesus Christ as declared in the preface (1:1-14) as witnessed to by the testimony of the Baptist (1:15-34), and demonstrated in the first visit to Judea after the baptism (1:35-2:12).

PREFACE (1:1-14)

Observe the earliest illustration of John's presentation of Jesus as the Son of God. Nothing corresponding is found in the synoptics. John asserts the Deity of Jesus, showing Him to be the Creator of all things and the source of all life (vv. 1-5). He emphasizes the point by comparing Him with John the Baptist (vv. 6-9). He is careful, too, to proclaim Jesus as the source of the renewed spiritual life of man, the eternal life which is coincident with salvation (vv. 10-13). And yet side by side with these testimonies he demonstrates His perfect humanity (v. 14).

"Word" is the Greek *logos* which means

- (1) a thought or concept, and
- (2) the expression or utterance of that thought. And thus as a designation of Christ it is peculiarly applicable because in Him are

embodied all the treasures of the Divine Wisdom or the collective thought of God (~~402~~ 1 Corinthians 1:24; ~~402~~ Ephesians 3:2; ~~402~~ Colossians 2:2-3), and also because from all eternity, but especially in His incarnation, is He the utterance or expression of the Person or "thought" of God (John 1, 3-5, 9, 14-18; 14:9-11; ~~402~~ Colossians 2:9).

THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST (1:15-34)

Every student will be impressed with the originality of this Gospel concerning the testimony of John the Baptist. Nothing corresponding is found in the synoptics. Observe his testimony to the pre-existence and deity of Jesus Christ (vv. 15-18), and to the sacrificial nature of His death (v. 29). It was questions of this character which arose for settlement in the early church and which John the evangelist was retained on the earth to answer. Was Jesus God as well as man? Was His death a sacrifice for human guilt? How clearly the Baptist's witness bears upon these points.

THE FIRST VISIT TO JUDEA (1:35-2:12)

It is a peculiarity of the fourth Gospel that it dwells upon the ministry of Jesus in Judea while the others mention more especially His ministry in Galilee. In Matthew, after the narrative of the baptism, there is scarcely any allusion to Jesus visiting Judea until the nineteenth chapters, which was His last visit. A convenient division of the present Gospel will be along the line of these different visits.

The first includes the baptism, overlapping what we described as the testimony of John, and might be said to begin at verse 29 instead of verse 35. Besides the baptism it includes the call of the first four disciples (vv. 35-51), a call preliminary to the more formal call in the other gospels. In connection with the call of Nathaniel, Christ's reference to the prophetic symbolism in Jacob's dream of the ladder points to the Millennial age, when visible communication may be carried on between earth and Heaven.

This first visit to Judea ended with his return to Capernaum in Galilee, on which journey was wrought the creation of wine out of water at the wedding feast. The nature of this miracle and the bearing of its record upon the peculiar position of John's Gospel has been alluded to in "Introductory."

QUESTIONS

1. Why have these chapters been chosen as a lesson?
2. How is the Deity of Christ brought out in the preface?
3. What does "Word" mean, and how does it show the deity of Christ?
4. Have you examined the texts in Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians?
5. How does John the Baptist witness to the Deity of Christ?
6. On what feature of Christ's ministry does this Gospel dwell?
7. What events are included in the first visit to Judea?
8. What kind of a work was the turning of water into wine?

JOHN 2:13-4:54 — SECOND VISIT TO JUDEA

With reference to what occasion, and hence at what period of the year, did this visit take place (2:13)? With what display of Jesus' authority and power is it associated (vv. 14-17)? Comparing this with ~~4:12~~ Matthew 21:12-13, it would seem that this transaction was repeated at the last Passover. In what manner did He refer at this time to His death and resurrection (vv. 18-22)? What great discourse of Jesus is associated with this second visit to Judea (3:1-21)? Where did this discourse occur presumably (2:23)? How does the theme of this discourse demonstrate the profundity of this gospel, and bear out the theory that it was written for the church? How further does John the Baptist bear testimony to Jesus on this visit (3:25-36)? An analysis of this testimony like that in the first chapter, would make an excellent sermon, or Bible reading. He testifies

- (1) to Jesus, relationship to His people (v. 29);
- (2) His growing influence and authority (v. 30);
- (3) His exaltation (v. 31);
- (4) His truth (vv. 32, 34); and
- (5) His supreme power and grace (vv. 35-36).

What reason is assigned for Jesus' departure from Judea at this time (4:1-3)? Whence did He journey, and what route did He take (vv. 3-4)? What exhibition of grace was associated with this journey (vv. 5-42)? Select some passages in this part of the chapter which harmonize with the design of John's Gospel. What about verses 10, 14, 24? How long did Jesus remain in Samaria, and where did he next go (v. 43)? What miracle is connected with this return journey to Galilee, and how does it bear on the purpose of John's Gospel (vv. 46-54)? An allusion to this miracle was made in the introduction to our study of John.

We must not pass the teaching in 3:3-8 about regeneration. We see how essential it is because the natural man cannot "see," apprehend, the Kingdom of God without it. Read here ^{<BIB>}Jeremiah 17:9; ^{<BIB>}1 Corinthians 2:14; ^{<BIB>}Romans 8:7-8; ^{<BIB>}Psalms 51:5; ^{<BIB>}Ephesians 2:3. As to its nature or source it is a supernatural, creative act of the Holy Spirit, not reforming our old nature, but giving us a new one alongside of the old (^{<BIB>}John 1:12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17; ^{<BIB>}Ephesians 2:10; 4:24). There is one condition for our receiving it: faith in the crucified and risen Lord (^{<BIB>}John 3:14-16; ^{<BIB>}Galatians 3:24). This gospel is richly set before us in the familiar ^{<BIB>}John 3:16. Salvation may be said to be its theme, and we find in it:

- (1) its source, the love of God;
- (2) its ground, the gift of Christ;
- (3) its means, faith;
- (4) its need, "should not perish";
- (5) its result, eternal life; and
- (6) its extent, "whosoever."

That word "perish" must not be misunderstood. It is translated "marred" in ^{<BIB>}Mark 2:22 and "lost" in ^{<BIB>}Matthew 10:6 and other places, but nowhere does it signify cessation of existence.

The great teaching in chapter 4 is suggested in verses 6-14 about the Holy Spirit, whose indwelling in the believer is set before us in the Symbol of the living water. Other truths are the nature of God (v. 24), the revelation of the Messiahship (v. 26); the governing motive of Jesus (v. 34), and the miracle of verses 46-53.

QUESTIONS

So many questions are asked in the text of the lesson that but few are required here.

1. What is the doctrine in chapter 3:3-8?
2. Tell what you have learned about it in this lesson.
3. How many of the corroborative scriptures have you examined?
4. Analyze ~~RB6~~ John 3:16.
5. What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in chapter 4?

JOHN 5-6 — THIRD VISIT TO JUDEA

This visit like the second was occasioned by the Passover, and a year later (v. 6). What miracle was wrought on this occasion (5:2-9)? With what effect on the unbelieving Jews (vv. 10-16)? How does Jesus justify such labor on the Sabbath day (v. 17)? On what two-fold ground did His enemies seek to kill Him (v. 18)? The latter of these grounds, because he said "God was His Father," is deeply important. The Revised Version translates it because "He also called God His Own Father." The Jews understood Him to declare God to be His Father in a sense in which He was not the Father of other men. This is why they said He made "Himself equal with God." The importance of this is seen in that it contains a direct claim on Jesus' part to be equal with God, i.e., a claim of absolute Deity.

The Jews so regarded His words, and Jesus took no pains to correct that impression, on the contrary, His words that follow are an argument, to prove that He was God. Almost all the verses down to verse 31 prove this, but especially verse 23. This discourse concludes with a supplementary one on the Four Witnesses (vv. 32-47). We have here cited by Jesus Himself, the witness of John the Baptist (vv. 32-35), the witness of His own marvelous works (v. 36), and the witness of the Father (vv. 37-38), and the witness of the Holy Scriptures (v. 39), but how vain so far as moving the wills of His unbelieving countrymen was concerned (v. 40)!

Leaving Judea again, where do we next find Jesus (6:1-3)? What miracle is associated therewith (vv. 5-13)? This is one of the few miracles found in the other gospels which is also recorded by John, and for the reason doubtless of leading up to the discourse on the Living Bread. What effect

had this miracle on those who saw it (v. 14)? What did they propose to do with Jesus in consequence of their opinion (v. 15)? What did the knowledge of their purpose lead Jesus to do? What bearing has His action on the incident in chapter 18:10-11 and His words before Pilate in the same chapter, verse 36? To what place did Jesus depart? What miracle took place during the night (vv. 16-21)? Where next do we find Jesus (vv. 22-24)? It is at this point the discourse is given to which reference has been made, and which is one of those which give the gospel its distinctively spiritual character. Where was this discourse given (v. 59)? How does it seem to have been received by the people generally (vv. 41, 52)? How by the disciples (vv. 60, 66)? What foreshadowing of His death does He reveal (vv. 66-71)? Why did He confine His ministry to Galilee just now (7:1)?

The importance of these two chapters grow on one as establishing the Deity of Christ, and the vital character of the work for man which he came into the world to do. As illustrating the latter, consider especially verses 37-40 in the discourse on the Living Bread:

- (1) the Father gives His chosen ones to the Son;
- (2) the Son receives all such;
- (3) the reason for His so doing is His devotion to His Father's will;
- (4) His will is that He lose none of those the Father gives Him; and
- (5) the means by which this choice of the Father becomes operative in individual cases is faith, "believing on" the Son.

Another way to treat this chapter is to divide it into four parts designated by the attitude of the multitude toward our Lord:

1. Discussion (four dialogues) (vv. 25-40);
2. Dissatisfaction, (vv. 41-51);
3. Dissension (vv. 52-59); and
4. Defection; (vv. 60-66).

QUESTIONS

1. What occasioned this visit to Judea?
2. State the circumstance under which Jesus claimed equality with God.

3. What four witnesses does He produce to substantiate his claim?
4. What distinction is accorded the miracle of the loaves and fishes?
5. Analyze ~~Rev~~ John 6:37-40.
6. Analyze the chapter as a whole.

JOHN 7-10:21 — FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The story of the fourth and last visit to Judea is too long and important to gather into one lesson, and will be broken up into three or four, the first of which bears the above title.

How did Jesus' brothers regard him at this time (7:2-5)? What hesitancy did He exhibit in going up to this feast (vv. 6-9)? This feast took place in the fall, corresponding to our October. This chapter and the next are identified as those of the controversies in the Temple. They represent periods of sustained contention with enemies such as are described nowhere else in the gospels. The crisis indicated in the synoptics is now rapidly approaching. Examine in this connection 7:12-13, 20, 26-27, 30, 32, 43. What effect had Jesus' answers to His opponents upon the officials (vv. 45-46)? What authoritative person speaks on His behalf at this critical moment (vv. 50-52)?

Where did Jesus pass the night after this exhausting day (8:1)? Where is He found the next morning (v. 2)? With what work of courage and grace does the day begin (vv. 3-11)? Who came off victor in that contest of light and darkness, Jesus or His adversaries (v. 6)? The controversy begins again with Jesus' bold declaration of Himself as "the Light of the World," a declaration which, if unsupported by the truth, makes Him an impostor, but otherwise establishes His right to be all that this gospel claims for Him — that He is God. Observe the features of the controversy all through this chapter, but especially at verses 13, 19, 25, 37, 48, 52, 59. Observe, too, the repeated declarations of Jesus bearing upon the dignity of His person, as in verses 16, 18-19, 23, 28, 36, 42, 46, 51, 56, 58. It is comforting that His testimony was not fruitless in discipleship (v. 30).

As Jesus passed from this murderous crowd, what miracle is wrought (chap. 9)? What explanation does Jesus afford as to why this man was born blind (v. 3)? How does this work of power and mercy effect the enemies of Jesus, does it soften or harden their opposition (vv. 16, 28-29)? What did

they finally do to the man (v. 34)? What does "cast him out" probably mean? Compare verse 22, last clause. How does Jesus make a further claim of Deity in addressing this man (vv. 35-37)? It is to be observed in this connection that the discourse on the good Shepherd, in chapter 10, grew out of the casting out of this man from the synagogue because of his confession of Jesus. The Scribes and Pharisees are the "hirelings" Jesus has in mind, who showed themselves to be such in their treatment of this man. Notice how this discourse also falls into harmony with the purpose of John's Gospel to present the highest aspect of Christ's Person and work, for example, compare His utterances in verses 10-11, 15, 17-18. His work is clearly that of a substitute Savior, and yet none other than God could speak of Himself thus. What opposite results were produced by this discourse (vv. 19-21)?

Reference was made above to chapters 7-8 as those of the controversies in the Temple. The first controversy has been described as touching the character of Christ's teaching and the condition for testing it (vv. 15-30); the second, as touching the character of the Sabbath day (vv. 21-24); the third, on the divine character of Christ Himself (vv. 25-31); the fourth, on His approaching disappearance, its nature and object (vv. 32-36). Another outline is the following: controversy one, on the source of His knowledge (vv. 14-24); controversy two, on the origin of his being (vv. 25-31); three, on the mysteriousness of His sayings (vv. 32-36). In the same way chapter 8 might be regarded as a controversial discourse on the nature of His mission (vv. 12-20); its need (vv. 21-30); its result (vv. 31-36); and, possibly, its motive (vv. 37-58).

Speaking specifically of chapter 10 and the discourse on the Good Shepherd it may be stated that the Shepherd work of our Lord has three aspects:

- (1) as the Good Shepherd He gives His life for the sheep;
- (2) as the Great shepherd He intercedes for them as one alive from the dead, and hence is caring for and perfecting them (^{³¹⁰⁰Hebrews 13:20); and}
- (3) as the Chief Shepherd He is coming again in glory to reward the faithful under shepherds (^{⁴¹⁰⁰1 Peter 5:4).}

QUESTIONS

1. When do the feasts of the Passover and the Tabernacles relatively occur?
2. How would you characterize chapters 7-8?
3. How is Jesus proven to be God in this chapter?
4. Analyze chapter 8.
5. Name the three aspects of Christ's work as Shepherd.

JOHN 10:22-11 — FEAST OF THE DEDICATION

The Feast of the Dedication took place midway between that of the Tabernacles and the Passover, or some time corresponding to our December or January. It is mentioned nowhere else in the Bible, and it is not positively known just what it commemorated.

Where Jesus had been in the meantime is not revealed except that it is not stated that He returned to Galilee. We dwell on this period to call attention to the same features as in the previous one, viz: the putting forth of the boldest claims on Jesus' part, followed by conflict with His opponents. For the claims consult verses 28 and 30, and the conflict, 31 and 39. What was the sequel of this appearance so far as Jesus was concerned (vv. 40-41)? Notice that in the face of all the criticism and opposition, the disciples continually increased (v. 42).

We should not leave this without a further word on verse 30, which literally translated is, "I and My Father are one thing." Christ does not say "One" in the masculine, but in the neuter gender. That is, He and His Father are not one in Person, but one in nature, power, will. It silences those who say there is but one Person in the Godhead, and those also who say that the Son is inferior to the Father.

Our Lord's defense of this language against the charge of blasphemy (vv. 33-36), is an argument from a lesser to a greater. In ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 82, the inspired writer is speaking of the position and duties of princes and rulers, whose elevation above other men and consequent responsibility was so great, that compared with them, they might be called "gods." If then no fault is found with them, who receive this honor by grace, how can He deserve blame who possesses this honor by nature? "Sanctified" (v. 34)

means "set apart," and the verse teaches the eternal generation of Christ. The Jews did not understand Christ to claim to be "god" in the sense of ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 82 or they would not have threatened to stone Him; but God in the sense of Deity, and hence Christ's acceptance of that claim, as in chapter 5, is an assertion of that fact on His part.

THE HOME IN BETHANY

We now come to chapter 11, where we find Jesus in Bethany. Here occurs the raising of Lazarus. In the synoptics we read of the raising of Jairus' daughter and the son of the widow of Nain. In the first case death had just ensued, and in the second but a single day had intervened. Here, however, Lazarus had been four days dead. Of course, with God it is no harder to restore life in the one case than in either of the others, and yet all must be impressed with the gradation of difficulty illustrated in the three, and that the most difficult, humanly speaking, should be recorded only in John's Gospel. This, like so many other features, shows the purpose of this gospel to set forth Jesus in the highest aspect of all, that of the Son of God — the Son of God giving life to the world. What a wonderful declaration that in verse 25!

Speaking of this miracle in general terms, Bishop Ryle makes three good points:

- (1) it was intended to supply the Jews with one more incontrovertible proof that Jesus was the Messiah (compare again their question in 10:24),
- (2) it was meant to prepare their minds for our Lord's own resurrection. They could not say when the tomb of Jesus was found empty, that His resurrection was an impossibility; and
- (3) it is the most credible of all our Lord's miracles, and supported by the most incontrovertible proof.

QUESTIONS

1. When did the Feast of Dedication take place?
2. Explain ~~John~~ John 10:30.
3. Explain ~~John~~ John 10:33-36.
4. With what circumstances are we impressed in comparing the raising

of Lazarus with the other two restorations to life?

5. Quote from memory ~~<4125>~~ John 11:25-26.

6. What three good points on this miracle are made by Bishop Ryle?

JOHN 12-13 — APPROACH THE HOLY OF HOLIES

A footnote of the *Scofield Bible* which suggests the title of this lesson is well worth quoting:

Chapters 12-17 are a progression according to the order of approach to God in the Tabernacle types. Chapter 12 in which Christ speaks of His death answers to the brazen altar of burnt offering, type of the cross. Passing from the altar toward the holy of holies, the laver is next reached answering to chapter 13. With his associate priests now purified, the High Priest enters the holy place in the communion of chapters 14-16. Entering alone the holy of holies, the High Priest intercedes (chap. 17). It is not for the salvation of His own for which he intercedes, but their keeping and blessing. His death has saved them, and this is assumed as accomplished (17:4).

The facts of chapter 12 include the supper at Bethany (vs. 1-11), the triumphal entry (vv. 12-19), and the visit of the Greeks concluding the chapter. The first two having been touched upon in the synoptics, let us consider the last which some regard as the second great temptation in Jesus' life. The considerations justifying such a view are found in the effect which the request of the Greeks to see him made upon Jesus: "Now is my soul troubled," "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die," "Father, save me from this hour." Also in the heavenly testimony to His Sonship which was again afforded him. The thought is that the Greeks, whether heathens or proselytes to the Jewish religion, had come to invite Jesus to return with them to their own land. We have seen what the Greek race stood for, what their ideals were, and how likely they would have been to make a god of Jesus had He consented. It was a temptation not unlike that of Peter, when in ~~<4161>~~ Matthew 16, he sought to dissuade Jesus from going to the Cross, or, like that of Satan in the wilderness, when showing Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." He said, "All these will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." This view assumes deeper significance if we recall that the time these Greeks approached Jesus was when He had most come to realize that "He

had come to His own and His own received Him not." It was when he was rejected by His own nation that this sister nation, great in much that the world called greatness, came to Him thus and said, "Come with us and we will receive, honor, and deify Thee!" Ah! If He had, what would have become of this poor lost world (vv. 20-36)?

We should not pass to the next chapter without observing in passing the additionally strong testimony John bears as his manner is, to the Deity of Jesus. See for example, the argument to be drawn from verses 37-41. Look up the quotation in ^{<2300>}Isaiah 6 and ask yourself whether John's testimony must not be utterly dishonored unless Jesus is God incarnate. How corroborative of this are Jesus' own words in verses 44-45. What is the leading event in chapter 13? What is the lesson taught in this transaction (vv. 12-16)? And yet is there not more than a lesson in humility here? What of the mysterious teaching in verses 8-9? We have here a symbolic representation of Christ's intercessory work for His people. They are already "clean" so far as their salvation is concerned because of faith in Him, and on the ground of His finished work on the Cross; but passing through the world brings daily defilement which requires daily cleansing, for which provision is made by His intercession as our High-priest. Compare ^{<600>}1 John 1:9. Peter's words in verse 8, illustrate the mistake of the sinner with reference to Christ's atonement; while those in verse 9, illustrate the mistake of the saint with reference to His intercession.

What omission is found in this gospel with reference to the events of this last Passover night as compared with the synoptics? What additional details of the betrayal are given here (vv. 18-30)?

QUESTIONS

1. What justifies the title to this lesson?
2. What are the three great facts of chapter 12?
3. What significance is attached by some to the visit of the Greeks, and why?
4. With what other temptation of Jesus is this classed?
5. How do verses 37-41 compared with ^{<2300>}Isaiah 6:1-4 prove the Deity of Jesus Christ?
6. What verses in chapter 12 teach the sacrificial character of Christ's death?

7. What symbolic representation is afforded in chapter 13?
8. Explain the spiritual distinction between "bathed" (RV) and "wash his feet" in verse 10.
9. What two mistakes are illustrated in Peter's words?
10. Can you quote from memory ~~<6100>~~1 John 1:9?

JOHN 14 — CENTRAL TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST

The title of this lesson is borrowed from Bernard's volume on chapters 13-17 inclusive. Others call the chapters the heart of the heart of the Gospel. Commonly chapters 14-16 are known as the farewell discourse to the disciples, which occurred in the same place and on the same occasion as the washing of the disciples' feet. Indeed there seems to have been two discourses on the occasion, the one limited to chapter 14, and the other to 15 and 16.

Chapter 14 as to subjects might be thus classified: the preparation for Christ's Second coming (vv. 1-3); the identity of the Father and the Son (vv. 4-15); the office of the Holy Spirit in the church (vv. 16-26); and the bequest of peace (vv. 27-31). We have seen that the Second Coming of Christ is to be conceived of under two aspects, a coming for His saints (~~<5144>~~1 Thessalonians 4:14-17), and a Coming to judge the nations (~~<4229>~~Matthew 24:29-30), and it is the first of these aspects that is here referred to. The "Father's house" not God's dominion is in the foreground. It has "'mansions' which suggests settled continuance and secure possession," "many" mansions, not in the sense of amplex only, but variety. Jesus' going is necessary to prepare them, for they were not open to the sons of men till the Son of Man was glorified (see the Author's "Progress in the Life to Come") and yet their preparation was not enough, but there is the added grace of the coming again to receive His disciples unto Himself. This is not a continuous coming again but a final and collective one (~~<6221>~~Revelation 22:20). It is a reunion too, "Where I am, there ye may be also" (compare 12:26; 17:24; ~~<4788>~~2 Corinthians 5:8; ~~<5123>~~Philippians 1:23).

The next subject (vv. 4-15) is introduced by the suggestion that disciples sometimes know more than they suppose or use (v. 4). "Cometh unto the

Father" (v. 6), is to be construed not only as coming to Him in glory at the last, but coming to Him in a reconciled relation now through faith in Christ. Verses 7-11 contain truths too deep for human understanding, and we can only say in the face of them that the more we know of the Son, the more we know of the Father. The first half of verse 12 refers to the miraculous gifts the apostolic church exercised, and the last to the moral and spiritual effects of the preaching of the gospel from that day to this. The reason for these gifts and these effects is twofold, "because I go to my Father" and because "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do." The only qualification to this asking and receiving is "that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (v. 13).

The subject following (vv. 16-26), is in harmony with the foregoing, because as the result of His going to His Father the Holy Spirit was given to the church, through whose power the mighty works are done and prayer made efficacious (^{<3006>}Zechariah 4:6; ^{<4136>}Romans 8:26, etc.). This is the first time the Holy Spirit is named as Christ's special gift to His people. Of course He was the regenerator, guide and aid of the Old Testament saints, but His relation to New Testament saints is peculiar as we shall see later. Several things are here taught about him. He is a person for the words do not fit an influence or an inward feeling. His special office is to apply the truth to the heart. He is the eternal possession of the believer. His coming to dwell in him fulfills the deep mysterious sayings of verses 17-23: "I will come to you"; because I live you shall live also"; "Ye in me and I in you"; "make our abode with Him."

In the conclusion of this chapter there is a difficulty at verse 28, where our Lord says, "My Father is greater than I," but where He means as touching His manhood simply (compare ^{<1007>}Philippians 2:7). And yet why does He say that the disciples ought to rejoice at His going to the Father because the Father is greater? Perhaps because then He would resume the glory He had with Him before the world was, or perhaps then he would receive the kingdom which in the eternal counsels the Father had prepared for the Son as mediator. "If I had not placed Myself in a position of inferiority to the Father by becoming man for man's sake, you would have no hope for your souls. But now the work is finished, and I return to My Father and ye ought to be glad." The last words of verse 31 indicate some kind of a break in the discourse, and make it a suitable place to bring the lesson to a close.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is this title given to our present lesson?
2. In what terms do others designate these chapters?
3. Name the different subjects of chapter 14.
4. Expound verses 1-3.
5. Explain verse 12.
6. What do we learn about the Holy Spirit here?
7. Explain verse 28.

JOHN 15-16 — CENTRAL TEACHING — CONTINUED

The fundamental subject of this discourse is that of the relation of believers to Jesus Christ in respect to practical life under the coming dispensation:

1. The relation of members who share in His life and thereby bring forth fruit unto God (15:1-8).
2. The relation of friends who share in His love and maintain its continuance and manifest its effect by love to each other (vv. 9-17).
3. The relation of followers who share in His work toward the world, and therefore in its enmity (18:16, 3).
4. The relation of adherents on whom He bestows a share in His own Spirit, the comforter, advocate and teacher (16:4-15).

Then follow answers to thoughts raised in the minds of His hearers, renewed warnings, promises and assurances, closing with a sad intimation of desertion, which passes again into a note of peace and victory.

Under the first of the above relationships (vv. 1-8), we learn that the union between Christ and His true disciples is a living one — the branch lives in the vine and the vine in the branch. All the meaning that can be gathered out of that simile belongs to the Christian's faith. We learn also, that there are false Christians as well as true ones, branches which appear to be joined to the vine and yet bear no fruit. Further, we are taught that the only satisfactory evidence of being a true Christian is fruit. Again, that fruitfulness is increased in such by God's providential dealing with them.

Verse 7 is a distinct promise of power and success in prayer as a result of fruit bearing.

Under the second relationship (vv. 9-17) think of the measureless compass in the words, "Even as the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you" (v. 9); think how simple it is to continue in that love, just to keep His commandments; and the two-fold motive for so doing, that He may have joy in us, and that our own joy may be filled full. Note the high privilege of a believer in verse 15 and compare it with ^{<01817>}Genesis 18:17.

As to the enmity of the world, how kind that our Lord should relieve His disciples of fault or blame in the promises (vv. 18-21)! Verse 22 does not teach that they would not have been sinners at all had not Christ come, but they would have had a less degree of guilt (compare ^{<01041>}John 9:41).

In the teaching about the Holy Spirit there is a mysterious saying at verse 16:7. It is hard to understand why it could be good for Christ to go away from His disciples, but the fact remains that when He went away and the Comforter came at Pentecost the faith of the disciples became a new thing altogether. The Acts of the Apostle will teach us this. If Christ had remained bodily with them he could not have been in more places than one at the same time, and there would have been far less room for the exercise of their faith, and hope and trust. And what about His exalted life in heaven as our High Priestly intercessor? How could His people have continued without that? Verse 8 is also mysterious. As commonly understood, it describes the ordinary operation of the Holy Spirit in saving sinners, but there is more in it. Bishop Ryle thinks it means that when the Spirit came at Pentecost He would stop the mouths of enemies, and oblige them however unwillingly, to think of Christ and what He taught very differently from what they were thinking now. The Acts illustrates this for there was a peculiar irresistible power accompanying the work of the Apostles which neither the heathen nor the unbelieving Jews were able to resist or gainsay. Witness the stoning of Stephen, ^{<01000>}Acts 7, and Pliny's famous letter to Trojan about the Christians. Verses 12-13 of this chapter are Christ's preauthentications of the New Testament. He would leave many things to be revealed for example, and this revelation would be completed after the Spirit came (compare ^{<01447>}1 Corinthians 14:37 and ^{<01219>}Revelation 22:19).

But there is nothing in this sublime discourse of more practical value than what it teaches about prayer. See 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-27. To ask the Father in Christ's name is in advance of asking for His sake. To ask in His

name is as though He asked Himself with all the assurance of answer which such a fact implies. This is the privilege of the true believer who is thus a member of Christ's body, and of Him only, and it is a revelation of truth which Christ at no time had made known to His followers until now doubtless because they were not prepared to receive it.

QUESTIONS

1. Name four different relations of believers to Christ treated in this discourse.
2. What are the subjects concluding chapter 16?
3. What do we learn from the parable of the vine and the branches?
4. What is the high privilege of a believer as stated in 15:15?
5. Explain 15:22.
6. Explain 16:7-8.
7. How would you characterize verses 12-13, and why?
8. What does it mean to pray in Christ's Name?

JOHN 17 — THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER

This chapter because of its subject, and its great preciousness is worthy to stand out by itself. Bernard divides the prayer into three great parts and a sequel:

1. for His work and glory (vv. 1-5);
2. for the disciples (vv. 6-19);
3. for all believers (vv. 20-24);
4. the sequel (vv. 25-26).

The first and second part he subdivides again into two sections (vv. 1-3 and 4-5, and 6-10 and 11-19, respectively). The third into three (vv. 29-23, 23, 24).

The *Scofield Bible* divides it into seven petitions:

1. That Jesus may be glorified as the Son who has glorified the Father
2. For restoration to the eternal glory (v. 5)
3. For the safety of believers from the world (v. 11) and from the evil

one (v. 15)

4. For the sanctification of believers (v. 17)
5. For the spiritual unity of believers (v. 21)
6. That the world may believe (v. 21)
7. That believers may be with Him in heaven to behold and share His glory (v. 24).

The same source notes the five gifts which Christ bestows on them whom the Father gives him:

1. eternal life (v. 2);
2. the Father's Name (6:26);
3. the Father's words (8:14);
4. His own joy (v. 13);
5. His own glory (v. 22).

We have here the only long prayer of our Lord which the Holy Spirit has thought good to record for our learning. And how wonderful it is when we think of the One Who prayed it! One Person of the adorable Trinity praying to another Person of the Trinity! Or when we think of the occasion on which it was prayed, the night in which he was betrayed! Or those for whom it was prayed, disciples soon to forsake Him and flee, and other believers like ourselves, so unworthy of it all, or finally, when we think of its terms, the character of its petitions. Wonderful indeed! Perhaps it was prayed in the room where the Lord's supper was instituted, but from the closing words of chapter 14 it seems likely to have been uttered in some quiet place outside the walls, and before the crossing of the brook Cedron (18:1).

Among the utterances, we note especially the last clause of verse 1, which proves, inferentially, the equality of Christ with God. Then verse 3 as a description of saved souls. Of course, head knowledge is not here meant, but that to which we have been renewed by the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ (⁵¹⁸⁰Colossians 3:10). God known out of Christ is a consuming fire. A question of grave importance arises at verse 12. The "but" in this case is not exceptive but adversative as Bishop Ryle thinks. It does not mean that Judas was once a true believer who became lost, but should be read: "Those to whom Thou gavest Me I have kept, and out of them not one is lost. But there is one soul that is lost, even Judas, the son of perdition." this

view is confirmed in ~~<618>~~ John 18:9, where no hint is given of any exception having been made by our Lord in the previous instance, when John of course, heard Him speak. Verse 17 seems to us next in importance. Sanctification there is in the experimental sense. Saints are sanctified the moment they accept Christ in that they are then set apart for God, but after that they are expected to become sanctified in that their life and conduct are to measure up to their position. In this verse we see such sanctification to be an obligation; and also that it is the work of God in us, He must do the sanctifying; and yet there is an instrument or means to be used to that end, even His Word of truth. Without a knowledge of God's Word in us the Holy Spirit has nothing on which He can work so to speak, hence the primary importance of Bible reading and study.

Verse 19, in this connection must not be misunderstood. Christ Himself required no sanctification in the sense of experience or growth. He was always perfect and without sin. The word in His case is the same as "consecrate" or "set apart." He offered Himself to God as a sacrifice in other words, that His people might be both justified and sanctified. To pause next at verses 21-23, the unity of believers there sought is not that of any visible church or denomination, but that of the church considered as the body of which he is the head, and which was effected potentially on the day of Pentecost (~~<411>~~ Acts 2:1-4; ~~<623>~~ 1 Corinthians 12:13; ~~<401>~~ Ephesians 4:1-6). We express this unity not in forms of worship, discipline or government, but in oneness of will, heart, doctrine and conduct.

QUESTIONS

1. How does Bernard divide this prayer?
2. How does Scofield divide it?
3. What are the gifts Christ bestows on His disciples?
4. What makes this prayer wonderful?
5. Where, presumably, was it uttered?
6. What question arises at verse 12 and how is it answered?
7. What are we taught about sanctification?
8. What are we taught about Christian unity?

JOHN 18-19 — AT MAN'S JUDGMENT SEAT

A way to study this lesson is to compare the text with the corresponding places in the synoptics and observe what is original to John. Any "Harmony" of the Gospels would furnish valuable aid. For example, it is John who named "the brook Cedron" or "Kidron," and identifies the "garden" (18:1). The others speak of "a place called Gethsemane," etc., but nothing more. He alone tells us that Judas "knew the place," and why (v. 2), 18:4-8 is new, and one sees its fullness as the design of that Gospel is to emphasize the power and Godhead of Christ. Here we learn the name of the high priests' servant Malchus (v. 10). Again from 13 to 17 is original, and from 17 to 23, also verses 29, 32, 34-38. These give details of Peter's denial of His Master, and Jesus' hearing before the Sanhedrin and before Pilate.

John gives no record of the agony in Gethsemane, which otherwise would have appeared between verses 1 and 2 of chapter 18. Verse 2 affords one of the many illustrations in this chapter of the voluntariness of Christ's death. He did not hide himself, but went where He could easily be found. Verse 4 is to the same purport. With verse 6 compare ~~BRD~~ Psalm 28:2. Let not verse 8 be passed without noting the illustration of Christ's constant watch-care and protecting power over all His believing people. Verse 9 shows that one way he keeps His people faithful is by keeping them from being tempted above what they are able to bear. The circumstance in verse 13 is mentioned only by John, and is explained by saying that Annas, having served his time as high priest, was living in the same place with his son-in-law. Certainly their relations were intimate judging by ~~BRD~~ Luke 3:2. There was disorder in the office of the high priest at this period, which must be kept in mind in considering the difficulties of this chapter, verse 24 for example. Then too, for wise reasons, the Holy Spirit may have led one writer to dwell more on one set of facts than another. If each had told the story in the same words, the whole would have been less satisfactory.

The larger part of chapter 19 is new with John. The events are the crowning with thorns (vv. 1-3); the appearance before the multitude (vv. 4-13); the final rejection (vv. 14-15); the crucifixion (vv. 16-37); the entombment (vv. 38-42).

The outstanding figure from the point of view of human iniquity is Pilate, the double-minded, cruel deceitful Pilate. Note the scourging of Jesus (v. 1), and remember that "by His stripes we are healed" (^{<2515>}Isaiah 53:5). ^{<4173>}Matthew 27:29 tells us that this took place in the "common hall," the soldier's guard room, the character of which may be imagined by what we know of similar places in modern days. The Roman legionaries were expert in torturing prisoners. Verse 7 refers to ^{<1246>}Leviticus 24:16. Verse 14 means that it was the day before the great Sabbath of the Passover Week (Mark. 15:42). There is a difficulty in that John speaks of the sixth hour and Mark the third, a common solution being that the latter reckoned by Jewish and the former Roman time. Note how the close of verse 15 stamps the Jews at this time as an apostate nation. With the word "delivered" (v. 16), compare ^{<4025>}Romans 4:25; 8:30, and with "led," ^{<2517>}Isaiah 53:7; ^{<4182>}Acts 8:32. With "went forth" (v. 17), compare ^{<1167>}Leviticus 16:27 and ^{<3132>}Hebrews 13:12.

At verse 24, note the importance of interpreting prophecy literally, of which importance there are several illustrations in the chapter (for example vv. 36-37). At verses 28-30 observe another proof of the voluntary character of Christ's death, as the final separation between body and soul could not take place until he willed it. The "blood and water" (v. 34) was a symbolic fulfillment of ^{<3101>}Zechariah 13:1, which see. Verse 38 was predicted in ^{<2519>}Isaiah 53:9, which should be translated, "His grave was appointed with the wicked; but with the rich man was His tomb."

QUESTIONS

1. Do you possess a Harmony of the Gospels?
2. Name some of the events original to John in these chapters.
3. Name some of the proofs of the voluntariness of Christ's death.
4. What is one of the means by which Christ keeps His people faithful?
5. How often is ^{<2518>}Isaiah 53 quoted in this lesson?
6. How would you harmonize the difficulty in verse 14?
7. Name some of the illustrations of the importance of interpreting Old Testament literally when it can be done.

JOHN 20-21 — AFTER THE RESURRECTION

THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION (20:10)

The original features are Mary Magdalene's message to Peter and John and the visit of the last two to the tomb. Perhaps the most notable verse is verse 7, which shows the deliberate manner in which the resurrection took place. Everything contradicted the idea that the body had been stolen. Why thus should the linen clothes have been left? The quantity of linen must have been large when one hundred pounds of aromatic powder had been used wrapping the body.

THE APPEARANCE TO MARY MAGDALENE (20:11-18)

The critical verse is verse 17. In view of ^{<410>}Matthew 28:9, why should Christ say "touch me not"? Was it because several women were present then, and here but one? Was it because she evinced extravagant joy in some way? Or was it because Christ would now teach her of the new relationship to His disciples He was about to assume (compare ^{<415>}2 Corinthians 5:15-17)? And then what is the significance of the words, "I am not yet ascended," in this case? We must confess inability to answer these questions satisfactorily.

APPEARS TO THE TEN (20:19-23)

With what body did Christ arise? It was of a more spiritual kind than He had before, because He appeared in the room without unfastening the doors, and yet it was a real human body and not a mere shadow or spirit. "Peace be unto you" was not merely a formal salutation, but a reassurance that all had been forgiven them. The breathing on them is a strong intimation that the Holy Ghost proceeded from Him, and hence another indirect proof of his Godhead (^{<413>}John 1:33; ^{<412>}Acts 2:33). It is difficult to interpret the sense in which they now received the Holy Ghost, since they had received Him at their regeneration and conversion (1 Cot. 12:3); and receive him again on the day of Pentecost (^{<411>}Acts 2). May it be that this was a special endowment of power for the intervening period before Pentecost? Of course the authority to remit sins is not absolute but declarative, just as the high priest in the old economy pronounced who were clean and who were unclean as to leprosy. It was God who cleansed

in the one instance or forgave in the other, but the evidences of either might be made known through His representatives.

THE APPEARANCE WHEN THOMAS WAS PRESENT (20:24-29)

Here is strong indirect evidence of the truth of the scriptures, as an impostor would not have told us of the unbelief of an apostle! Christ's words to Thomas are a warning to all who demand an excessive amount of evidence before they believe. And yet when Thomas did express his faith, "My Lord, and My God" became an unanswerable testimony to Christ's Deity. It was said in the presence of ten witnesses and our Lord accepted it as a fact.

SUMMING UP THE TESTIMONY (20:30-31)

These verses are parenthetical and break the thread of the narrative. If the Gospel ended here they might apply to the whole of what the evangelist had written; but as another chapter follows he is probably referring only to the proofs of the resurrection.

THE SEA OF TIBERIAS (CHAP. 21)

There is little requiring explanation in these verses, but the *Scofield Bible* offers a good interpretation of them. The whole chapter it entitles, "The Risen Christ is Master of our Service." Verses 3-4 show us service in self-will under human leadership, and verse 5, the barren results. Verses 6-11 on the other hand, show us Christ-directed service and its result, while verses 12-14 indicate that the master is enough for the need of His servants. Then in verses 15-17 we have the only acceptable motive in service. Verses 18-19, the Master appoints the time and manner of the servant's death. Verses 20-25, if the master returns the servants will not die.

"Naked" (v. 7) means the absence of a loose outer garment, the same which he "girt" about him afterwards. The number 153 probably has some symbolic significance, but up to the present it is only speculation to inquire. The "third time" (v. 14) means doubtless, the third time Christ appeared to any number of the disciples gathered together. "Lambs" in contradistinction to "sheep" means probably the young and weak in spiritual experience, what ever their years. Verses 18-19 shows that the future history of every saint is known to Christ, and it is commonly supposed that in fulfillment of

them Peter was crucified as a martyr, the latter is interested to know of John's future and is gently rebuked for it (vv. 20-22). Verse 22 is mysterious, and has never been fully explained and is distinguished as having given rise to the first tradition in the church (v. 23). This tradition though early and common, was nevertheless false. It is always better to say, "I do not know," than to build up a conclusion on a false premise. In verse 24, John alludes to himself and his authorship of this Gospel, while in verse 25, according to Calvin, he employs a figure of speech for commending the greatness of Christ's works.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the features original to verses 1-10?
2. Which is the most notable verse, and why?
3. What explanations have been offered of verse 17?
4. How might the breathing upon them of the Holy Ghost be explained?
5. What two-fold evidential value is attached to 20:24-29?
6. What spiritual interpretation of chapter 21 has been suggested?
7. What gave rise to the first tradition in the church?