

Sunday School Member Quarterly

Winter 2018 – 2019

John 12 – 21

That You May Believe,
Part 2

Sunday School Lessons for Adults and Youth
Written by John O. Yates



Morningside

B A P T I S T C H U R C H

2604 Bemiss Road, Valdosta, GA 31602
(229) 242-1426 www.morningside.ws
Sunday School – 8:45 each Sunday Morning

Sunday School Member Quarterly,
Winter 2002-2003, John 12 – 21,
Copyright © 2002, John O. Yates, October 2002.
All rights reserved.

Updated and revised 2018 for the Winter 2018 – 2019
quarter.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are taken
from the King James Version of the Bible.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Sunday School Lessons
December 2018 through February 2019

John 12 – 21
That You May Believe, Part 2

FINAL TEACHINGS OF THE SON OF GOD

<i>Dec. 2:</i>	Ups and Downs (12:1-50).....	9
<i>Dec. 9:</i>	Humility and Betrayal (13:1-38).....	12
<i>Dec. 16:</i>	Comfort in Troubling Times (14:1-31).....	15
<i>Dec. 23:</i>	Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Luke 1 – 2)	19
<i>Dec. 30:</i>	Fruitfulness and Friendship (15:1-17)	22
<i>Jan. 6:</i>	The World Will Hate You! (15:18 – 16:15)	25
<i>Jan. 13:</i>	Joy Out of Tragedy (16:16-33)	28
<i>Jan. 20:</i>	Jesus Prayed for <u>You</u> (17:1-26)	31

CRUCIFIXION OF THE SON OF GOD

<i>Jan. 27:</i>	Arrested! (18:1-27)	34
<i>Feb. 3:</i>	Innocent but Condemned (18:28 – 19:15)	37
<i>Feb. 10:</i>	Dead and Buried (19:16-42)	40

RESURRECTION OF THE SON OF GOD

<i>Feb. 17:</i>	Victory Over Death! (20:1-31)	43
<i>Feb. 24:</i>	Fish, Forgiveness, and Faithfulness (21:1-25).....	46

Supplementary Materials

Daily Bible Reading Guide	4
Coming Next Quarter	5
Map of Israel	6
Map of Jerusalem	7
Introduction to John	8
How to Become a Christian	Back Cover

Daily Bible Reading Guide

Read the following scripture passages each day and complete the learning activities in this book each week. This will prepare you for Sunday School class, and God will bless you as you read, study, and memorize His Word.

Week of November 26 – December 1

Mon: John 12; **Tues:** Psalm 118; **Wed:** Isaiah 6;

Thurs: Memorize John 14:1-3; **Fri:** Isaiah 53; **Sat:** John 12

Week of December 3 – 8

Mon: John 13; **Tues:** Psalm 41; **Wed:** Mark 14:1-31;

Thurs: Memorize John 14:6; **Fri:** Luke 22:1-34; **Sat:** John 13

Week of December 10 – 15

Mon: John 14; **Tues:** Psalm 23; **Wed:** John 16:16-33;

Thurs: Memorize John 14:15; **Fri:** Philippians 4;

Sat: John 14

Week of December 17 – 22

Mon: Luke 1; **Tues:** Luke 2; **Wed:** Matthew 1;

Thurs: Memorize John 14:26; **Fri:** Luke 1; **Sat:** Luke 2

Week of December 24 – 29

Mon: John 15:1-17; **Tues:** Hebrews 6; **Wed:** 1 John 5;

Thurs: Memorize John 15:5; **Fri:** 1 Corinthians 3;

Sat: John 15:1-17

Week of December 31 – January 5

Mon: John 15:18-27; **Tues:** John 16:1-15;

Wed: Psalm 69:1-18; **Thurs:** 2 Timothy 3;

Fri: John 15:18-27; **Sat:** John 16:1-15

Week of January 7 – 12

Mon: John 16:16-33; **Tues:** Jeremiah 29; **Wed:** Psalm 91;
Thurs: Memorize John 16:33; **Fri:** James 1;
Sat: John 16:16-33

Week of January 14 – 19

Mon: John 17; **Tues:** Romans 8; **Wed:** Philippians 1:12-30;
Thurs: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; **Fri:** Hebrews 7; **Sat:** John 17

Week of January 21 – 26

Mon: John 18:1-27; **Tues:** Matthew 26:47-75;
Wed: Mark 14:43-72; **Thurs:** Luke 22:47-62; **Fri:** Psalm 37;
Sat: John 18:1-27

Week of January 28 – February 2

Mon: John 18:28 – 19:15; **Tues:** Matthew 27:1-32;
Wed: Isaiah 50; **Thurs:** Mark 15:1-23; **Fri:** Luke 23:1-25;
Sat: John 18:28 – 19:15

Week of February 4 – 9

Mon: John 19:16-42; **Tues:** Psalm 22:1-18; **Wed:** Isaiah 53;
Thurs: Memorize Isaiah 53:6; **Fri:** Matthew 27:33-66;
Sat: John 19:16-42

Week of February 11 – 16

Mon: John 20; **Tues:** Luke 24; **Wed:** 1 Corinthians 15:1-28;
Thurs: Memorize John 20:21; **Fri:** Acts 1; **Sat:** John 20

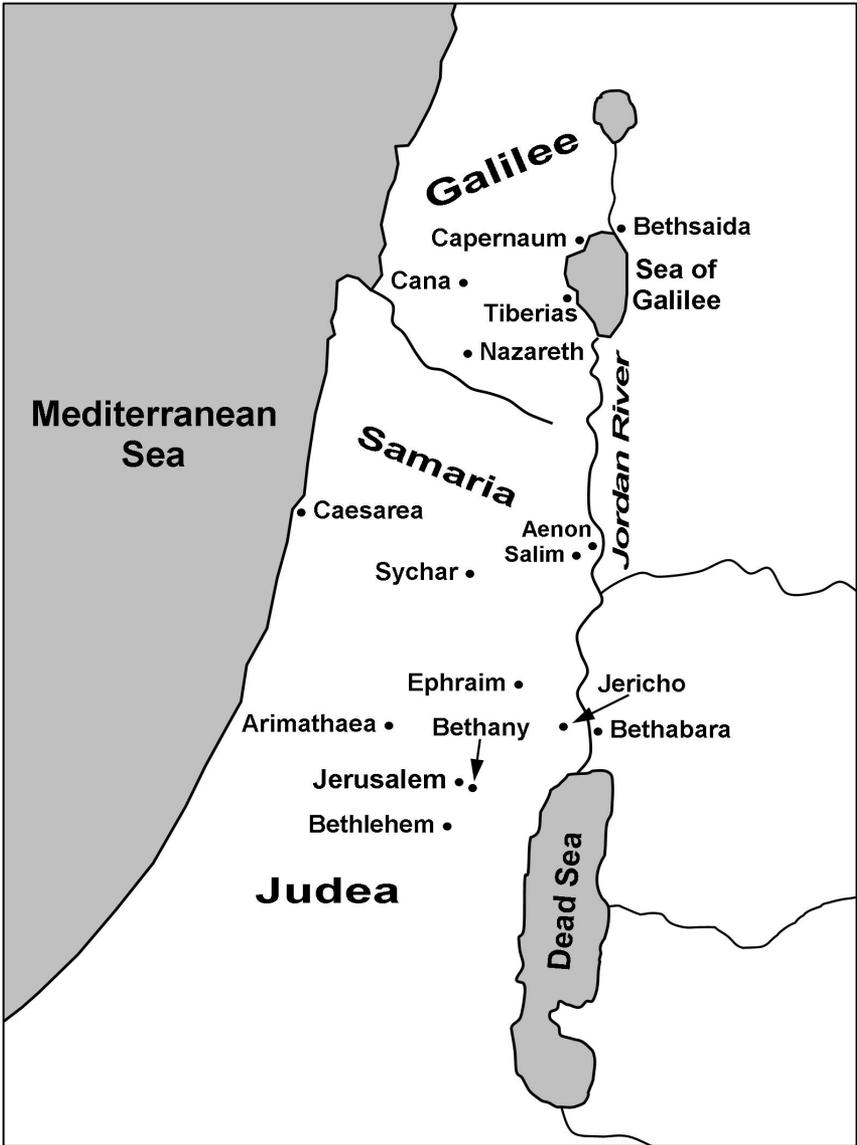
Week of February 18 – 23

Mon: John 21; **Tues:** 2 Peter 1; **Wed:** 2 Peter 3;
Thurs: 1 Timothy 6; **Fri:** Revelation 1; **Sat:** John 21

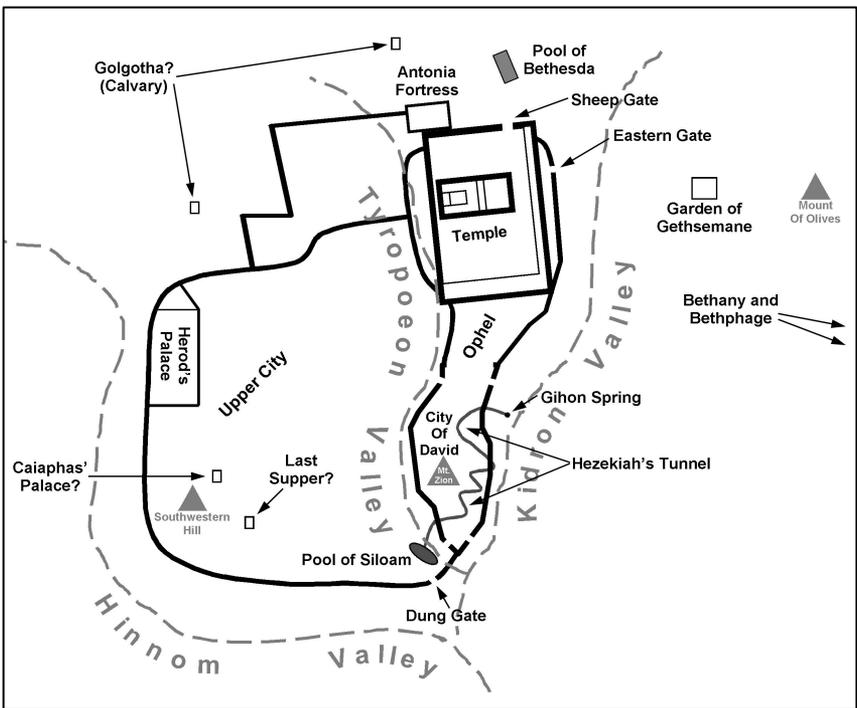
**Coming Next Quarter
(March – May 2019)**

Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

Map of Israel



Map of Jerusalem



Introduction to John

Author: The Apostle John

Date: A.D. 85-90

The Apostle John wrote the Gospel of John, the epistles of 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John, and the book of Revelation. Only the Apostle Paul wrote more of the New Testament than John. One of the youngest of Jesus' disciples (perhaps only a teenager during the time of Jesus' earthly ministry), John enjoyed a very special relationship with Jesus as a member (along with Peter and James) of the "inner circle" of disciples.

Purpose: The purpose of John's Gospel is clearly stated in John 20:31: *"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."*

To prove that Jesus is the Christ, John included the following seven "sign miracles" in the first half of his gospel.

1. Jesus turned water into wine – John 2:1-11
2. Jesus healed a nobleman's son – John 4:46-51
3. Jesus healed a lame man – John 5:1-9
4. Jesus fed over 5,000 people – John 6:1-14
5. Jesus walked on water – John 6:16-21
6. Jesus gave sight to a blind man – John 9:1-38
7. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead – John 11:1-44

In John's Gospel Jesus often identified Himself as God by referring to Himself as "I AM," the same name God called Himself when He spoke to Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3:14).

This Quarter's Study: This quarter you will study chapters 12-21. The prominent events are the triumphal entry, the Last Supper, Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trials, crucifixion, resurrection, and several of His post-resurrection appearances.

Ups and Downs

Have you ever had one of those “up” and “down” days? You know – the kind of day when your excitement at receiving a small refund check from the insurance company is quickly offset by learning that your car needs a new transmission. Or the kind of day when you “aced” the chemistry test in the morning, but flunked the English test in the afternoon.

How do you deal with emotional “ups” and “downs”?

In this lesson you will learn that Jesus faced extremes of emotion, but throughout it all He kept His focus on His purpose for coming to earth. Read **John 12:1-50** and then answer the following questions to learn more.

John 12:1-2 Shortly before Passover, Jesus returned to **Bethany** (see the **Map** on page 6). They had a dinner for Him. Who was one of the dinner guests?

John 12:3 What did Mary do?

John 12:4-6 Why did Judas object?

John 12:7-8 Jesus told Judas to leave Mary alone. According to Jesus, why had Mary kept this ointment?

John 12:9-11 Many Jews came to see Jesus and Lazarus. What did the chief priests decide to do?

John 12:12-13 The next day Jesus came to **Jerusalem**. How did the people greet Him?

The crowd clearly stated in two ways that they believed Jesus was the Messiah. First, they called Him “*the King of Israel,*” a title

reserved for the Messiah. They also quoted **Psalm 118:26** about the Messiah when they said Jesus came “*in the name of the Lord.*”

John 12:14-16 Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey, which the disciples later understood was another sign that Jesus was the Messiah (**Zech. 9:9**).

John 12:17-19 Those who saw Lazarus arise from the dead told others, until it seemed to the Pharisees that **everyone** acclaimed Jesus as the Messiah.

Talk about emotional ups and downs! The night before, Mary tenderly and affectionately anointed Jesus’ feet in preparation for His **burial**. The next day the people of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus as their **King** and **Messiah**.

How did Jesus handle these ups and downs? He stayed focused on His purpose for coming to earth. Read the following verses to discover some of the reasons Jesus came.

John 12:23 The time had come for Jesus to be _____.

John 12:24 Like a grain of wheat, Christ’s death would bring forth much _____.

John 12:25-26 Jesus promised to give life and honor to those who serve Him.

John 12:27 Jesus would soon bear the sins of the world and the wrath of His Father. He was troubled by the thought of this, but stayed focused on His purpose.

John 12:28-30 What amazing thing did God do to confirm Jesus’ identity?

John 12:32-34 “And I, if I be _____ up from the earth, will _____ all men unto me.” What did the people realize He was talking about?

John 12:37-41 Even though Jesus did many miracles, many people still did not believe in Him. Why didn't they believe (see **Isa. 53:1** and **6:10**)?

John 12:42-43 Some of the chief rulers of the Jews believed in Jesus. Why didn't they confess Him publicly?

John 12:44-45 Jesus came to help people believe in _____.

John 12:46 Why did Jesus come?

John 12:47-48 Jesus came not to judge but to _____.

John 12:49-50 He came to speak His _____'s words.

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus remained focused on His purpose in coming to earth. He didn't allow the fickle winds of popularity to sway Him from His task.

Jesus said He came to earth to be glorified (verse 23), to bring forth fruit (verse 24), to give life and honor to those who serve Him (verses 25-26), to die on the cross and thus draw people to Himself (verse 32), to enable people to believe in the Father (verses 44-45), to bring light into a dark world (verse 46), to save the world (verses 47-48), and to speak the Father's Words (verses 49-50). **Jesus knew His purpose and He stayed on task.**

When you face the ups and downs the world dishes out, you, too, must **stay focused on your purpose**. God's ultimate purpose is not to give you wealth, health, or happiness. Rather, He wants you to believe in Jesus (**1 John 3:23**), avoid sin (**1 Thess. 4:3**), be different from the world (**Rom. 12:2**), be thankful (**1 Thess. 5:18**), and glorify Him in everything you do (**Col. 3:23**).

Project: Stay focused on God's purpose for you. Memorize **John 14:1-3**. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** (page 4) each day this week.

Humility and Betrayal

Has a close friend ever betrayed you? Has anyone ever been “out to get you?” It really hurt, didn’t it?

How did your relationship with that person change? Have you held onto hard feelings toward him or her, or do you simply try to avoid and ignore them? Or would you, on the other hand, go out of your way to purposely do something nice for that person?

In this week’s lesson you will discover that Jesus demonstrated humility toward His disciples by washing their feet. Think about the people whose feet Jesus humbly washed:

- Judas, who would soon betray Him.
- Peter, who would soon deny Him.
- The other disciples, who (except for John) would soon abandon Him in His time of trouble.

Read **John 13:1-38** to discover ways Jesus demonstrated humility toward those who would soon betray and hurt Him.

John 13:1 What did Jesus know?

How did He feel toward His disciples?

John 13:2 Who inspired Judas to betray Jesus?

John 13:3-5 What did Jesus do?

Foot washing was a customary courtesy in ancient times because roads were dirt and people wore sandals. Usually the lowliest household servant washed the feet of the guests.

John 13:6-10 Peter initially refused to let Jesus wash his feet, but when Jesus told him it was necessary to have fellowship with Him, what did Peter say?

To the Christian the symbolism of verse 10 is clear. When we are saved, we are completely washed clean of sins. As we walk through this wicked world, however, we sin and get spiritually “dirty.” Thus we need to regularly confess our sins and have our “feet” cleaned.

John 13:11 What did Jesus know?

John 13:12-17 Jesus wanted the disciples to understand His actions. What did He want them to learn?

John 13:18 Jesus quoted **Psalm 41:9**. What did He say one of His disciples would do?

John 13:19 Why did He tell them this?

John 13:21 What did Jesus announce to the group?

John 13:22-25 The disciples were very curious, so John (the disciple “*whom Jesus loved*”) asked Jesus who would do such a terrible thing.

John 13:26 How did Jesus answer John?

What did He give Judas?

John 13:27 What happened after Judas ate the sop?

What did Jesus tell Judas?

John 13:28 Did the other disciples understand what was happening?

John 13:29 What did they think Jesus wanted Judas to do?

John 13:30 What did Judas do?

John 13:34 What new commandment did Jesus give them?

John 13:35 What does loving one another show the world?

John 13:36-37 Peter was concerned that Jesus said He was going away and they could not follow Him. What did Peter boldly promise Jesus?

John 13:38 What did Jesus tell Peter?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus humbly washed the feet of Judas, the very man who was about to **betray** Him so He could be put to death. Remember that Jesus knew what Judas was about to do (**John 6:70; 13:1-2, 11**).

Jesus humbly washed the feet of Peter, who was about to **deny** that he even knew Him. Jesus humbly washed the feet of the other disciples, all of whom (except John) were about to **abandon** Him.

Jesus humbly stooped down to the ground, took the job of a lowly servant, and did something kind for people who would soon betray, deny, and abandon Him.

Has anyone ever hurt you? Did you try to “get even” with that person or did you just avoid and ignore him or her?

Do you think you could do what Jesus did – be a humble servant to someone who has betrayed or hurt you? That is what Jesus did, telling the disciples to follow His example (verse 15) and to love one another (verse 34).

Will you obey Jesus’ commands? If so, ask God to enable you to show humility and love toward those who have hurt or disappointed you.

Project: Memorize **John 14:6**. Do something nice for someone who has chosen to be your enemy, or for someone who has disappointed or hurt you.

Comfort in Troubling Times

The business where you've worked 25 years suddenly closes down, leaving you out of work. The doctor calls you in for a consultation and you discover that you have a very serious type of cancer, which is already in an advanced stage. A member of your immediate family is killed in an automobile accident, leaving you stunned and broken-hearted.

Situations such as those described above are very troubling. If you faced circumstances like those, where would you turn for comfort and strength? You've probably already faced some troubling and uncertain times in the past. What gave you comfort during those difficult times?

Jesus' disciples were frightened and upset. In the last chapter He announced that one of them would betray Him, He was about to leave them, and Peter would deny Him. In this week's lesson you will learn how Jesus comforted His disciples in troubling times.

John 14:1 Why did Jesus say His disciples shouldn't be troubled?

John 14:2 What did Jesus say about His Father's house?

What did He say He was going to prepare?

John 14:3 What did Jesus promise to do after going to prepare a place for them?

Jesus comforted His disciples by promising to return for them.

He was about to leave, but He promised to come back for them. If someone you loved and depended on had to go away for a long time, they would undoubtedly ease the pain of separation by promising to come back. When the disciples faced persecution, they could remember that Jesus promised to come back.

John 14:4-5 What did Thomas ask Jesus?

John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the _____, the _____, and the _____: no man _____ unto the _____, but by _____.”

John 14:7-8 What did Philip ask Jesus?

John 14:9 Jesus said: “He that hath seen _____ hath seen the _____.” Jesus made it clear: **He is God!**

John 14:10-11 Jesus said: “I am in the _____, and the Father in _____.” Jesus said His **words** and **works** were those of His Heavenly Father.

John 14:12-14 Jesus said His followers would do great works. What did He promise if we ask Him anything?

John 14:15 What did He say we should do if we love Him?

Jesus comforted His disciples by assuring them that He possessed all the Father’s power. Jesus Christ is God. He did the Father’s works and spoke His words. Since He has power to answer prayer, we should ask Him for help in troubling times.

John 14:16 Who did Jesus say the Father would give them?

The Comforter is the Holy Spirit. How long did Jesus say the Comforter would stay with them?

John 14:17 Jesus said the Holy Spirit “dwelleth _____ you, and shall be _____ you.”

John 14:18-20 Jesus promised to return to the disciples and to reveal Himself to them even when the world could no longer see Him.

John 14:21-22 Jesus said He and His Father love anyone who loves Jesus. What did one of the disciples ask?

John 14:23 What do those who love Jesus do?

John 14:24 How can you recognize those who don't really love Jesus?

John 14:26 Jesus told them the Holy Spirit would do two things for them: "He shall _____ you all things, and bring all things to your _____, whatsoever I have _____ unto you."

Jesus comforted His disciples by promising to send them the Holy Spirit, who would never leave them. Jesus was going away, but the Holy Spirit would come and stay with them (and *in* them) forever. Jesus would not leave them comfortless.

John 14:27 Jesus said: "_____ I leave with you." He went on to say: "Let not your heart be _____, neither let it be _____."

John 14:28-29 Why did He tell them these things before they came to pass?

Jesus comforted His disciples by promising them peace. The disciples were about to face the most troubling times of their lives: Jesus' sudden arrest and brutal execution. Jesus promised to give them peace in the midst of whatever storms they might face.

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus comforted His disciples by explaining four truths to them. Those four promises and facts comforted the original disciples, and they can still provide comfort for us today. Let's personalize the things Jesus said to His disciples, to see how they relate to us:

1. Jesus promised to **return** for us.
2. Jesus possesses all the Father's **power**, with which He can answer our prayers.

3. Jesus has given us the **Holy Spirit**, a Comforter who will never leave us.
4. Jesus promised to give us **peace**.

Do you remember the troubling circumstances described in the first paragraph of this lesson (page 15)? Re-read that paragraph right now. How can the truths Jesus shared with His disciples bring comfort in each of those situations?

How can these same truths bring comfort in your troubling and difficult times? Thank God for these truths and ask the Lord to use them to give you comfort and peace.

Do you know someone who is going through troubling times right now? Could these truths help that person?

Project: Memorize **John 14:15**. Try to comfort someone who is facing troubling or uncertain times this week. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** and be sure to come to Sunday School this Sunday.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God

Christmas is only a few days away. Since most Americans celebrate Christmas, the name of Jesus Christ (in the word **Christmas**) will be prominently displayed throughout our land for the next few days. You may even see a manger scene.

Regardless of these public acknowledgements of Christ, most people have never trusted Him as their Savior. If a skeptic were to challenge you, denying that Jesus is the Son of God, how would you answer? Is there anything in the Christmas story that proves Jesus is the Son of God? The following verses contain eight facts that prove Jesus' identity.

1. The Angel told Zacharias that John would be the Forerunner of the Messiah

Luke 1:12-13 What did Zacharias see in the Temple?

Luke 1:14-15 What did the angel tell Zacharias?

Luke 1:16-17 John the Baptist would precede Jesus, preach in the spirit and power of the Old Testament prophet Elijah (see **Mal. 4:5-6**), and point people to Jesus.

2. Gabriel Announced Jesus' Birth and Identity to Mary

Luke 1:26-27 The angel Gabriel went to Nazareth. What does verse 27 tell us about Mary?

Luke 1:28 What did the angel say to Mary?

Luke 1:29-30 Mary was scared, but the angel told her not to fear.

Luke 1:31 “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a _____, and shalt call His name _____.”

- Luke 1:32-33** The angel told Mary five things about Jesus:
1. "He shall be _____"
 2. He "shall be called the _____ of the _____"
 3. "The Lord God shall give unto Him the _____ of His father _____"
 4. "He shall _____ over the house of Jacob _____"
 5. "Of His kingdom there shall be no _____."

3. Elisabeth called Mary's Baby "my Lord"

- Luke 1:39-41** Mary went to visit her cousin Elisabeth. What did Elisabeth's unborn baby (John the Baptist) do?
- Luke 1:42-43** Elisabeth blessed Mary and her unborn baby (Jesus). What did Elisabeth call Jesus?

4. Zacharias said Mary's Baby was the Messiah and John would Prepare the Way for Him

- Luke 1:67-70** Zacharias praised God for sending Jesus. How long had God's prophets predicted the arrival of Christ?
- Luke 1:76-77** Zacharias said that his child (John the Baptist) would be "the prophet of the _____: for thou shalt go before the face of the _____ to _____ His ways; to give knowledge of _____ unto His people by the _____ of their sins."

5. The Angel Told the Shepherds that Jesus was the Savior, Christ the Lord

- Luke 2:1-7** Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem?
- Luke 2:8-10** What did the shepherds see?
- Luke 2:11** "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a _____, which is _____ the Lord."

6. Simeon Announced that Jesus is the Savior

- Luke 2:25-26** Simeon was a righteous and devout old man. What did the Holy Spirit reveal to him?
- Luke 2:27-32** What did Simeon recognize about Jesus?
- Luke 2:33** How did Joseph and Mary react to Simeon's words?

7. Anna Confirmed Jesus' Identity as the Redeemer

- Luke 2:36-37** Anna was an 84-year-old widowed prophetess.
- Luke 2:38** She "spake of Him [Jesus] to all them that looked for _____ in Jerusalem."

8. Jesus Said God was His Father

- Luke 2:41-42** When He was 12 years old, Jesus went with His parents to worship in Jerusalem.
- Luke 2:43-45** What happened when His parents left for home?
- Luke 2:46-48** Where did Joseph and Mary find Jesus?
What was He doing?
- Luke 2:49** What did Jesus say He was doing in the Temple?

Concluding Thoughts: The Christmas story contains eight scriptural proofs that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior.

Have you accepted Jesus for who He really is? Have you received Christ as your Savior? If not, please read the plan of salvation printed on the back of this book and ask Jesus to save you.

Project: Memorize **John 14:26**. Look for opportunities to tell others that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the true and living God.

Fruitfulness and Friendship

Have you ever had a bush or hedge that grew larger than you wanted it to be? If so, you probably got some hedge clippers and trimmed it. When you finished trimming, there were lots of cut branches and clippings lying on the ground. You probably gathered up all the clippings and carried them to the street for the sanitation crews to pick up.

If those cuttings stayed at the street for several days before being picked up, did you notice any change in their appearance? Did they wilt and change color? If they remained there long enough, they probably looked like dead sticks.

After branches are cut off a bush or other plant, they begin to wither and die. Cut branches lying in the street do not remain healthy, grow, produce flowers, or bear fruit. Why? Because **they are no longer attached to the source of their life and strength.**

Jesus and His disciples shared a private Passover meal. Jesus told them He was going to leave them, but He also said not to worry because He would send the Comforter (the Holy Spirit), who would stay with them forever. In this week's scripture Jesus used familiar agricultural imagery to teach some important lessons.

John 15:1 "I am the true _____, and my Father is the _____." The **husbandman** or **vinedresser** is the farmer who cares for the vine.

John 15:2 What did Jesus say about branches that don't bear fruit?

What did He say about the branches that bore fruit?

John 15:3 "Now ye are _____ through the _____ which I have spoken unto you."

John 15:4 The word **abide** means to remain, stay, or continue.
Can the branch bear fruit if it is cut off the vine?

Can we bear fruit if we are cut off from Jesus?

John 15:5 Who is the vine?

Who are the branches?

If we abide in Jesus, what will we bring forth?

“For without me ye can do _____.”

John 15:6 What happens to those who do not abide in Jesus?

John 15:7 What benefit will we enjoy if we abide in Christ?

John 15:8 What glorifies the Father?

John 15:9 “As the Father hath _____ me, so have I
_____ you: continue ye in my _____.”

John 15:10 What did Jesus promise to those who obey His commandments?

John 15:11 Jesus wants to put His joy in us, and He wants our joy to be _____.

John 15:12 What is Jesus’ commandment?

John 15:13 “Greater _____ hath no man than this, that a man lay down His _____ for His _____.”

John 15:14 What qualifies someone to be Jesus’ friend?

John 15:15 Servants don’t know everything their master does.
Why did Jesus call the disciples His friends?

John 15:16 “Ye have not _____ me, but I have chosen _____, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth _____, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall _____ of the Father in my _____, He may _____ it you.”

John 15:17 What did Jesus command us to do?

Concluding Thoughts: Dead branches that have been cut off from a vine or bush do not grow, thrive, or bear fruit. Instead, they wither up and die. On the contrary, branches that remain attached to the vine or bush grow strong and healthy, and they are fruitful.

What kind of fruit are Christians supposed to bear? Our fruit may be summarized as converts (**Acts 1:8**), character (**Gal. 5:22-23**), and Christ-like conduct (**Rom. 6:22; Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Thess. 5:22**).¹

What about you? Are you bearing fruit for the Lord Jesus? The only way to do so is to abide in Christ, because without Jesus you can't do **anything** (**John 15:5**).

Evaluate your spiritual life. Does it look like a healthy and fruitful vine, or a dried-up and dead stick? If all you see is deadness you need to turn to Jesus Christ – the true Vine – for eternal life. Read the verses printed on the back of this book, repent of (turn away from) your sins, and cry out to Jesus for salvation. Do it now.

Ask the Lord to teach you how to abide in Him, and to make you fruitful for Him.

Project: Memorize **John 15:5**. Ask the Lord every day this week to make you a fruitful Christian.

¹ *New Scofield Reference Bible KJV*. Copyright © 1967 by Oxford University Press, Inc. All rights reserved. Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1998, Parsons Technology, Inc.

The World Will Hate You!

Roger was shocked when his doctor told him that he needed heart bypass surgery. He immediately contacted his friend Dean, who had similar surgery a few years earlier.

Kelly felt led to go on a mission trip to India. She didn't know what to expect or how to prepare, so she contacted a mission organization that regularly sponsored trips to India.

Why did Roger contact Dean? Why did Kelly contact the mission organization? They were both facing unfamiliar experiences and wanted advice from someone who had already "been there." They wanted to know what to expect, and what help and resources were available to them.

Jesus was preparing His disciples for the time when He would leave them. He told them what to expect after He left and the resources they had to enable them to do the things He told them.

John 15:18 "If the world _____ you, ye know that it _____ me before it _____ you."

John 15:19 Why does the world hate Jesus' followers?

John 15:20 Jesus said His followers could expect the same kind of treatment from the world that He got.

John 15:21 Why does the world persecute Christians?

John 15:22 Jesus and His teachings expose the world's sin.

John 15:23 What did Jesus say about those who hate Him?

Is it possible to love God and reject Jesus?

John 15:24-25 Jesus' works exposed the world's sinfulness. The world's hatred of Him was in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (see **Ps. 35:19; 69:4**).

John 15:26 What does the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) do?

John 15:27 What did Jesus say His followers will do?

John 16:1 Why did Jesus tell His disciples these things?

John 16:2 What did Jesus say people will do to His followers?

What will those who persecute Christians think they are doing?

Jesus' statement in verse 2 may sound hard to believe, but it is true. When Saul of Tarsus persecuted and executed Christians, he thought he was doing God a favor (**Acts 26:9-11**). Even today, Christians around the world suffer persecution. Certain groups and governments think they are serving their god by killing Christians.

John 16:3 Why do people persecute Christians?

Regardless of how religious or sincere they may be, those who persecute Christians prove that **they don't know God at all!**

John 16:4 Why did Jesus tell His disciples (and us) these things?

John 16:5-6 Jesus was about to leave the earth, so His disciples were filled with sorrow.

John 16:7 Why was it good for Jesus to leave earth?

John 16:8 "And when He (the Holy Spirit) is come, He will reprove the world of _____, and of _____, and of _____."

John 16:9 The greatest sin anyone can ever commit is **not believing in Jesus Christ** (see **1 John 3:23**). Those who commit that sin are doomed to hell.

John 16:10 The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus' righteousness and our lack of righteousness.

John 16:11 Judgment is coming! Satan (the "*prince of this world*") is already judged (**Rev. 20:1-3, 10**). Everyone who rejects Jesus will one day face judgment (**Rev. 20:11-15**).

John 16:12-13 What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit does for us?

John 16:14-15 What else does the Spirit do?

Concluding Thoughts: Let's review. What did Jesus say His disciples could expect from the world? He said they would experience rejection and hatred. This promise still applies to Christians today. As a matter of fact, **2 Timothy 3:12** says, "*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*"

What resource did Jesus provide to enable His disciples to endure hatred and carry out God's mission in the face of persecution? He promised the Holy Spirit, who testifies of Him (**John 15:26**), reveals and convicts the world of sin (**John 16:8**), guides us into truth and shows us things to come (**John 16:13**), and glorifies Christ (**John 16:14**). If you belong to Jesus you have that very same Holy Spirit living within you.

Ask the Lord to help you endure persecution, through the indwelling Holy Spirit's help.

Project: Look for examples of hatred toward Christians this week. Pray for those experiencing persecution and hatred. Rely on the Holy Spirit when people ridicule or reject your faith.

Joy Out of Tragedy

Kyle was devastated. After faithfully working for his company for eleven years, another corporation bought out the business and he and many other workers were laid off. Through no fault of his own, Kyle was out of work. He moped around the house for several days in the depths of despair.

Eventually a friend came over to visit Kyle. He told Kyle not to worry about his job, but to pray and trust God to meet his need. Kyle followed his friend's advice. He prayed for a job and even asked people at his church to pray, as well.

In time, Kyle got a new job. Amazingly, the new job was in a field in which Kyle had always wanted to work. He loved his new job and looked forward to going to work each day. He later told his friend that he was actually thankful for being laid off, because it opened the door for him to get an even better job.

When tragedy strikes we are often knocked flat on our back. In this week's lesson you will learn that Jesus' disciples faced some very sad and frightening times, but He promised that their sorrow would be turned into joy.

John 16:16 What did Jesus mean when He told His disciples in a little while they wouldn't see Him?

What did He mean when He said a little while later they would see Him again?

John 16:17-18 How did the disciples react to Jesus' statements?

John 16:19 How did Jesus know what the disciples wanted to ask Him (see also **John 2:24-25**)?

John 16:20 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall _____ and _____, but the world shall

_____ : and ye shall be _____.”
Jesus knew His disciples would be devastated with sorrow and sadness when He was crucified. Remember that He spoke these words the night before He was crucified. Jesus went on to say: “But your sorrow shall be turned into _____.”

To help them better understand, Jesus used the illustration of a woman giving birth to a child.

John 16:21 What happens to a woman **after** her baby is delivered?

John 16:22 When did Jesus say the disciples would rejoice?

How long did He say that joy would last?

John 16:23-24 Jesus urged His disciples to pray in His name, promising answers to those prayers.

John 16:25 How had Jesus spoken to them up to that time?

How was He going to speak to them in the future?

John 16:26 Jesus said in the future His disciples would pray in His name and have direct access to God the Father.

John 16:27 Why did the Father love Jesus’ disciples? “Because ye have _____ me, and have _____ that I came out from God.”

John 16:28 Where did Jesus say He was going?

John 16:29-31 The disciples finally understood His words. What did Jesus ask them?

John 16:32 What did He say the disciples would soon do?

The Old Testament predicted Jesus' disciples would abandon Him (**Zech. 13:7**). That is exactly what happened (**Matt. 26:56**).

John 16:33 Why did Jesus tell His disciples about these things?

What did He promise they would experience in the world?

Why could they be of good cheer?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus' disciples were about to face the worst time of their lives. Within a matter of hours one of them would betray Jesus, resulting in His arrest; they would all (except John) abandon Jesus; another of them would deny that he knew Jesus; their Lord would endure the combined cruelty of the Jews and the Romans; and Jesus would be brutally executed.

The disciples were understandably stunned, broken-hearted, and discouraged. How could things possibly get any worse? Yet in the midst of their emotional devastation, Jesus told them that their sorrow would soon be turned into joy.

If you experience turmoil and tragedy and a friend says, "Cheer up, things will get better!" does that really help your feelings? Probably not, because your friend doesn't know anything more about the future than you do.

Jesus, however, told His friends to cheer up, but He is God and He knows exactly what the future holds. Jesus knows that we will face difficulties in the world, but He has overcome this wicked world. We can always trust Him to do what's best for us.

When tragedy comes, thank God that He holds your future.

Project: Memorize **John 16:33**. Do the **Daily Bible Readings** each day and don't miss Sunday School this Sunday.

Jesus Prayed for You

Do you appreciate it when people pray for you?

If you were facing some really big challenge, who would you ask to pray for you? Do you find comfort and strength in knowing that someone is praying for you?

Did you realize that Jesus Christ prayed for you before He went to the cross? He prayed for His disciples, but He included you in His prayer as well. In this week's lesson you will learn what He prayed. Read **John 17:1-26** and answer the following questions.

John 17:1 This entire chapter is made up of Jesus' prayer. He said the time of His sacrificial death on the cross had come. What did He ask His Father?

John 17:2 God gave Jesus **power** (authority) over all flesh, and in turn Jesus gave certain people eternal life. To whom did He give eternal life?

John 17:3 How did Jesus define eternal life?

John 17:4 "I have _____ thee on the earth: I have finished the _____ which thou gavest Me to do."

John 17:5 "_____ thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee _____ the _____ was."

In those first five verses Jesus prayed for Himself. Throughout the rest of the chapter, however, He prayed for His disciples and for **all** believers of **all** future generations. That includes believers now.

John 17:6-7 How did Jesus come to have the disciples who followed Him?

John 17:8 Jesus told the disciples the things His Father wanted Him to. What did the disciples understand about Jesus?

John 17:9 Who did Jesus pray for?

John 17:10 Jesus and His Father “co-own” His followers.

John 17:11 Jesus prayed two things for His disciples:
1. “_____ through thine own name those whom thou hast given me,”
2. “That they may be _____, as we are”

John 17:12 Jesus kept and protected His disciples. Who is the “*son of perdition*” (compare **John 6:70-71**)?

John 17:13-14 Why did the world hate Jesus’ disciples?

John 17:15 Name the third thing Jesus prayed for His disciples:
3. _____

John 17:16-17 Verse 17 contains a fourth thing Jesus prayed:
4. _____
Where is God’s truth found?

John 17:18-19 Where was Jesus sending His disciples?

John 17:20 “Neither pray I for these alone, but for _____ also which _____ believe on me through their _____.”

In verses 1-4 Jesus prayed for Himself, and in verses 5-19 He prayed for His disciples. In verse 20 His prayer changed its focus. He prayed for all believers throughout all generations. If you’re saved, then **Jesus prayed for you!**

John 17:21 What did Jesus pray for us? “That they all may be _____.”

- John 17:22-23** Jesus described the unity He wants His followers to have. What will this unity show the world?
- John 17:24** Where does Jesus ultimately want believers to be?
What does He want them to see?
- John 17:25** What do Jesus' followers know about Him?
- John 17:26** What kind of love does Jesus want His followers to experience?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus asked His Father to **protect** His followers from Satan and the evils of the world (verses 11 and 15). He prayed that Christians would be **unified** and share the kind of love and oneness He and His Father share (verses 11, 21-23, 26). Jesus asked the Father to **sanctify** His followers (verse 17) and that they would **be with** Him and behold His glory (verse 24).

Jesus Christ prayed these things for His disciples, but the truly amazing thing is that if you're saved He prayed these things for **you**. Here's some more good news – **Jesus hasn't stopped praying for you**. Romans 8:34 says: "*It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*" That verse says Jesus Christ is at the right hand of the Father right now, praying for you!

Isn't it comforting to know that Jesus is praying for you? He is the best and most faithful prayer partner you could ever have.

Thank the Lord Jesus for praying for you. Trust Him to always do what's best for you, even when your circumstances are difficult.

Project: When trials and temptations come this week, stop and thank Jesus for praying for you, and then depend on Him to protect and help you through those trials. He's praying for **you!**

Arrested!

Have you ever witnessed an arrest?

Through reality TV and TV news, many of us have seen actual video of criminals being arrested. The criminals often flee or resist arrest in a very violent manner. When the arrest is finally made, it is usually obvious that the police are in complete control of the situation and the criminal is helpless to resist any longer.

In this week's lesson you will learn about a very different arrest. You will also contrast Jesus' boldness with Peter's denials. Read **John 18:1-27** and answer the following questions to learn more.

John 18:1-2 Jesus and His disciples left the city, crossed the **Kidron Valley**, and entered the **Garden of Gethsemane** (see the **Map of Jerusalem** on page 7). How did Judas know the place?

John 18:3 Who did Judas bring to the garden?

John 18:4 Did Jesus know what was happening?

Jesus stepped forward to meet Judas and the others. What did He ask?

John 18:5 They said they were looking for Jesus of Nazareth. What did Jesus say?

Jesus responded with the words, "**I AM.**" Remember that Jesus often referred to Himself as "I AM," a phrase that clearly identified Him as Almighty God in human flesh – the Messiah. Those who heard Jesus use these words understood what He was saying.

John 18:6 How did the armed guards react to Jesus' words?

Picture this scene in your mind: a large contingent of armed men frightened into a state of total inactivity by one unarmed man who uttered two small words! Amazing!

John 18:7 The guards had forgotten what they were there for!
What did Jesus ask them?

John 18:8-9 What did Jesus tell the arresting officers to do?

Jesus did this to fulfill the prophecy He had already made that none of His disciples would be lost (**John 6:39; 17:12**). This was a very unusual arrest. Jesus was in the process of being arrested, but He was completely in control of the entire situation!

John 18:10 What did Peter do?

John 18:11 What did Jesus tell Peter?

John 18:12-14 Jesus was tied up. Where did they take Him?

Peter and John followed. The people in the high priest's household knew John, so they let him in (v. 15). John told the servant girl who kept the door to let Peter come in also (v. 16).

John 18:17 What did the girl ask Peter?

How did Peter answer?

Ancient Jewish houses usually consisted of a central courtyard surrounded by rooms and enclosed within a wall. Peter stayed near the fire that was burning in the courtyard, while Jesus was questioned (about His disciples and doctrine) in one of the rooms.

John 18:20-21 What did Jesus tell the high priest?

John 18:22 What did one of the officers do to Jesus?

Jesus was bold in the face of arrest, personal injury, and impending death. Earlier in the evening, Jesus told Peter that he would deny

Him three times before morning (**John 13:38**). We've seen that Peter already denied Him once (v. 17).

John 18:25 What did those around the fire ask Peter?

How did he answer?

John 18:26 What did one of the servants ask Peter?

John 18:27 What did Peter do?

What happened next?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ came to earth to fulfill His Father's plan. That meant He had to die on the cross to pay the price for the sins of those who would trust Him as Savior. Everything that happened on the night of His arrest and so-called "trials" occurred in perfect fulfillment of God's plan.

Because He was perfectly fulfilling His Father's will, Jesus was completely in control when the Temple guards and Roman soldiers arrested Him in the garden. He was also bold to admit who He was and to answer the high priest's questions. Even though He would soon endure a terrible death, He remained bold.

Peter, on the other hand, was frightened. In the garden in the dark of night Peter was ready to fight for the Lord. After Jesus was arrested and Peter was in the courtyard of the high priest's house, Peter denied three times that he even knew Jesus. Fear gripped his heart, making him afraid to speak up for the Lord.

Can you identify with Peter? Has fear or intimidation ever prevented you from speaking up for Jesus Christ? Ask the Lord to help you boldly identify with Him, regardless of the consequences.

Project: Look for opportunities to speak up for the Lord this week.

Innocent but Condemned

Have you ever been unjustly accused of something? Has anyone ever lied about you to get you in trouble?

From time to time the news media reports that someone who has been in prison for many years has recently been proved innocent and released. Those occurrences are rare, but occasionally an innocent person is convicted of a crime.

This week you will learn that Jesus Christ was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. But you will also discover that the man who passed judgment on Him firmly believed He was not guilty of any crime. Why would he sentence an innocent man to death?

John 18:28 Where did the Jewish religious leaders take Jesus?

The “*hall of judgment*” was probably in the Antonia Fortress adjacent to the Temple (see the **Map of Jerusalem** on page 7). The Jews wouldn’t go in because entering a Gentile house would make them ceremonially unclean and unfit to eat the Passover.

John 18:29 Pilate went out to them. What did he ask?

John 18:30 Did the Jews bring a charge against Jesus?

John 18:31 Pilate told them to take Jesus and deal with Him by their Jewish Law. Why did the Jews refuse?

John 18:32 Jesus had already predicted that He would die by crucifixion (see **John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32-34**). The Romans were the only ones who could legally carry out a crucifixion.

John 18:33 What did Pilate ask Jesus?

John 18:34 What did Jesus ask Pilate?

John 18:35 Pilate sarcastically asked, “Do you think I am a Jew?” What else did he ask Jesus?

John 18:36-37 Returning to Pilate’s question about whether He was a king, what did Jesus say about His kingdom?

Why did Jesus say He came into the world?

John 18:38 Pilate went back out to the Jews. What did he say about Jesus?

John 18:39-40 Since he knew Jesus wasn’t guilty of any crime, Pilate resorted to a custom of releasing a prisoner at Passover. Who did the Jews want released?

John 19:1-3 What happened to Jesus next?

Scourging was a terrible punishment that involved whipping the prisoner with a lash made of leather thongs with bone or metal imbedded in the ends. Flesh and muscles were often ripped from the prisoner’s back. Many prisoners died during the beating.

John 19:4 Pilate went back out to the Jews. What did he say about Jesus?

John 19:5-6 Pilate brought Jesus out. What did the chief priests and other leaders say when they saw Him?

What did Pilate say about Jesus’ guilt?

John 19:7 Why did the Jews say Jesus should die?

John 19:8-9 What was Pilate’s reaction to this?

What did he ask Jesus?

John 19:10-11 What did Jesus say about Pilate's power?

John 19:12 Pilate wanted to release Jesus. What did the Jews tell him?

Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent, but he also realized if he released Him he would get in trouble with Caesar.

John 19:13 Pilate brought Jesus out to the judgment seat.

John 19:14 What did Pilate say to the Jews?

John 19:15 Pilate mockingly asked if he should crucify their king. How did the Jews respond?

Concluding Thoughts: Three times (**John 18:38; 19:4, 6**), Pilate declared Jesus innocent. Pilate tried all sorts of maneuvering to release Jesus, but failed at every turn. Why did Pilate finally give in to the Jews and crucify Jesus Christ?

Pilate compromised his beliefs to do what would benefit him the most. He knew Jesus was innocent, but he executed Him anyway. He asked Jesus about truth, but he was more concerned with doing what would help him politically than what was right.

What about you? Have you ever been tempted to lie, cover up something, or go along with the crowd, even when you knew it was wrong?

Are you willing to do the right thing, even if it will cost you something? Will you do what's right, even if it means you don't get the promotion you want or you won't be popular? If you're willing to make that commitment, then tell God right now.

Project: Don't compromise your convictions this week. Always stand up for the right thing and don't go along with the crowd.

Dead and Buried

Have you ever been to a funeral?

Death is universal. Studies have concluded that 100% of humans die. Some may die young and others may live to be very old, but eventually **everyone** dies.

Many people try to completely avoid thinking about death, but most are somewhat curious and intrigued by it. Perhaps that fascination stems from the fact that we know death is coming to us.

Jesus Christ, the virgin-born Son of God, never committed any crime. In last week's lesson you learned that Pontius Pilate declared Jesus innocent three times, yet he finally gave in to political pressure and sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion.

John 19:16-17 Pilate delivered Jesus to the executioners to be crucified. Where did they take Jesus?

See the **Map of Jerusalem** on page 7 for two possible locations of Golgotha.

At the place of execution the soldiers stripped Jesus, laid Him on the ground on top of the cross beam, and nailed His hands or wrists to the beam. They then hoisted the cross beam (and Jesus) up and secured it to the upright member, after which they nailed His feet to the upright beam of the cross. Crucifixion was a slow and agonizing death. Two others were crucified beside Jesus.

John 19:19 What did Pilate put on the cross?

John 19:20-22 Why did this anger the Jews?

John 19:23 What did the soldiers do?

John 19:24 Why didn't they tear Jesus' coat (tunic)?

John 19:25-26 Jesus' mother and some others stood nearby. What did Jesus say to His mother?

John 19:27 What did Jesus say to John ("*the disciple*")?

What did John do?

John 19:28 "After this, Jesus knowing that _____ things were now _____, that the _____ might be fulfilled, saith, 'I _____.'"

John 19:29 What did they give Jesus to drink?

John 19:30 What did Jesus say?

What happened next?

The Jews were preparing for their Sabbath, which began at sunset. They felt the land would be defiled if dead bodies were left hanging outside the city on the Sabbath (**Deut. 21:23**), so they asked that the criminals' legs be broken. That would make it impossible for them to breathe, so they would quickly suffocate.

John 19:32-33 Why didn't the soldiers break Jesus' legs?

John 19:34 "But one of the soldiers with a spear _____ His _____, and forthwith came there out _____ and _____."

John 19:35-36 Why didn't they break His legs (see **Psalm 34:20**)?

John 19:37 Why did they pierce His side (see **Zech. 12:10**)?

John 19:38 What do you learn about Joseph of Arimathaea in this verse?

What did he ask Pilate?

John 19:39 Who helped Joseph with Jesus' burial?

John 19:40 What did the two men do?

John 19:41-42 Jesus' burial preparations had to be rushed because the Sabbath began at sundown. Where did they put His body?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus was crucified. Expert executioners put Him to death in a very cruel and painful manner. Those who passed by watched in amazement as an innocent man who claimed to be God was brutally executed.

The Roman soldiers (who were experts in death) attested to the fact that Jesus was dead. Some of His followers took His dead body and prepared it for burial. Just before sundown, they laid Jesus' body in a nearby tomb.

No one who witnessed those cruel and violent proceedings had any doubt in their mind that Jesus of Nazareth was dead. The Jewish religious leaders could rest easy, knowing that the troublemaker was out of the way. Jesus' disciples were devastated and went into hiding. They were afraid the chief priests and other religious leaders would come looking for them after the Sabbath was over.

Why did Jesus die? He died to pay the price for your sin. Read **Isaiah 53:6-10** to see what Jesus did for you.

Have you accepted God's gift of salvation, paid for by the blood of Jesus? If not, please read the verses printed on the back of this book and ask Jesus to save you right now. If you're already saved, thank Jesus for enduring the agony of the cross for you.

Project: Memorize **Isaiah 53:6**. Every day this week, be sure to thank Jesus for dying for you.

Victory Over Death!

Have you lost any acquaintances, friends, or loved ones through death. How many of those people ever came back to life?

The grave has an amazing holding power – **no one** who goes there ever leaves. There have been times when graves had to be reopened, and there have been floods and other natural disasters that unearthed caskets. In each of those cases, however, the dead body remained dead and was soon returned to the grave.

Jesus raised a few people from the dead (such as Lazarus – see **John 11**), but each of them eventually died and returned to the grave. After Jesus Christ died, however, He defeated death and left the grave. He is still alive today and He will never die again. Read **John 20** to learn about it.

John 20:1 The Sabbath ended at sundown Saturday night. Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb. What did she find?

John 20:2 Who do she run to tell?
What did she tell them?

John 20:3 What did Peter and John (“*that other disciple*”) do?

John 20:4 John, being younger, outran Peter.

John 20:5-6 John arrived at the tomb first, but who went into the tomb first?
What did he see there?

John 20:7 What else did Peter see?

- John 20:8-10** What did Peter and John think about all this?
- John 20:11-12** Mary stayed outside the tomb and looked in. What did she see?
- John 20:13** What did the angels ask Mary?
How did she answer them?
- John 20:14** Who did Mary see when she turned around?
- John 20:15** What did Jesus ask her?
Mary didn't recognize Jesus. What did she ask?
- John 20:16** How did Jesus identify Himself to Mary?
- John 20:17** What did Jesus tell her?
- John 20:18** What did Mary do?
- John 20:19** What happened on Sunday evening?
- John 20:20** What did Jesus show the disciples?
- John 20:21** "Then said Jesus to them again, ' _____ be unto you: as my Father hath _____ me, even so _____ I _____.'"
- John 20:22-23** Jesus told the disciples they could proclaim that God forgives those who repent and turn to Him, but those who refuse to repent will face God's judgment for their sin.
- John 20:24** Who was not present when all this happened?

- John 20:25** What was Thomas' reaction when the others told him about Jesus' appearance to them?
- John 20:26** Eight days later, Thomas and the other disciples were gathered together. What happened?
- John 20:27** What did Jesus say to Thomas?
- John 20:28** When Thomas saw that Jesus was really alive, he said, "My _____ and my _____."
- John 20:29** Who did Jesus say are blessed?
- John 20:30-31** Jesus did many other things not recorded in John's gospel. Why did John write his gospel?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ arose from the dead and showed Himself to His disciples. In fact, He appeared on earth for a period of forty days after His resurrection (**Acts 1:3**), providing many infallible proofs that He is alive. He even appeared to more than 500 people at once (see **1 Cor. 15:3-7**).

The resurrection of Jesus is one of the best-documented facts in human history. In fact, there is *"more evidence that Jesus rose from the dead than there is that Julius Caesar ever lived or that Alexander the Great died at the age of thirty-three."*²

Jesus died on the cross to pay the price for your sin and He rose from the dead to prove that He is God and can be trusted. If you've never trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, please do it now. If you're already saved, thank God that Jesus arose from the dead.

Project: Memorize **John 20:21**. Look for opportunities this week to tell other about Jesus' resurrection.

² *The Reason for My Hope*, Copyright © 2013, William F. Graham, Jr., p. 82.

Fish, Forgiveness, and Faithfulness

What on earth do fish, forgiveness, and faithfulness have in common? You will find that they all play a part in the last chapter of the Gospel of John.

Jesus was betrayed by Judas, arrested by the Jews, put through the mockery of several trials, pronounced innocent by Pilate, and finally crucified by the Romans. He died on the cross and was buried. In last week's lesson we learned that Jesus arose from the dead and was seen by many people after He came back to life.

Jesus remained on earth for forty days after His resurrection (**Acts 1:3**), during which time He appeared to many different people (see **1 Cor. 15:3-7**). In this week's lesson you will learn about one of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. You'll also find out about fish, forgiveness, and faithfulness. Read **John 21**.

John 21:1 Where did Jesus show Himself to the disciples?

The Sea of Tiberias is another name for the **Sea of Galilee** (see the **Map of Israel** on page 6).

John 21:2-3 What did Peter and the others do?

John 21:4 Who was standing on the shore?

Did they recognize Him?

John 21:5 What did Jesus ask them?

John 21:6 What happened when they did what Jesus said?

John 21:7 What did John ("*that disciple whom Jesus loved*") realize?

- John 21:8** Peter swam ashore while the other disciples brought the boat to shore, dragging the net.
- John 21:9** What did they find when they got ashore?
- John 21:10-11** What did Jesus tell them to do?
How many fish did they catch?
- John 21:12** Jesus invited them to eat. Why didn't they ask Him who He was?
- John 21:13-14** Jesus and His disciples ate together. The fact that Jesus ate proved He wasn't just a spirit or a vision.
- John 21:15-17** What did Jesus ask Peter?
What did He tell Peter to do?

Why do you think Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him? Remember that Peter denied Jesus three times, so this gave Peter three opportunities to make up for his denials.

The word "love" can be used many different ways (for example, "I love my wife" and "I love cheeseburgers" have two very different meanings). Four different Greek words are translated "love" in the New Testament. In verses 15-16, Jesus asked Peter twice if he loved Him, using the Greek word *agape* (God's kind of perfect, complete and unselfish love). Both times, Peter responded with the Greek word *phileo*, which means fondness, friendship, and affection. In verse 17, Jesus used Peter's word, *phileo*. Peter was grieved, realizing that the Lord understood his uncertainty and weakness. Peter again said he loved (*phileo*) Jesus.

Jesus forgave Peter, giving him the task of feeding His sheep.

- John 21:18** What did Jesus tell Peter?

John 21:19 Jesus foretold Peter’s death by crucifixion, which occurred 35 years later. He told Peter to follow Him.

John 21:20-21 Rather than following Jesus, what did Peter do?

Peter asked Jesus if John would also die a martyr’s death.

John 21:22 Jesus told Peter that John’s fate was none of his business, and told Peter: “_____ thou _____.”

John 21:23 Because of Jesus’ statement, some people believed John would not die before Jesus returned. John made it clear that was **not** what Jesus said.

John 21:24 John identified himself as the writer of this book.

John 21:25 What did John say about all of Jesus’ works?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus forgave Peter for his denials and He gave Peter a job to do: to feed His sheep and follow Him. When Peter got distracted from that task by focusing on John, Jesus told him emphatically: “You, follow me!”

If you’ve failed Jesus somehow in the past and that has crippled you from serving the Lord, remember Peter. Jesus forgave him and put him back to work. Jesus offers you forgiveness and wants you to get back to work on the tasks He has given you.

When other people distract you or get in your way, keep your focus on Jesus. The Lord doesn’t give us all the same tasks, responsibilities, or burdens, but He expects us **all** to be faithful.

Confess your sins, get back to work for the Lord, and keep your eyes on Jesus Christ (not other believers).

Project: Pick up a *Sunday School Member Quarterly* for the new quarter so you can begin the **Daily Bible Readings** on Monday.