

slans 1: 23, that commission was finally carried out.

Verse 49. *The promise of the Father* pertained to the outpouring of the Spirit, and it had been made in Joel 2: 28-32. The exact date of that event was not stated to them, hence it was necessary to tarry in Jerusalem until it came. *Be endued* is from *enduno*, and means "to be clothed with." *Power* is from *DUNAMIS*, and means might or strength. This qualification was to be upon the apostles so they would be able to "preach the Gospel to every creature," as Mark 16: 15 words it. This is why it must be said that none but the apostles were able to carry out the "Great Commission."

Verse 50. Mathew says nothing about the ascension; Mark merely mentions it, and our passage precedes it with the name of the location, which was Bethany, the home town of Lazarus and his sisters (John 11: 1).

Verse 51. Before starting his journey toward heaven, Jesus lifted up his hands to bless the apostles, thereby adding dignity and solemnity to it. *He was carried up*. Jesus could have soared through space independent of any visible vehicle, but this phrase indicates He did not do so. Acts 1: 9 states "a cloud received Him out of their sight."

Verse 52. *They worshiped Him*. This was after He had disappeared, which reminds us of the various meanings of the word "worship." (See the note at Matthew 2: 2.) *The great joy* was not over the disappearance of Jesus, of course, but for the assurances of the angels that are recorded in Acts 1: 11.

Verse 53. The temple was the headquarters of the Jewish system, and the place where the national worship was conducted. It was natural for them to be spending the time at that place, waiting for the coming of the power promised by Jesus. Their activities consisted in praising and blessing God, because they believed He was the One "From whom all blessings flow."

### JOHN 1

Verse 1. *In the beginning*. It should be asked, beginning of what? The almost universal answer would be, "the beginning of time." That answer would be wrong, not only from the context, but also because time never had a beginning any more than did God. The Bible makes no distinction between "time" and "eternity." The sec-

ond word occurs once in the Bible (Isaiah 57: 15), and the definition is, "duration," and that quality belongs to the word "time" as well. The popular notion is that "time" means the period before the judgment day, and "eternity" means the period afterward; the Bible makes no such distinction. The English word "time" occurs several times in the New Testament, and it comes from 12 different Greek words, but in no single place is it used as an abstract name of the space this side of the day of judgment, as distinguished from that afterwards. In the Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament, the first three words of Genesis are exactly the same as the original for the italicized words in this paragraph, and have exactly the same meaning. The reader should consult the first paragraph in volume 1 of the Old Testament Commentary.

The entire context shows the writer is considering the work of creation of the heavens and the earth, which is the subject of Genesis first chapter. The Being whom we call the Son of God was in existence before the creation of the universe, but He is here designated as the *Word*. *The Word was God* is said on the basis that God is the family name of the Deity, hence any member of that family would rightfully take that name, just as any member of the Smith family is a Smith. That is why Jesus is called God in Isaiah 9: 6; Matthew 19: 17; Acts 20: 28. And it explains why the terms "church of Christ" and "church of God" means the same, and are used interchangeably in the New Testament.

Verse 2. This verse does not change the meaning of the preceding one, but it is a significant passage, showing that while the term "God" applies to each of the Beings considered, yet they are to be understood as two separate personalities, else one of them could not be "with" the other.

Verse 3. The pronoun *him* means the Word of verse 1, and whom we know as the Son in the New Testament. *All things were made by Him*. That accounts for the plural pronoun "us" in Genesis 1: 26; 3: 22; 11: 7. In all of the domain of creation, providence and redemption, God the Father and God the Son, worked together in perfect unison although they are separate personalities.

Verse 4. A careful attention to the language of this book, will show us that John was especially impressed with the divine character of Christ,

and that He has been present, either apparently or otherwise, in all of the movements and influences pertaining to the works of God. *In him was life*, then, applies from the very "beginning" which is explained above. When God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of *life*, the Word contributed to that life. Of course, the writer is not especially thinking of that fact as he writes this verse, but is viewing the subject more directly as it pertains to His influence upon the spiritual lives of men as he lived upon the earth. Thus we hear Jesus saying, "I am the light of the world" (John 8: 12).

Verse 5. *The light shineth* refers to the general favors of a spiritual character that Christ has offered to the world. What John says about the attitude of men in darkness toward the light has been and always will be true. (See chapter 3: 19, 20.) *Comprehended* is from KATALAMBANO, and Thayer defines it, "To lay hold of so as to make one's own, to obtain, to attain; to appropriate." The thought is that even though the Lord has offered the benefits of divine enlightenment to the darkened world, the men groping in darkness (as a rule) refuse to take advantage of the light.

Verse 6. The preceding 5 verses may be considered as John's preface to his account of the Gospel. The importance of the light of heaven, as it was to be shed on the world by the personal life of Christ, was of such great proportions, that God deemed it well to send a forerunner among men, to prepare a people for the reception of the Light. That man's name was John (the Baptist).

Verse 7. It is customary, when some notable person is about to appear before an audience, for another to present or introduce him. And even this temporary speaker is supposed to be a man of some importance. He will usually make a brief reference to the timeliness of the subject to be discussed before the audience, and always bears testimony of the qualifications of the speaker to handle the matter. Likewise, it is stated that the forerunner of the Light bore witness of Him, and the purpose stated is, *that all men through him might believe.*

Verse 8. *He was not that light.* John was always attentive to keep the people informed about his relation to Christ in his work, and did not want them to confuse the one with the other. (See verses 15, 20, 27.)

Verse 9. The spiritual light that Christ had to offer was for the whole mass of mankind, not just for the Jews or any other special group. The word *world* is from *kosmos*, and with the exception of chapter 9: 32, every occurrence of the word "world" in this book is from that Greek word. It has a wide range of meanings, but the one that Thayer gives for its most general application is, "The inhabitants of the earth."

Verse 10. *He was in the world*, means he was among mankind as a citizen. *Knew* is from *ginosko*, and Thayer's first and "universal" definition is, "To learn to know, get a knowledge of; passive, to become known." Robinson defines it in virtually the same words. We might recognize a certain man to be John Doe, and yet not know, or care to know much about him. In that way the people of the world did not care to know much about Christ. (See the definition of *comprehended* in verse 5.) *The world (mankind) was made* (caused to be) *by him*. The words in parentheses are according to lexicon definitions. Verse 3 declares that all things were made by Him; also the definition of "us" in that verse is important and should be consulted again by the reader.

Verse 11. *Came unto his own.* Luke 1: 17 says of John that he was to precede Christ, "To make ready a people prepared for the Lord." These people were Jews, and had been all of their lives, but had to be reformed before they could become a part of the "people prepared for the Lord." That is why chapter 3: 25 makes a distinction between the Jews as such, and the disciples of John. *Own received him not.* The same "own" is meant in both instances in this verse. The meaning is, that the disciples of John as a group did not receive Jesus. According to Matthew 3: 5, 6; Mark 1: 5, great multitudes from the regions named were baptized by John. However, according to Acts 1: 15, only about 120 disciples, which would include the ones made by both John and Christ, were accounted for on that day of Pentecost. This explains the words *received him not*, stated in verse 11.

Verse 12. *As many as received him.* There is a familiar saying, "All rules may have some exceptions." In the preceding verse we learned that the disciples of John, as a group, rejected Christ. That was the "rule," and the exception is indicated by the italicized words here. For instance, the apostles

had all been baptized by John, and were prepared for the work of Christ as soon as He called upon them. (See the comments at Matthew 9: 9.) Hence the apostles, at least, were among "his own" who "received him." *Power* is from *EXOUSIA*, and its first meaning is, "right or privilege." *Sons of God* or children of God, is a term denoting family relations. While Jesus was on earth with the apostles, the spiritual family of God had not been formed. But as soon as that was done (which was on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2), all of the faithful disciples of both John and Christ became "charter members" of the new family, and in that sense they became children of God.

Verse 13. People became members of the Mosaic system by fleshly conception and birth. Being born into the spiritual family of God is accomplished according to His will, that was made known through the Gospel of Christ. However, the persons specifically referred to at first in the present passage, were those who had been baptized by John. The principles involved in their birth, though, were the same as pertain to all others who afterward were to become members of the divine family. John's disciples were baptized upon their repentance, after having believed on Him (which should come after him, Acts 19: 4), while all others were to be baptized upon believing on Him who has come.

Verse 14. The *Word* was wholly spiritual until the time for God's great "will" (Hebrews 10: 7, 9) to be carried out, the purpose of which was to have a Son begotten by His own bodily vitality, but clothed upon by the flesh, so that He could become a complete sacrifice for sin. (See the comments on Luke 1: 34, 35.) *Full of grace and truth* denotes that through Christ we are furnished completely in those blessings.

Verse 15. *Of whom I spake*. (See Matthew 3: 11; Mark 1: 7; Luke 3: 16.) The word *before* is used twice, but it is from different Greek originals. The first means before in the sense of being previous; therefore it denotes being before in the sense of rank or importance. The second means previous in time, or in any succession of things. John's reasoning is based on the priority of Christ. Since He existed before John did, he (John) felt that he ought to accord to Him the place of seniority. Christ was six months younger than John in the flesh, but

existed before the beginning of the world spiritually.

Verse 16. *Grace for grace* is the outstanding phrase in this verse. *For* is from *ANTI*, and Thayer explains it to mean, "grace (or favor) succeeding grace perpetually, i. e., the richest abundance of grace, John 1: 16."

Verse 17. The law of Moses was truthful, and many favors were bestowed on the Jews by it. But in contrast, the system given by Jesus Christ was far superior, because it bestowed one favor upon another in more complete measure, as the preceding verse with its comments shows.

Verse 18. No man with fleshly eyes has ever seen God, for that would have caused his death (Exodus 33: 20). Yet God wished to give man some kind of glimpse at Him that he could endure, hence the Son of God came among man in the form of flesh, who then declared, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14: 9).

Verse 19. For comments on *priests and Levites*, see at Luke 10: 31, 32.

Verse 20. The messengers the Jews sent to John asked him about his identity. He was the most unusual person who had come among them in that generation, and it had raised questions and suggestions in connection with some historic characters of the Old Testament. Many knew it was predicted that *the Christ* (the Anointed) was to come into the world, and perhaps John was that person. The inquiry was doubtless prompted by both curiosity and genuine interest. *Confessed* often implies some unfavorable charge having been made; it does not in this case. The first definition of the original shows it to mean simply, "to declare." It had been the attitude of John all along, to be humble and to show deep respect for the One who was to follow him, hence he wished to leave no uncertainty as to his position.

Verse 21. The inquirers became specific in their questioning. By *Elias*, they meant the person predicted in Malachi 4: 5. *That prophet* was their reference to a prediction of Moses in Deuteronomy 18: 15-20. To all of these questions, John gave a negative answer which left the inquirers without the desired information.

Verse 22. The negative answers did not furnish these messengers with a satisfactory report to take back with them. They insisted that John take the affirmative line and give them a specific answer as to his identity.

Everyone knew the personal and family name of John, and hence this inquiry did not pertain to that. What the messengers wanted to know pertained to his connection with the vital affairs of the Jews.

Verse 23. John's answer must have been a surprise to these men, for he had nothing to say about himself personally. *The voice of one*, etc., was to direct their attention to what he was saying to the people in the wilderness, and not to anything pertaining to him as an individual. He verified that "voice" by referring to a prediction of Esaias (Isalah), chapter 40: 3, 4, of that prophet's book.

Verse 24. The Pharisees were a prominent sect of the Jews in the time of Christ, and they had been so for several years before. They were very formal, and made great pretensions to righteousness. For a more extended description of them, with the Sadducees, see the notes at Matthew 16: 12.

Verse 25. It is uncertain as to when the practice of baptism began among the Jews. History reveals that it became a part of the ceremonies that introduced Gentile proselytes into the religion of the Jews, and in some particulars admitted them to the privileges of the same. But since those cases were performed upon Gentiles only, and John performed his baptism on Jews only (Luke 1: 16), the Pharisees thought the work he was doing was for the purpose of introducing some new system (which was true). And such a radical movement, as they thought, should properly be initiated by some note-worthy person, such as the ones they named to John.

Verse 26. John did not say anything to lessen the importance of his work, neither did he wish them to think he regarded it as the most important. Hence he stated that his ceremony consisted of water baptism only. He further told them that an unknown (to them) person was standing among them.

Verse 27. See comments at verse 15.

Verse 28. *These things* means the conversations just reported. There is some uncertainty with the works of reference, as to the exact identity of Bethabara, but all agree that it was a town on the east shore of the Jordan, near a spot where John was baptizing at that particular period in his work.

Verse 29. *The next day* means the day after the conversations mentioned above. John saw Jesus coming to-

wards them, and he recognized him from the events recorded in verse 33. *Behold the Lamb of God*. This should be understood as John's presentation of Jesus to his (John's) disciples, and his speech corresponds with the opening of the sheepfold in chapter 10: 3. *Taketh* is translated "beareth" in the margin, and the lexicon agrees with it. The whole sentence is worded in view of the use made of the scapegoat to "bear upon him" the iniquities of the congregation of Israel (Leviticus 16: 22). Yes, Jesus became the scapegoat for the whole world, but that does not relieve sinners of their personal obligation to appropriate the benefits of that arrangement by proper conduct of life. The ceremony with the scapegoat was for the congregation as a whole, but the individual members of the congregation had their personal duties to perform in order to benefit by the national sacrifice. Likewise, men have their individual duties to obey, in order to obtain any benefit from Christ's sacrifice.

Verse 30. This is the same as verse 15.

Verse 31. John knew some person was to come among the people of Israel, but did not know what particular man it was. He was given a cue (stated in verse 33) whereby he would have the promised one pointed out, and it was to take place while performing an act of baptism. *Therefore* signifies that because of the part water baptism was to play, John engaged in that kind of baptism, as well as to be preparing a people for that special One.

Verse 32. Luke 3: 22 says the Spirit descended in a *bodily shape* like a dove, while the other three records say the Spirit *descended like a dove*. The point is in bringing out the idea that the Spirit had to be in some visible form, in order that it could be seen by John. Not only did John see this form descend, but it alighted on Him and remained for the occasion.

Verse 33. *And I knew him not*. John means that up to that instant he did not know this person as the promised Messiah, and the One for whom he was baptizing penitent Jews. There was to be no mistake, or confusion caused by a mere incident. It might not be regarded so strange for a dove to alight momentarily, but such a timid creature would not ordinarily be seen "remaining" on the head of a man. Hence that item was added to the circumstance to give it the force of evidence. Just how long before this



verse it was that the baptism had taken place, we do not know; but it was prior to the "presentation" of verse 29.

Verse 34. After John *saw* the evidence so strangely demonstrated, he became a witness in person. The subject of his testimony was the great fact that the person he baptized under such unusual circumstances, was the Son of God.

Verse 35. This was the *next day* after the presentation in verse 29.

Verse 36. *The Lamb of God*. This phrase was significant especially to the Jews, because they were familiar with the national practice of offering animal sacrifices.

Verse 37. The two *disciples* were the ones mentioned in verse 35, to whom John repeated his presentation phrase in verse 36.

Verse 38. *Saw them following*. These disciples had hitherto been disciples of John. He had told his converts they should believe on the one who was to come. Now that One was in sight, and when John bade his disciples to behold Him, it meant to them that from then on they would desire to be in His company. That is why they asked Jesus where he dwelled, which meant for the time being, for the permanent residence of Jesus had been established in Capernaum (Matthew 4: 13).

Verse 39. Jesus invited the disciples to go with him and see where he was staying. As it was about the tenth hour (our 4 o'clock), they visited the rest of the day.

Verse 40. One of the two evening guests of Jesus was Andrew, brother of Peter. He had been a disciple of John, but upon introduction to Jesus, followed Him.

Verse 41. *First* is from *PROTOS* according to the commonly-used Greek text, but Moffatt says it is really from *PROI*. Thayer's definition of that word is, "in the morning, early," and it is so translated in Matthew 16: 3, and Moffatt so renders it in our verse, making it read, "In the morning," as being the time when Andrew went in search of his brother Peter. That is a reasonable conclusion, for we have seen that it was near the end of the day when the two disciples made their call upon Jesus with whom they spent the rest of the day. Then early the next morning, Andrew went in search of his brother, and told him the good news of finding the Messiah.

Verse 42. This verse corresponds in thought (but not necessarily in chronological order) with Matthew 16: 18. In that passage Jesus is reported to have said, "Thou art Peter," while in our present verse he said, "Thou shalt be called Cephas." The two statements are identical in thought, because the Greek words for "Cephas" and "stone" have virtually the same definition.

Verses 43, 44. *Day following* means the day after the one on which Jesus had the conversation with Peter. Jesus left his place of lodging and started to go to Galilee. Upon arriving there he came to the home town of Andrew and Peter. There Jesus met Philip who was told to follow Him, and he became one of the 12 apostles.

Verse 45. I have consulted half a dozen standard works of reference, and all of them say Nathanael was another name for Bartholomew, one of the apostles. The information will be useful when we get to verse 51. Philip told Nathanael the news of finding the person whom the prophets and Moses had predicted. This announcement would have been unmingled good news for Nathanael, had it stopped there. But Philip next specified the person he meant, by saying he was *Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph*.

Verse 46. The information almost dashed the interest of Nathanael, for Nazareth was not a very popular town. The question Nathanael asked was not prompted by prejudice as against some territory besides his own, for he was himself a Galilean. The origin of the lowly repute of that district is not known with certainty. Philip made a fair and logical reply to the question; *come and see*. He believed (and rightly), that no one could come under the influence of Jesus without being convinced that He is not only a "good thing," but the best that ever lived among men.

Verse 47. *Guile* means "deceit," and Jesus described Nathanael as an Israelite who was free from that evil. He made that announcement as Nathanael approached, but after he was near enough to hear it.

Verse 48. Nathanael was surprised that Jesus knew him, even though they were in the bodily presence of each other. Then his astonishment was increased when Jesus mentioned an apparently trivial circumstance such as standing under a fig tree. If Jesus knew of that circumstance while not present nor in sight of it, it would

prove Him to be the very person whom Philip described in verse 45.

Verse 49. Upon the aforesaid evidence, Nathanael acknowledged Jesus to be all He had claimed to be, namely, the *Son of God* and *King of Israel*.

Verse 50. Jesus made a remark about Nathanael's belief in Him, based on the incident of relating an experience he thought no one knew. He then notified him that he was destined to see greater things than such circumstances.

Verse 51. This verse names the "greater things" referred to in the preceding one. *Upon* is from *ἐπὶ*, and Greenfield defines it to mean, "On account of, because of." This prediction was fulfilled at the ascension of Jesus in Acts 1: 9-11. Here the "two men" were angels, and they were seen coming down in the sight of the apostles (of whom Nathanael was one, verse 45). Their descending from heaven, then ascending thereto again, was brought about by the ascension of Jesus. They conducted this mission "upon" or "on account of" the performance of the Son of Man who had just disappeared in a cloud.

## JOHN 2

Verse 1. *Third day* means after the conversation with Nathanael in the preceding chapter. Cana was a town not far from Capernaum, and it was the home of the apostle Nathanael (chapter 21: 2). The text does not state whether the mother of Jesus was there by personal invitation, or that she was a relative of the parties.

Verse 2. The disciples of Jesus would mean those he had made after entering upon his personal ministry. It was appropriate to invite the disciples along with the Master.

Verse 3. *Wanted* is from *ἠστερέω*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "To fall, be wanting." It indicates that they had wine provided in the beginning of the feast, but the supply had run out. The mother of Jesus very naturally appealed to her son to help them out of their embarrassment.

Verse 4. Such an appeal indicated that she expected Jesus to perform some kind of a miracle, since the occasion was too far advanced to go to a market. But Jesus had not intended launching upon his public miraculous works in full scale degree yet. Moffatt renders the question Jesus asked, "What have you to do with me?" It was a mild protest against her attempt

to press Him into his work before he was ready.

Verse 5. The statement of Jesus to his mother must not have been very severe, and there was doubtless something in the conversation (not recorded) that indicated a willingness on the part of Jesus to help the group out of their difficulty. Mary instructed them to follow whatever directions He gave to them.

Verse 6. Moffatt says these waterpots could hold about twenty gallons each.

Verse 7. It required no miraculous power to fill the pots with water, hence Jesus bade the attendants do that. The lesson of human cooperation with the Lord is taught frequently throughout the Bible, showing that He will not do for us what we can do for ourselves. Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from death, but commanded the people to feed her (Mark 5: 43). He brought Lazarus from the grave, but told the people to remove the grave clothes (John 11: 44).

Verse 8. *Governor* in this verse, and *ruler* in the next, are from *ἀρχιτετακνίνος*, and Thayer defines it, "The superintendent of a dining-room, a table-master." He then explains it as follows: "It was his duty to place in order the tables and couches, arrange the courses, taste the food and wine beforehand, etc." That is why Jesus told them to bear this wine to the governor of the feast.

Verse 9. The foregoing information explains why the ruler of the feast tasted the wine. He thought it had been provided by the bridegroom for the use of his guests. He was so well pleased with it that he decided to compliment the host.

Verse 10. When a man is drunk, his mind is rendered dull so that his ability to make distinctions is weakened. Hence an entertainer would reserve his worst wine until the guests were drunk, after which they would not know the difference. Attempts have been made by some commentators to explain away the seeming objection to this circumstance, by referring to the various kinds of wine that were made in Palestine. They explain that some varieties were not as strong as others, and that when men are said to be drunk on it, it only means they are filled to the point of being stupefied. But the theory does not agree with the original language. *Drunk* is from *μέθυσκο*, which has some variety of forms in the Greek New Testa-

ment, but all have virtually the same meaning. Thayer defines the word, "To intoxicate, make drunk; to get drunk, become intoxicated." Strong defines it, "To drink to intoxication, i. e., get drunk." Greenfield defines it, "To intoxicate, inebriate, make drunk; passively, to be intoxicated, make drunk." *Good* and *worse* wine are used in the sense of superior and inferior, meaning that after wine has been fully "aged," it is more satisfactory. Of course it would be no difficult task for Jesus to put this water through all the processes that nature does in bringing it to a state of clarification.

The attempts of friends of the Bible to meet the so-called objection to this event by appealing to the meaning of the word "drunk," are not justified by the original Greek words. But the whole effort is unnecessary, for Jesus did not claim to be attempting a general reformation of the whole world all at once. (There is no evidence that the related guests were disciples either of John or Jesus.) He once told his disciples, even, that he had many things to say to them which they could not bear then (chapter 16: 12), and certainly the world in general was not yet ready for the more advanced teaching on the subject of wine as a beverage. Another thing to note in the case, is that it does not say that a single person present had actually drunk enough to make him intoxicated. In those days, people did not have any process of preserving grape juice unfermented, hence the various passages on the subject only rule against drinking enough of the wine to become drunk. (See Ephesians 5: 18; 1 Timothy 3: 3, 8; Titus 1: 7.)

Verse 11. Jesus had not planned to open his public work of performing miracles yet (verse 4), but the appeal of his mother prompted him to act. It is noteworthy that the "beginning of miracles" was enacted in the district where he was brought up. *Disciples believed on Him*. This does not denote they did not believe previously, for they could not have become disciples of Jesus without first believing; but their faith grew.

Verse 12. Jesus went on down to the city that he had adopted as a residence (Matthew 4: 13), which was not far from Cana where he had performed his first miracle. Note that his *brethren* and *disciples* are mentioned in the same sentence, which refutes the Romish theory that the "brethren" of

Christ always means his disciples. The doctrine is used to support their unscriptural notion of the perpetual virginity of His mother.

Verse 13. John's record of the Gospel is the only one of the four that refers to all the passovers Jesus attended while on earth. These events give us the Biblical basis for saying that His earthly ministry lasted between three and four years. The present verse gives the first one, and the next is in chapter 5: 1.

Verses 14-16. See notes on Matthew 21: 12, 13.

Verse 17. The saying referred to is recorded in Psalms 69: 9. See my comments on that verse in volume 3 of the Old Testament Commentary.

Verse 18. The Jews were questioning the right of Jesus to "take the law into his own hands," so to speak, and inflict this physical punishment on the dealers in necessary articles for the service of God. They challenged Him to stake his standing as an unusual person by uttering some *sign*, which means some kind of event that was to come.

Verse 19. The Jews pretended to think Jesus meant the literal temple that was the capitol of their national service. But their conversation with Pilate, recorded in Matthew 27: 62, 63, shows they fully understood what temple was meant.

Verse 20. *Forty and six years* was the length of time that Herod had used in *building* (remodeling) the temple. But even if Jesus had meant that structure, it would not have been any more difficult a task for him to have reconstructed it in three days, than to perform the other miracles recorded.

Verse 21. Jesus compared his fleshly body to a temple because it was the structure in which his spirit was dwelling. Paul makes the same comparison in 1 Corinthians 6: 19 and 12: 12-26.

Verse 22. *Believed the scripture* refers to the prediction in the Old Testament that Jesus was to rise from the dead the third day. That prediction is recorded in Psalms 16: 9, 10, and commented upon by Peter in his discourse in Acts 2: 25-27.

Verse 23. This is still the first passover, mentioned in verse 13. *Believed when they saw the miracles*. That was the primary reason why Jesus per-

formed the miracles according to chapter 20: 30, 31.

Verse 24. *Commit* is from *PISTEVO*, and as used in this verse, it means to put trust in another. Jesus did not put any confidence in mankind in general, and the reason is stated in the next verse.

Verse 25. Jesus knew all about the innermost thoughts of men, and regarded them as unreliable; he knew they were not to be trusted.

### JOHN 3

Verse 1. *Ruler* is from *ARCHON*, which Thayer defines with the simple words, "A ruler, commander, chief, leader." I have examined four other lexicons, and they give virtually the same definition. It does not necessarily mean one with official authority, although it is so used in some cases. It generally means a man of outstanding prestige among the people, in whatever position he may be found; whether religious or civil, official or unofficial; a person of much influence. Nicodemus was thus respected because of these qualities, and not merely because he was a member of the Sanhedrin. Being a Pharisee, in religion, he occupied a noted position in that group. See the long note at Matthew 16: 12 for the description of the Pharisees.

Verse 2. The scripture does not even intimate why Nicodemus chose the nighttime for his visit with Jesus, hence it would be speculation for me to attempt an explanation. Had it been worth-while for us to know the reason, doubtless John would have been inspired to tell us. However, there are indications that he left the presence of Jesus with a favorable attitude toward him and his disciples. (See chapter 7: 50, 51; 19: 39.) *Rabbi* is a Greek word, and has been transferred into the text of the New Testament by the King James translators in its original form. Thayer defines it, "my great one, my honorable sir." It has been used as a proper noun 8 times, and translated by the simple term "master" 9 times. The complimentary things Nicodemus said were not mere flattery, for he gave a logical reason for his statement. In truth, the very reason he gave for saying that Jesus was from God, was the one that John states to be the purpose for performing the miracles (chapter 20: 30, 31).

Verse 3. Baptism, which is the final act in the process of the spiritual

birth, is not the only important subject connected with salvation under the Gospel Dispensation, yet it is the principal one considered in this conversation with Nicodemus; there is a good reason for it. The Jews placed much of their dependence upon their fleshly birth, being in the blood line from Abraham (Matthew 3: 9), which fact entitled them to be members of the Jewish Dispensation of religion. The text does not give us any of the introductory conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, further than the complimentary words of this verse. Perhaps that is all that was said to begin with, but Jesus knew what was in his mind (chapter 2: 25), and hence the following conversation was on the subject uppermost in the mind of this Jewish teacher. He evidently thought his birth through the blood line from Abraham would entitle him to consideration in connection with the kingdom that Jesus was reported as being on earth to set up. Jesus took that idea away by a sweeping statement that meant his fleshly birth would not be even considered as a factor in entering the kingdom of heaven. *See* is from the Greek word *emo*, which has such a wide range of meanings that space would forbid attempting to quote all of them. The context has to be considered in each case to determine its specific meaning. The definitions of both Thayer and Robinson that apply in this verse and others like it, are condensed to the simple phrase, "To experience." A sinner may see the church as an institution of which he is not a member, but he cannot have the experience as a member without being *born again*.

Verse 4. With a fleshly birth still in mind, Nicodemus asked the question stated in this verse. He evidently was not a believer in the theory of "Transmigration of souls" (Matthew 14: 2), or he would not have thought that even that kind of a new birth would be impossible, the only difference being the said theory did not teach that a man would enter his mother's womb, but that of another woman.

Verse 5. The necessity of a new birth in general was the form in which Jesus opened up this subject to Nicodemus; He then entered more into the details of the process. The Greek New Testament uses the same word in the process of reproduction, whether the time of begetting or that of the birth is considered. The word is *GENNAO*,



and Thayer gives us the two definitions, "To be begotten; to be born." If the entire process is referred to in our language, it is proper to use the word "born," such as saying a child was born to Mr. and Mrs. John Doe. But if the parents are referred to separately, the correct form of speech is that a child is begotten by his father, and born of his mother. Having only the one Greek word on the subject, the King James translators often give us "born" when it should have been "begotten." A more exact wording of our passage would be, a man must be born of the water, having been begotten by the Spirit. This begetting takes place when a man believes the words of the Spirit (1 John 5: 1), because that word is the seed (of reproduction) of the kingdom (1 Peter 1: 23). After a man believes this word, he is then put under the water, and as he comes out of it he is being born of that water, because the literal meaning of "being born" is, "to come out of." The person has then been born into the kingdom of God.

Verse 6. This verse is a simple statement of the difference between things fleshly and things spiritual. The kind of birth Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of is fleshly only, while he was speaking of a spiritual birth. It is true the fleshly body must be acted upon even in the spiritual birth, but that is because the inner man that is being renewed or regenerated, is living within the fleshly body.

Verse 7. Jesus is still reading the mind of Nicodemus, and sees him in a state of confusion over the things that have been said. He is inclined to question the conclusions that Jesus has presented to him, because he cannot understand all about them. As an argument by way of comparison, Jesus intends to remind Nicodemus that he accepts other conclusions in the domain of his experiences, many of which are as mysterious as this one about a spiritual birth that seems to puzzle him. Yet he will accept them on the strength of the evidences, even though some phases of the cases might seem mysterious. One of those circumstances will be presented in the next verse.

Verse 8. The religious world in general is overwhelmed by erroneous ideas about the Spirit, as it is involved in the process of the new birth. Then in trying to refute those ideas, the friends of truth may go to extremes and invent other notions that

are likewise erroneous. One of such performances is the strain that is put on the present verse, which is only an illustration which Jesus draws from nature, to prove to this bewildered Jew that he is inconsistent in faltering over the new birth just because some features of it may seem mysterious to him, when he will accept the fact that the wind blows, even though he cannot tell (from any evidence of his senses) from where the wind comes nor to where it goes after it passes him. *So is every one* means that every person who is born of the Spirit is supposed to accept the proposition on the evidence of God's teaching, even though some things about it seem strange.

That the passage means just what the common translation makes it say, and that it does not call for some labored interpretation to rescue it from the hand of "sectarians," I shall give the definitions of the original words in Thayer's lexicon for this verse. *Wind* is from *PNEUMA*, and the definition is, "1. a movement of air, (gentle) blast; 2. the wind . . . hence the wind itself, John 3: 8." *Bloweth* is from *PEO*, and the definition is, "To breathe, to blow; of the wind, Matthew 7: 25, 27; Luke 12: 55; John 3: 8; 6: 18, Revelation 7: 1; Acts 27: 40."

Verse 9. Nicodemus was still confused about the subject in general. It is as if he said, "I do not see how all of this can be, or what the action of the wind has to do with the Spirit in the new birth."

Verse 10. The word *master* is from a Greek word that means "teacher." Being a teacher of Israel would not be a reason why he should understand the new birth under the Gospel system, therefore we know that *these things* refers to the subject of the temporal wind that Jesus described in verse 8.

Verse 11. Jesus gives Nicodemus a mild rebuke for stumbling over what was said to him about the things in nature, which were matters that should be accepted as facts by every person who has made any observation.

Verse 12. The only verse that has any *earthly things* in it as far as this conversation is concerned, is verse 8, the one about *the wind*. This again shows that passage refers to the literal wind, and is used to illustrate the point stated in verse 10.

Verse 13. The thought in this verse is that the Son of man had previously

been in Heaven, and hence was in a position to speak on heavenly subjects, such as the new birth. This passage closed up the discussion on the subject of the new birth into the kingdom of God that Jesus was about to set up on the earth.

Verse 14. The account of the serpent is in Numbers 21: 9. There were no curative qualities in the brazen serpent, but those who looked upon it were cured by the Lord as a reward for their faith. The serpent was placed on a pole so all could see it.

Verse 15. The literal sight of Jesus on the cross is not what saves sinners, for only a few men of the world could see it. Hence the Lord makes his comparison on the principle of believing, for the death of the Son of God on the cross will benefit no one who does not have faith in that great sacrifice.

Verse 16. The word *so* is from *houto*, and means, "in such a manner." The point is not how much God loved the world, but what kind of love He had. The answer is stated by telling how God manifested it, which was by the sacrifice He made for the sins of the world. God is the maker and owner of all that is in the universe, and no sacrifice could have been so costly that He would have been unable to produce it. But the value of the sacrifice (from the standpoint of its price or cost) is not the question. It is the fact that God gave up His *only begotten* Son. There was only one being in the universe who possessed that qualification. The subject is explained in detail at Luke 1: 35, and I urge the reader to see and carefully consider that place, then come back to the present paragraph. *Perish* and *everlasting life* are put as alternatives for the responsible members of the world. There is no middle ground; every creature that God has formed is destined to experience one or the other of these lots endlessly, after the judgment.

Verse 17. The world was all under the guilt of unbelief before Jesus came into it (Romans 11: 32), therefore his coming was not for the purpose of pronouncing condemnation upon it; that had already been done. But the condition called for something to counteract it, and the Son of God was sent among mankind for that purpose.

Verse 18. *He that believeth on him is not condemned*, since faith in Christ leads to obedience which lifts the condemnation from him. (See Romans 8:

1.) *He that believeth not is condemned already*. That is because it leaves him in the state he was in before Jesus came into the world. (See the preceding verse.)

Verse 19. The condemnation that rests upon the world is not an arbitrary decree of God, but is based on the truth that men prefer darkness to light. The reason for their unwise choice is in their wanton manner of life, which is an evil one.

Verse 20. It is a bad indication when men prefer darkness to light, for it shows they are practicing evil deeds. If they were to operate under the light, it would expose them and show them to be guilty of evil practices.

Verse 21. On the other hand, if a man is a lover of truth, he will want his life to be revealed in order to see if it is correct. A sincere man, even though he may be in error, will wish to be sure of himself, and he knows he can never be certain as to what is right, except as his conduct is regulated by the divine truth.

Verse 22. Jesus had been in Jerusalem which is in the province of Judea. *Land of Judea* means the rural or outlying territory of the district. The purpose for going out there is indicated by the statement that he tarried with his disciples and baptized, all of which could be conveniently accomplished in the country.

Verse 23. Salim was a town not far west of the Jordan, and near it was a smaller place called Aenon. John the Baptist made that his headquarters at one time, because his business was to baptize people, and there was *much water* in that locality. According to some information in Funk and Wagnalls Standard Bible Dictionary, the water supply in that vicinity was in the form of springs.

Verse 24. This is the only place where John mentions the imprisonment of John the Baptist. The manner of the injection of the subject into the story, indicates that John's work was about over, and that his imprisonment was in the near future.

Verse 25. A distinction is made between *John's disciples* and *the Jews*, although John did not baptize any but Jews (Luke 1: 16). This shows that while all of John's disciples were Jews, not all of the Jews as a nation became his disciples, and hence were not the people whom he prepared for Christ.

Verse 26. This association between John and Jesus, and John's witness

that he bore for Jesus, are recorded in chapter 1: 19-29. *They* denotes John's disciples who are referred to in the preceding verse. They seemed to be concerned because their teacher was not drawing the crowds that Jesus was having.

Verse 27. John was always unselfish, and appeared pleased over any good news about Jesus. Instead of being envious, he always taught that it was expected for Jesus to increase, while he (John) would decrease. He went further and told his disciples that the success of Jesus was given him from Heaven.

Verse 28. John also reminded his disciples that he had previously predicted this very turn of affairs. Such predictions and instructions are in chapter 1: 15, 27.

Verse 29. John continued his exaltation of Jesus and the diminishing of his own work and importance. He did it under the figure of a social custom regarding weddings. The superiority of a bridegroom is manifested by the fact that he it is who possesses the bride. However, the friend of the groom finds satisfaction in hearing the voice and seeing the happiness of the bridegroom. In the illustration, John is the friend and Jesus is the bridegroom, which causes him (John) to have full rejoicing.

Verse 30. John once more makes the prediction that the difference of importance between him and Jesus was to continue and widen.

Verse 31. John was an inspired man, and his teaching was directed by the Holy Spirit. But he was a man only, and his origin was wholly through the natural laws of reproduction. Jesus was both human and divine, and hence John said he was from above. That is why John was to decrease while Jesus was to increase.

Verse 32. As Jesus was from above, he was able to speak from personal knowledge. Notwithstanding, *no man* (comparatively speaking) seemed willing to receive the testimony of such an infallible witness.

Verse 33. *Hath set to his seal* is all from *σφραγιστο*, which Thayer defines at this place, "To confirm, authenticate, place beyond doubt." It means that when a man receives the testimony of a personal witness like Jesus, he is thoroughly convinced that the testimony is from God and must be true.

Verse 34. *Measure* is from *μετρον*,

and Thayer's first definition is, "An instrument for measuring." It means that God did not use any measuring instrument in bestowing the Spirit on his Son. His possession of the Spirit was total; unlimited. From this we may gather further information on the much discussed subject of receiving the Spirit. The fact of John's stating that Christ received it without measure, implies that various measures of it may be given to men. Thus the apostles received that amount required to baptize them, and empower them to bestow spiritual gifts upon Christians. Then those Christians in the days of miracles possessed that measure that enabled them to perform miracles, but not enough of it to transfer it to others. And by all these considerations, we can understand how a person could be in possession of the Holy Spirit, but in a lesser measure than would enable him to perform any miracle. Further comments will be offered on this subject as the various occasions may suggest in our study of the New Testament.

Verse 35. A part of this verse was prospective, for not until Jesus had risen from the dead did God give unto his Son this complete authority. (See Matthew 28: 18.) But the unmeasured possession of the Spirit was given to him at his baptism (chapter 1: 33), and it abided with him throughout his work while on the earth.

Verse 36. For the first part of this verse, see the comments on verses 17-19. For the word *see*, read the comments at verse 3.

#### JOHN 4

Verse 1. *When* is from *hos*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "II. as a particle of time; a, as, when, since." The Lord always knew what men were thinking and saying (chapter 2: 25), so this word means that Jesus did a certain thing because he knew, etc. The report that He knew about was what the Pharisees had been told; namely, that Jesus was making more disciples than John. That report was true, and it harmonized with what John had been telling his audiences about how Jesus was to increase over him.

Verse 2. Things done by the disciples of Jesus and under his supervision, are said to be done by Him. The original word for *disciples* has the nominative inflection, giving it the meaning as if it said, "Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples did."

The validity of baptism never did depend on the one doing the baptizing (except in the case of John the Baptist), therefore it was not necessary for Jesus personally to do this work. His first disciples had been baptized by John, who had come among the Jews to baptize them and prepare a people for the Lord. When Jesus took charge of these people prepared for him, it was proper that they should do the physical work of baptizing the new converts made under the teaching of Jesus. On the same principle, it was proper for the new disciples to assist in the work of baptizing the believers.

Verse 3. Envy is a terrible condition of the mind. The Pharisees did not have any great love for John, although they pretended to be interested in his work (Matthew 3: 7), yet they could not bear to see Jesus having any special success. Rather than come out into an open conflict with them at this time, the Lord decided to leave Judea and go to Galilee, which was the home of his childhood and early manhood.

Verse 4. Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee, which is the reason this verse says *he must needs go through Samaria*.

Verse 5. The history of this transaction of Jacob may be seen in Genesis 33: 19; 42: 22; Joshua 24: 32. When the Israelites took possession of Palestine, the territory later called Samaria was allotted to the sons of Jacob.

Verse 6. Wells were important improvements in ancient times, because it required much manual labor to produce one. Jacob either dug this well, or obtained it otherwise, and left it to his posterity. These wells had a curb extending above the ground for the protection of animals. It was on this curb that Jesus sat in his journey. Being *wearied*. This word is from *κοπιαο*, which Thayer defines, "to grow weary, tired, exhausted." We should always think of the Saviour as possessing a body that was just like ours as far as the laws of the flesh are concerned. It is true that he was the Son of God and possessed miraculous power, but there is not a single instance recorded where he used his supernatural power to relieve his personal needs. In all the trials and necessities of life, he met the circumstances in the same way that other righteous people are expected to do. (See Hebrews 4: 15.) When Jesus became tired from walking, he sat down

to rest for the same reason that other men would do it. It was about noon, so we may expect to see some people coming to the well for water. And since it was this time of the day, the disciples had gone to the city to buy food.

Verse 7. The city of Samaria was the capital of the region of Samaria (mentioned previously in this chapter). It was near this city where the well was located where Jesus was resting. The woman of Samaria was a resident of the city with that name, and she came to the well for water. Jesus was not too tired to use the opportunity for giving this woman some spiritual instructions. He always adapted his teaching to the circumstances of the occasion. Coming to the well for water indicated the woman was needing that necessity of her temporal life, and that would find her mind prepared to appreciate some thoughts on the subject of spiritual water of life. Jesus opened the subject by asking the woman for a drink.

Verse 8. This fact is referred to at verse 6.

Verse 9. The woman was so surprised at the friendliness of Jesus that she seemed to overlook the subject of water for the moment. She expressed herself to Jesus accordingly, giving as the basis of her astonishment the attitude of the Jews toward the Samaritans, that they had no dealings with them. One of the reasons the Jews had such a dislike for the Samaritans, was their inconsistent claims about their relation to the Jewish nation. Josephus gives us a description of this subject in his *Antiquities*, Book 9, Chapter 14, Section 3, as follows: "When they [the Samaritans] see the Jews in prosperity, they pretend that they are changed, and allied to them, and call them kinsmen, as though they were derived from Joseph, and had by that means an original alliance with them. But when they see them falling into a low condition, they say they are no way related to them, and that the Jews have no right to expect any kindness or marks of kindred from them, but they declare that they are sojourners, from other countries."

Verse 10. Jesus did not make any direct reply to the woman's remarks, but continued his own line about water. He went a little farther into the subject, and suggested that she would have been the one to ask for



water, had she realized who it was who was talking to her.

Verse 11. The woman is still thinking of literal drinking water. It was evidently the practice for people to bring their own cord with which to draw water from the well. Seeing that Jesus did not have such, she could not understand how he would perform the act of courtesy for her.

Verse 12. *Art thou greater.* The last word is from *MEGAS*, which has a wide range of meaning. As it is used in this passage it means, "stronger or more able or better equipped." Jacob was certainly as well prepared as anyone need be to get water from this well, for he used it to supply his family and also his cattle. Yet even he had to use some means such as a cord to obtain the water. *Father* is from *PATER*, and Thayer's first definition is, "Generator or male ancestor," and it was in this sense the woman used the word, for the Samaritans claimed to have blood relation with the Jewish race. This was true to a limited extent, which may be learned from 2 Kings 17: 24-33, which is commented upon in volume 2 of the Old Testament Commentary.

Verse 13. We have an excellent example of the proper way to approach a subject figuratively. Jesus did not launch upon the theme with the full comparison, for the woman would not have been able to understand it; instead, he unfolded it little by little. The woman needed only to be reminded that such water as the well furnished would not give permanent relief, but must be drunk of time after time.

Verse 14. The Bible does not contradict itself, and when it may seem to, there is always a fair explanation if we will search for it. Jesus pronounced a blessing on those who hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matthew 5: 6), but here he says that if a man takes a drink of the water He provides, he *shall never thirst*. The word is from *DIPSAO*, and Thayer's first definition of it is, "To suffer thirst; suffer from thirst." A person can have a healthy desire for a drink of water, which will cause him to relish the water and feel satisfied afterward, and yet not have to be in actual suffering for it; such is the meaning of the statement of Jesus. The person who accepts the provision offered by Jesus need never be famished and suffer for the want of a drink, for he will have that well always with him, so that he

may keep his desire constantly satisfied. That is what Jesus meant by the beautiful statement that it will be in him *a well of water, springing up into everlasting life*.

Verse 15. The woman was still somewhat in the dark as to the kind of water Jesus was offering her. She had the idea it had such qualities that it would take the place of that in the well. It is no wonder, then, that she requested the water from Jesus.

Verse 16. Having conducted the figurative comparison to the point where the woman was ready to make some personal application, Jesus concluded to arouse her to a sense of her own moral and spiritual defects. The subject of water will not be mentioned again. Jesus opened the next phase of the lesson by telling the woman to call her husband. This was not because He thought the man should receive some teaching also, for there is no evidence that he was ever called or appeared on the scene. It was the Lord's way of stirring up her conscience.

Verse 17. The woman said she had no husband, and Jesus agreed with her.

Verse 18. In this verse Jesus gave the reason for verifying the woman's statement in the preceding verse. This has been a stumbling block for many who have been in confusion over the Biblical position on the marriage relation. The only marriage "ceremony" that God ever gave for the institution is the fleshly union of one male with one female. That law is stated in Genesis 2: 24, and verified by Jesus in Matthew 19: 5; Mark 10: 6-9, and by Paul in Ephesians 5: 31. But the objector says this woman was thus joined to the sixth man, yet Jesus said he was not her husband. That is because the laws of man came in and required certain ceremonial regulations before a union would be recognized as legal. While the Lord did not originate this ruling, yet He recognized it, and requires his creatures to obey it.

The confusion is caused largely by the term "husband," which is a legal one and not a natural one, and has been used by the translators to distinguish between a man who has complied with the legal regulations for marriage, and one who merely has relations with a woman without having done so. The terms "husband" and "man" are from the one Greek word *ANER*, and mean the same as far as the language is concerned. "Husband" is the wrong word to emphasize in this

passage, for the word "man" would be as correct a translation as the other. So that, it would be just as correct for the verse to be translated, "Thou hast had five men; and he whom thou now hast is not thy man." All of these persons were men, but the one the woman was living with was not hers, because they had not complied with the laws of the land that would give her legal possession of this man. So if the reader will place the emphasis on the words "had" and "hast," which is where it belongs, showing ownership, he will be saved the confusion so prevalent over this subject. (See also my comments on Matthew 19: 5, 6.)

Verse 19. By a prophet the woman meant that Jesus possessed superhuman knowledge, and as such he belonged in the rank of Biblical persons who could interpret spiritual matters. She was convinced of this by what He said concerning her domestic life. To use popular language, she was secretly living with a man "to whom she was not married."

Verse 20. When the woman concluded that Jesus was a Jewish prophet, she also believed he would be informed in all the matters pertaining to the history and religious teaching of the Jews, which explains her remarks in this verse. *Our fathers* means the early ancestors of the Samaritan race and nation. The mountain referred to by the woman was Gerizim, about 25 or 30 miles north of Jerusalem. Smith's Bible Dictionary says, "Gerizim was the site of the Samaritan temple, which was built there after the captivity, in rivalry with the temple at Jerusalem." In the article "Samaritans," the same Bible Dictionary says the following: "The animosity of the Samaritans became more intense than ever. They are said to have done everything in their power to annoy the Jews. Their own temple on Gerizim they considered to be much superior to that at Jerusalem. Toward the mountain, even after the temple on it had fallen, wherever they were they directed their worship. . . . The law (i. e. the five books of Moses) was their sole code; for they rejected every other book in the Jewish canon" [accepted list of books]. This information from the authentic work of reference, explains the woman's reference to the two places of worship, and what the Samaritan "fathers," and the Jewish prophets (of whom she thought Jesus to be one) said about them.

Verse 21. Jesus did not enter into

the controversy between the Samaritans and Jews as to which place was the more important. It was not worth while to do so, because He was going soon to set up a system of worship that would not depend upon any particular spot, geographically speaking, for its genuineness. That is why Jesus said, "*neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem*. Not that men would not be allowed to worship God in those places, but their services would not be accepted on the basis of where they were performed.

Verse 22. The Samaritans rejected most of the Old Testament, which ruled out all of the prophetic writings except the few passages to be found in the five books of Moses. With such a partial basis for their guide, Jesus declared they did not know what they were doing when they professed to perform their services. *Salvation is of the Jews*. Every writer of the Old Testament was a Jew except Job, and he had some of the blood of Abraham in his veins. (See notes on page 351, volume 2 of the Old Testament Commentary.) Since the entire volume of religious revelation from God was given through the Jews, they would certainly know something of the subject. (See Romans 3: 1, 2.)

Verse 23. Notwithstanding this advantage the Jews had, the time was near when all previous modes and places for religious activities were to be replaced with the final system of God, unto which and for which all those forms were instituted among men. The outstanding feature of the new system was to be its spiritual character, in contrast with the formal rituals and material requirements the old law provided.

Verse 24. *God is a Spirit*. This does not mean that He is not a personal God, but his personalities are spiritual, hence He expects the worship offered to him to be spiritual. Such worship would not depend upon literal mountains or walled cities as proper situations in which to perform it satisfactorily to the Lord.

Verse 25. Although the Jews and Samaritans had no dealings with each other, and notwithstanding the latter rejected all of the Old Testament except the five books of Moses, yet they had a belief that a great person known as the Messiah or Christ was to come. This belief would be in harmony with a passage in their own document; namely, the prediction that a prophet was to come like Moses. (See Deuter-

onomy 18: 18-20.) They believed this Messiah was to be a very wise person, who would be able to explain all of the points that pertained to the Scriptures. The woman must have partly suspected Jesus to be that great One, from the wisdom that he had been showing through the conversation. Doubtless she began to think along that line as far back as verse 19, when she recognized him as being a "prophet." But she finally brought Jesus to a personal acknowledgment of his identity by her remark about the Messiah to come.

Verse 26. Jesus made this "good confession" to the woman, that he virtually made later to Pilate (chapter 18: 37), and that others are asked to make of Him.

Verse 27. The disciples marveled for the same reason for which the woman was surprised at the beginning of the conversation recorded in verse 9. There is no evidence they knew anything about her personal character, but they did know she was a Samaritan. The disciples were shocked, evidently, yet their respect for their Teacher held them back from criticizing him.

Verse 28. Having been convinced that the expected Messiah had come, the woman turned into a messenger, and left her original purpose that brought her to the well, and went into the city to speak to the citizens therein.

Verse 29. *Told me all things.* This is obviously an accommodative phrase. We have the conversation on record, and the part of the woman's secret life that Jesus told her is in verse 18. But if he knew the facts about her domestic life, something that she supposed no one but the man and herself knew, then certainly He could read her entire life as if it were an open book. And such a person, in her mind, had all of the essential qualifications of the one to be anointed, which means the Christ.

Verse 30. The people of the city accepted the invitation of the woman to meet the man who had told her so much. The result of the meeting will be seen later.

Verse 31. The disciples had gone to the city to buy food, hence it was natural for them to expect Jesus to eat. Apparently he did not show much interest in the food, after they had made the trip to the city for it, hence their insisting that He should eat.

Verse 32. Doubtless, the arrival of the people from the city, presented another opportunity before Jesus to en-

gage in something more important than partaking of temporal food. That is what He meant by the indirect or figurative remark about his having food of which they had no information.

Verse 33. The disciples thought Jesus meant temporal food, and that someone unknown to them had served it to him while they were in the city.

Verse 34. Jesus used *meat* (food) in a figurative sense. The word is from *BROMA*, which Thayer defines, "That which is eaten, food." He explains the way it is used in this passage to mean, "That which delights and truly satisfies the mind." The context justifies his explanation, for it would certainly satisfy the mind of Jesus to do the will of his Father. To finish His work meant to carry through to the end all that was in the mind of God when he sent his Son into the world.

Verse 35. Again Jesus uses some things in the temporal realm, to illustrate those in the spiritual. Temporal harvests are possible only after certain waiting periods, while the spiritual harvest is always ready to be gathered. That is because the souls of men are always subject to being gathered into the service of God.

Verse 36. *Wages* is used to represent the reward that all men will receive who do faithful work for the Lord. The production of a crop requires both a sowing and a reaping, but these are not always done by the same man. However, if they are working in harmony with each other, both will be benefited by the fruit produced.

Verse 37. Jesus only repeats the facts that are discussed in the preceding verse. It is a general principle, and the explanation will come in the next verse.

Verse 38. *The other men* means the Old Testament prophets and the work of John the Baptist. All of these servants of God had done much to prepare the way for the apostles to gather up the results. Paul teaches the same lesson in 1 Corinthians 3: 6-8.

Verse 39. The Samaritans were a mixed race, and thus were "part Jew," hence they were not regarded strictly as Gentiles. Jesus made a distinction between them in Matthew 10: 5, when he sent the apostles forth on their first mission. It also explains why the Gospel was offered to and accepted by the people of Samaria (Acts 8: 5-12), when it is generally believed (and correctly so) that it was offered to the

Gentiles for the first time when it was offered to Cornelius in Acts 10.

Verse 40. The Samaritans were so much interested in Christ, they urged him to spend some time with them. He did so, delaying his journey for two days.

Verse 41. The delay was profitable, for *many more believed* on Him.

Verse 42. There is no evidence that Jesus performed any miracle among these Samaritans. They explained their conversion on the ground of hearing His word. Jesus was able by his teaching to convince these people that he was the great One that was promised in the Scriptures and had been taught them by their leaders.

Verse 43. Galilee was an extensive territory, so that Jesus could go into that district, and yet not go into the immediate vicinity of Nazareth, which was originally considered his own country. (See Matthew 4: 13; 13: 54-57; Luke 4: 23.)

Verse 44. Because of the truth stated here, Jesus came into that part of Galilee that contained Cana (verse 46), instead of that where Nazareth was located.

Verse 45. The Galilaeans (those not in the region of Nazareth) received Jesus, because they had seen his works at the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem.

Verse 46. Smith's Bible Dictionary says Cana was not far from Capernaum, and the arrival at Cana was soon known at Capernaum. The miracle of making wine out of water had doubtless been reported generally, and the people of the neighboring towns were convinced that Jesus was able to accomplish miraculous cures. A *nobleman* was an officer serving next to a king, and therefore was an important person.

Verse 47. The nobleman went in person to Cana, and begged Jesus to come heal his son who was at the point of death from a serious fever.

Verse 48. As a test of the nobleman's faith, Jesus intimated that he would first perform some miracle, as evidence that he was able to accomplish healing the boy.

Verse 49. The nobleman was already satisfied about the ability of Jesus to work miracles. Of course Jesus knew his mind, but it is the Lord's will that people express their faith outwardly, and this was the way that Jesus brought forth the remark

of the nobleman. It was natural for him to feel anxious, because it was his son who was seriously ill, hence he pressed his request very earnestly.

Verse 50. Jesus did not accompany the father back to his home, but bade him go on his way, with the assurance that his son would live. The nobleman was satisfied to leave for home alone, because he believed the word of Jesus. Had he lingered to repeat his request for Jesus to go with him, it would have indicated that he was in doubt.

Verse 51. The nobleman did not reach home until the day after his conversation with Jesus. His servants saw him coming and went to meet him with the good news.

Verse 52. He did not question the word of his servants, but wanted to check on the saying of Jesus; he asked them when the son began to improve. The seventh hour would be the same as our 1 P. M., and it explains why the nobleman was not able to reach home until the next day.

Verse 53. The report coincided with the hour in which Jesus assured him that his son would live. We note the servants said the fever *left him* at that hour, but his full recovery was a matter of some time. This should not disturb us, for Jesus only said "thy son liveth," and to start his improvement. He caused the fever to leave him immediately. His convalescence could be taken care of by nature, without any miracle. The case caused the whole household to become believers in Jesus.

Verse 54. *Second miracle* means in Cana; the first is in chapter 2.

## JOHN 5

Verse 1. This feast was the Passover, and the second one that Jesus attended after his baptism. The next one is recorded in chapter 6: 4.

Verse 2. *Sheep market* is from the Greek word *PROBATIKOS*, which Thayer defines, "the sheep-gate." The Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) uses the same word, and Donnegan defines it, "Pertaining to sheep, or to cattle, especially sheep." This spot is mentioned in Nehemiah 3: 1, 32. *Porch* is from *stoa*, which the lexicon of Thayer defines, "a portico, a covered colonnade where people can stand or walk, protected from the weather and the heat of the sun."

Verses 3, 4. The greater part of this paragraph is omitted from some translations, on the ground that some early



Greek manuscripts do not contain it. I have consulted the information that is available to me, with the result that the subject is left in an indefinite state. Perhaps it is because there is little evidence of importance on the controversy. Various kinds of miracles were performed in ancient times, and the one described in this passage would not be entirely out of line with the Lord's manner of doing things. However, whether the miracle actually occurred as stated, or that the people had a tradition on which they relied, is immaterial as far as the work of Jesus is concerned. That some periodical disturbance of the water took place need not be disputed. Jesus did not make any controversy about the doctrine of "Transmigration of souls" (Matthew 14: 2), but healed the blind man independently of it. The writer does not show Jesus as even referring to the question of this agitation of the pool, therefore I shall comment on the remaining verses in their order.

Verse 5. This man's case was chronic, for he had been afflicted 38 years.

Verse 6. Of course Jesus knew the history of the case, but his approach to the patient was made in the spirit of a sympathetic well-wisher. The patient did not know the identity of Jesus (verse 13) until sometime afterward.

Verse 7. The impotent (weak or feeble) man had confidence in the curative properties of the water, whatever was the basis of that belief. He explained to Jesus why he was compelled to lie there from time to time, not getting any relief from his illness.

Verse 8. Jesus made no reference to the proposition in connection with the pool, but bade the man not only to arise, but to carry his bed as he walked.

Verse 9. A nervous person might be induced to bestir himself momentarily, by the influence of suggestion. But it would require something more than "mind over matter" to enable a man who had been physically helpless for 38 years, not only to walk, but to carry a bed that was large enough to support a man. His recovery was complete and immediate, because that was what Jesus willed to be accomplished in this case. In that of the nobleman's son (preceding chapter), Jesus only professed to start him on the road to recovery, which was done by causing the "temperature" to drop to normal. That feat was also immediate, for it

was done the "same hour" that Jesus spoke the word.

Verse 10. The Jews were not candid enough to object to the curing of the impotent man, but pretended to be opposed to breaking the sabbath.

Verse 11. The man did not express any conclusion, but the facts he related implied one that could not be disputed. Anyone could tell a man to get up and carry his bed, but not everyone who might say that could enable the patient to do so. This combination of facts was the strongest kind of evidence that it was no ordinary person who had befriended the impotent man.

Verse 12. We are not told whether the Jews suspected who the man's benefactor was, but it is reasonable to suppose they did, in view of their hatred for Him.

Verse 13. After Jesus cured the weak man, He took advantage of the crowd to disappear. Hence the former victim of the affliction told the truth, if he stated he did not know who it was who told him to carry his bed.

Verse 14. *Sin no more.* We are not informed what sin the man had committed, that brought on him the chronic case of physical prostration. And it did not have to be a miraculous punishment, although God did sometimes send physical judgments upon people in the days of miracles. But there are some sins of a moral nature, that can result in serious consequences to a man's health. But if this man should be so ungrateful as to sin again, the Lord would not wait for nature to inflict a penalty upon him, but would send one Himself, that would be worse than the affliction he had this time.

Verse 15. The meeting of Jesus and the man in the temple, and the conversation which they had, revealed to the former impotent man who his benefactor was. He seems to have thought the Jews had asked him the question about the identity of his friend, for the sake of information. Now that he has learned who he was, he felt that he should give them the information he could not before.

Verse 16. The Jews evidently knew that Jesus was going about doing good to the people, and that he was likely the one who had healed the impotent man. But their envy of Him was made more bitter because the man had learned about the identity of his friend, and seemed to be interested in His

work. The envy of the Jews became so active they had a desire to kill Him.

Verse 17. The Jews were so bitter against Jesus that they accused him of breaking the sabbath. Jesus made his reply by asserting his relation with God as his Father, and his cooperation with Him in the good work. The Jews made great claims of respect for God, and would never admit that He would violate the very day that he had declared to be holy. Now that Jesus claimed his work (even on the sabbath) to be as a co-worker with God, it was more than they could stand.

Verse 18. A new cause for murderous hatred was furnished the Jews by the answer of Jesus. They pretended to be outraged at his claim of being the Son of God.

Verse 19. This verse expresses a situation that is generally true in principle. A dutiful son will logically imitate the actions of his father. Since God does not hesitate to bestow works of mercy on the unfortunate, even on the sabbath day, so the Son may properly do the same without being condemned as a breaker of the holy day.

Verse 20. On the principle set forth in the preceding verse, a loving and divine Father will take his Son into his confidence, and inform him of the great things that are being done through Providential benevolence. And there were to be still greater things done than the healing of an afflicted man on the sabbath day.

Verse 21. One of the works that are greater than healing a sick man, is that of raising a man from the dead. The Son was destined also to perform that great work of quickening the dead by the sound of his voice.

Verse 22. *Hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* This was said in prospect, looking to the time when the Son would complete the test. (See Matthew 28: 18.)

Verse 23. Men are required to recognize the close relationship between the Father and the Son, in order to receive the favor of either of them.

Verse 24. The subject in the preceding verse is continued in this as to the close partnership between the Father and the Son. The passage adds the results for those who recognize that union, by showing a practical belief in the same. *Death and life* refers to spiritual matters, because all who refuse to accept God and Christ and obey their law will be condemned to everlasting death.

Verse 25. This passage pertains to the same death and life as that in the preceding verse. To *hear the voice of the Son of God* in the sense of this statement, means to heed and obey His requirements; a dead faith will not save.

Verse 26. A father transfers his characteristics to his offspring as an established rule. This relation between God and Christ is no exception to the rule, for Jesus is able to impart spiritual life to those who will accept it, because He is the Son of the life-giving God.

Verse 27. This inheritance that Christ received from his Father, entitled him to be the executioner of the divine judgment upon the world.

Verse 28. Jesus passes from figurative and spiritual language, to literal or physical. The graves are the enclosures for the bodies of those who have died, through separation of soul and body. These dead shall be brought out of their graves literally by the call of Jesus on the day of the general resurrection.

Verse 29. There will be only one literal resurrection day, on which all of the dead will come forth. The fact of coming from the dead will not depend upon character or conduct, for the whole human family that has died will come forth. *The hour* that the voice of Christ calls is the one instant when the tremendous event will occur. But as to what will be awaiting them after coming to life again, that does depend on their conduct, as stated in this verse. This resurrection and what will follow is predicted in Daniel 12: 2.

Verse 30. This is the same teaching as that in verse 19.

Verse 31. *Bear witness of myself.* This means if His testimony is by itself, and not in harmony with that of his Father. That is why Jesus always worked in harmony with God, so that their united efforts would verify each other.

Verse 32. Not only did God verify the Sonship of Christ (Matthew 3: 17), but there was another among men who added his testimony to the divine witness, to be named soon.

Verse 33. John the Baptist was the other witness referred to above. The time the Jews sent to inquire of John is recorded in chapter 1: 19-27.

Verse 34. *I receive not testimony from man.* This denotes that Jesus did not depend on human testimony

for his authority. *That ye might be saved.* The standing of Jesus did not depend upon human testimony. However, the salvation of men does depend on their faith, and Jesus was willing to cite them to any truth that would strengthen their faith. The corroborating testimony of John was a help in that direction.

Verse 35. The Jews had once shown much admiration for the work of John. If they became cool toward that testimony, that would not weaken its truthfulness.

Verse 36. The works to which Jesus refers are those mentioned in chapter 20: 30, 31. Had he been an impostor, he could not have performed these deeds.

Verse 37. No man in normal flesh ever saw the form or person of God, for to do so would mean his death (Exodus 33: 20). But God wished human beings to have the testimony of Him, hence he furnished it by aiding the Son to perform the miraculous works.

Verse 38. The gist of this verse, is that all who will nourish the word of God in their hearts, will signify it by accepting that of His Son, whom he hath sent into the world in the form of human flesh.

Verse 39. As the King James translators word this verse, it sounds like a command or directive, telling the Jews to go and search the scriptures. Several other versions have the pronoun "ye" before the word "search," and the inflection of the word in the Greek composition justifies it. The context also bears out that form of rendering. Jesus was showing the Jews another of their inconsistencies. They professed to have so much confidence in the Old Testament that they would search its pages to find the conditions on which they could obtain eternal life. And yet, that very document had told the Jews that a person like Christ was to come.

Verse 40. The one person that their Scriptures predicted should come into the world to save it, these Jews refused to accept that they might be saved.

Verse 41. This could not mean that no man honored Jesus, for even the "common people (the crowds) heard him gladly" (Mark 12: 37). It denotes that Jesus was not depending on human support for his standing.

Verse 42. This accusation that Jesus made was logical, and based on the

close relationship and attachment that God and his Son have for each other. If they loved God from the heart (and not merely from the lips), they would necessarily love his Son, which the Jews did not, or they would not be wanting to kill him.

Verse 43. It is hard to understand why false teachers can have more success in leading people than the true. Perhaps it is because such characters are unscrupulous about the means they will use to put over their theories.

Verse 44. Those who receive honor from men are selfish, and also feel obligated to "return the favor" to the others. Such worldly-minded persons cannot have much respect for the testimony of God, which requires them to disown themselves.

Verse 45. The thought in this verse is that Jesus is not alone in condemning these Jews. The giver of the law of which they boasted to be followers, already accused them by his predictions. In Deuteronomy 18: 18-20, Moses predicted that a prophet was to come among the Jews, and we know that was Christ. In that prophecy, a condemnation is uttered against the man who would not hearken to the words of that prophet.

Verse 46. When the Jews rejected Jesus it was the same as rejecting Moses.

Verse 47. Reasoning back the other direction, Jesus concludes they are bound to disbelieve his words, when they reject the words of their boasted lawgiver.

## JOHN 6

Verse 1. John gives us two names for the same body of water, and in Luke 5: 1 it is called the "lake of Gennesaret." Jesus spent much time near this body of water.

Verse 2. Curiosity as well as genuine interest, drew great crowds after Him.

Verse 3. According to Mark 6: 31, Jesus took his disciples and went into the mountain for relief from the crowds, for they interfered even with their meals.

Verse 4. This is the third occurrence of the Passover in the course of Christ's public ministry. The fourth and last is in chapter 13.

Verse 5. The diversion from the crowds was never very long. The compassion of Jesus was always present, and at this time he realized that the people would need food, being out in the unpopulated place. Jesus aroused

the interest of one of the apostles by suggesting that they provide food for the multitude.

Verse 6. *Prove* is from PEIRAZO, and Thayer's definition at this place is, "to try, make trial of, test." He then explains his definition to mean, "For the purpose of ascertaining his quality, or what he thinks, or how he will behave himself." Jesus did not have to use any such means for his own information (chapter 2: 24, 25), but wished to make it a test for the sake of an example. It was a test of faith, for the apostles had previously seen Jesus perform miracles as great as feeding a multitude.

Verse 7. Philip's remark showed that the "proof" Jesus used was testing him.

Verses 8, 9. Another apostle was being as sorely tested as Philip. He spoke as if the Lord expected them to feed the multitude with their personal supplies. John does not record any of the conversation that Jesus had on the merits of the test. But on another occasion, where this event along with another took place, He accused them of having little faith. (See Matthew 16: 8-10.)

Verse 10. *There was much grass.* This fact is mentioned to show the propriety of asking the people to sit down. It would have required another miracle to provide seats for five thousand people, hence it was perfectly reasonable to have them sit down, when there was an abundance of the green grass on which to be seated.

Verse 11. Jesus gave thanks, which was equivalent to "blessing" the bread.

Verse 12. *That nothing be lost.* This is the only instance of feeding the multitude, where the reason is given for gathering up the scraps. Jesus would never need them in his future service to the people, for even these materials had been miraculously produced. The reason for the instruction was to teach a lesson of economy.

Verse 13. People who are still hungry do not stop eating as long as there is yet something to eat at hand. The fact of having this much left after eating, proves that the multitude had a sufficiency of food.

Verse 14. The miracle served two purposes; it satisfied the hunger of the people, and also presented a proof of the personality of Jesus. This was one of the purposes of all miracles performed by Jesus. (See chapter 20: 30, 31.)

Verse 15. *Take him by force* sounds as if mere human beings could overpower the Son of God by superior strength. Of course we know that is not the idea, for He who could calm the storm and the raging sea, could certainly prevent any physical effort to take Him. But the people meant well in their intention to "draft" Jesus for the position of king. However, that was not the manner in which He was to come into his kingdom; besides, it was not the time for such a move. But rather than offend their good motives by overpowering force, Jesus quietly moved out and went into a mountain.

Verses 16-21. See the comments at Matthew 14: 22-34.

Verse 22. The people did not see when Jesus got out of the crowd to go into the mountain (verse 15), yet they realized He was not among the passengers on this boat.

Verse 23. These other boats came after the event of feeding the multitude. John mentions this to make the story clear to the reader. The people knew that Jesus did not get into the boat with the apostles. It might have been thought that Jesus was probably in one of these other boats. This is why John explains that the other boats came there *after* Jesus had given thanks, which would mean that He disappeared in some manner unknown to the crowd still remaining at that place.

Verse 24. Seeing that neither Jesus or his disciples were at that spot, they made use of these boats that had just come, and went across the sea to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. They had no direct information that Jesus would be in Capernaum, but went to that city as the place most likely to find him, that being his residence.

Verse 25. The surprise indicated by these people in their question was doubtless sincere. However, Jesus knew their chief motive in following, and rebuked them for it.

Verse 26. The leading motive of these people was their temporal appetite. Jesus did not mean it was wrong for a person to seek to satisfy his desire for food, for such a desire is natural and needs to be gratified.

Verse 27. The Bible does not contradict itself, hence an apparent conflict in its language will be understood when all the passages involved are considered. Ephesians 4: 28 directs men to labor for the necessities of life, so we are to understand our



present passage to mean that our desire for them must not be our chief purpose in the world; it should all be regarded in the light of Matthew 6: 33. *Sealed* is from *σφραγίζω*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "To confirm, authenticate, place beyond doubt." The idea is that we should seek the food that the Son of man offers which will lead to everlasting life. This is assured since the Father has placed his seal or stamp of approval on his Son's work.

Verse 28. The people were interested to the extent of making inquiry about carrying out the advice of Jesus that he had given for their benefit.

Verse 29. Much of John's account of the Gospel shows Jesus using temporal meat and drink to illustrate the spiritual. *Work . . . that ye believe.* Jesus meant that if a man really believes in Him, he will do the work that is required of him.

Verse 30. These Jews were still thinking of literal food, and were somewhat confused about how any improvement could be made over what God had provided for them in the wilderness. They called for some evidence that Jesus had anything better for them.

Verse 31. The Jews specified the provisions from God to which they referred in the preceding verse. They meant the manna that came down from heaven, a phrase quoted from Nehemiah 9: 15. The Hebrew Old Testament has but one word for the English word "heaven," whether the writer means the place of God's personal abode, or that in the material universe that surrounds the earth. It is true that the manna came literally from the latter heaven, but its true source was the Heaven of God. All of this led these Jews to think that no better food could be offered them.

Verse 32. In this verse Jesus distinguishes between the two kinds of bread. He does so by terming that from the Father as the *true bread*.

Verse 33. Jesus was presenting his comparisons in such a highly figurative form, that he drew the terms toward the application very gradually. In this verse the spiritual food is referred to as a person, without stating who that person is.

Verse 34. *Give us this bread.* This request seems to by-pass the highly figurative personal pronoun, and hold to the thought that the bread Jesus was talking about was something to

be given and received, which indeed it was, except they appeared not to suspect what it was.

Verse 35. The Jews should have been prepared by this time for the direct application of the figures of which Jesus has been speaking, hence he came out with the unusual statement, *I am the bread of life.* However, this only brought the comparison far enough along to tell them for whom he of verse 33 stood. As to what sense in which He could be called the bread of life is still to be seen. For the meaning of *never hunger* and *never thirst*, see the comments at chapter 4: 14.

Verse 36. All through the years that Jesus was in his public ministry, the controversy between him and the Jews revolved about His divinity. They professed to have great love for God, yet were averse to the idea that Jesus was the Son of God. That is the thought in this verse, for Jesus accuses them of refusing to accept the testimony of their own eyes.

Verse 37. The manner in which the Father gives people to his Son will be brought out further on in the chapter. The point to be noted now is that being given to Jesus, and coming to him, are virtually the same. *I will in no wise cast out.* These words express the perfect cooperation between Jesus and God.

Verse 38. This verse is more along the line of cooperation between Jesus and his Father. Jesus came into the world to do that very thing (Hebrews 10: 9).

Verse 39. Whatever was included in the Father's will was included also in the purpose of the Son when he came into the world. That comprehended not only the replacing of animal sacrifices (referred to in the quotation from Paul), but the personal interest in the salvation of those who were persuaded to come to Christ. That personal interest is to continue even unto the resurrection day, when the dead in Christ shall be raised in His likeness, never to die again.

Verse 40. Man cannot see God and live, but he can see the Son, and if he will follow up that seeing with sincere belief, Jesus will bring him out of the grave to enter into life everlasting.

Verse 41. The Jews continued to stumble over their literal interpretation of the statements of Jesus. He used several terms that should have taught them that something besides

material bread was meant by the subject under consideration. All of these were ignored, and they went back to the introductory sentences of the conversation.

Verse 42. The Jews could see no one in Jesus but the Galilaean, whose family relations they knew. Considering Him as a man like all others, they were in a critical mood over the claim that he came down from Heaven.

Verse 43. *Murmur* is from *goguzo*, and Thayer defines it, "To murmur, mutter, grumble, say anything in a low tone." That explains why Jesus added the words *among yourselves*. On many occasions Jesus read even the minds of his objectors and told them about it. It is perfectly right to hold certain subjects in confidence, but when people are making complaints against what they regard as wrong doing in another, the fair thing to do is to approach that person openly.

Verse 44. Advocates of the theory of unconditional predestination make much of this verse, but they do it by perverting it, and ignoring the rest of the teaching in connection with the subject. Verse 37 is virtually on the same thought, but the scriptural explanation is not given as directly as it is in the following verse.

Verse 45. *It is written*. The prophecy may be seen in Isaiah 54: 13 and Micah 4: 2. God draws mankind to his Son by teaching them about the ways that He would have them live. But the teaching offered to man will not avail anything unless he *hears* or heeds the things taught. This is the explanation promised the reader at verse 37.

Verse 46. See the comments on verse 40.

Verse 47. *Verily, verily*, has the idea of "most assuredly." To believe on Jesus so as to obtain life everlasting, one's faith must be proved by good works. (James 2: 26.)

Verse 48. See comments at verses 33, 35.

Verse 49. The argument of Jesus in this verse, is that the manna which their fathers ate in the wilderness was not the bread that would produce everlasting life, seeing that all of those ancestors were dead.

Verse 50. The pronoun *this* means the kind of bread Jesus was talking about. *Not die* is said in the same sense as *never hunger* in verse 35.

Verse 51. In this verse the Lord

takes another step in his application of the figures that he has been using. Here the statement is made that man must eat of bread that is called the flesh of the Son of man.

Verse 52. The preceding verse makes the first move toward introducing the very important matter of eating the flesh of Jesus. Of course Jesus knew the Jews would make a literal application of the statement. That would call for the true explanation of the subject, which will include several verses because of the deep spiritual significance of the topic in hand. The reader should patiently follow the comments through this interesting group of verses.

Verse 53. When people persist in making a literal application of some declaration, it may help them to see their error to repeat the statement, but do so in a still more unusual form. The Jews should have known that it would be impossible to drink literally of the blood of Christ. That was true for two reasons; namely, that blood was to be poured out on the ground beneath the cross and never recovered. The other reason was the fact that the blood of Christ was that of a dead man when it was shed, and such blood will produce death instead of life. (See Revelation 16: 3.)

Verse 54. Literal flesh and blood will not produce endless life, hence they should have begun to understand that Jesus was not talking of that kind of material.

Verse 55. This is the same thought as the preceding verse, but in another form.

Verse 56. There is an old saying that "man is what he eats." That is true, and it applies to this verse, for if Christ dwells in the man who eats of his flesh, then the adage means that if a man eats the flesh of Christ, part of that man is Christ.

Verse 57. In this verse the general thought pertains to the merging of three beings into one; the Father, the Son and the devoted partaker of Them.

Verse 58. Jesus intersperses his speech with contrasts between the literal manna in the wilderness, and the bread that he was really considering. This is done to keep their minds alive to the main thought that it was considered necessary to impress on them.

Verse 59. The synagogues were structures erected by the Jews, and used principally for the reading of the law, and for teaching and exhortation.

Verse 60. Not only the Jews in general, but even the disciples were puzzled over this strange (to them) speech that Jesus was making. *Who can hear it.* By this the disciples meant they could not understand it.

Verse 61. The disciples did not make their complaint audibly, but Jesus always knew what was in the mind of men. He let them know about it by asking them if they were offended or caused to stumble at what they heard.

Verse 62. See the comments on verse 53. The same principle is carried out in this verse, except it is in a still more baffling form. By suggesting an event that would make it impossible to eat of the literal body of Christ, the disciples ought to see the point finally, that their Lord did not mean his fleshly body. Hence he indicated that he was going to ascend to Heaven, and that they would see it occur.

Verse 63. Many brethren use the latter part of this verse as if Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are the Holy Spirit." Such a use of this passage is not only a perversion of it, but it misses the very point that Jesus was making all through the chapter from verse 26. The Bible is nowhere spoken of as the Holy Spirit. It has been given by the work of the Holy Spirit, and it is the sword of the Spirit, but it is not the Holy Spirit itself. Jesus has been patiently laboring to show the disciples and the other Jews, that man must eat bread or die. But he wishes them to understand he does not mean temporal bread. After a number of statements along the same line, he concludes it is time to come out with the direct conclusion to his discourse on the subject of spiritual food, and he does so in this verse. It is as if he had said, "I have not been talking to you about literal flesh or literal bread, for that 'profiteth nothing.' I was meaning spiritual food; and to make you know just what I mean by that kind of food, I will inform you what it consists of. It is my words or teaching, for they are spirit (ual) and will sustain your spirit in the life for me."

Verse 64. *But . . . some . . . believe not.* This shows that eating the kind of food that Jesus had been discussing, meant to believe the words he had been saying. Jesus had specific reference to Judas, for he knew that he was going to be his betrayer. Judas had

the same opportunity of hearing the words of Christ as the other apostles, but he did not heed and believe them, therefore he was considered as an unbeliever.

Verse 65. Jesus then went back to the forepart of his speech (verses 44, 45), and made a specific application of that passage to Judas. It is not given to any man by the Father to come to Christ who will not accept the words of his Son. Judas refused to believe them in the sense of heeding them, therefore God would not permit him to be attached to his Son in the great work of human redemption.

Verse 66. The disciples who *went back* were not very much interested in spiritual matters. They were the kind described by Jesus in verse 26.

Verse 67. This pathetic question that Jesus asked the apostles doubtless was intended as an inducement to obtain an expression from them. The all-important discourse that Jesus delivered was for the benefit of all hearers, but it was especially needed by the twelve. They were the ones expected to take the same teaching to the world.

Verse 68. Peter's answer showed he had caught the point in the speech of Jesus. *Thou hast the words of eternal life.* This was the very thought with which Jesus concluded according to verse 63. The words received from the Lord constituted the spiritual food that he offered as the meat that would sustain mankind unto life everlasting.

Verse 69. In this verse Peter was speaking for the group of apostles, and as far as he knew, all of them were favorable to the teaching of Christ.

Verse 70. Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him, but he did not point him out to the others yet. A man with the kind of heart that Judas possessed, deserved to be called by the term which Jesus used.

Verse 71. *Should betray him* is worded, "was to betray him," by Moffatt.

## JOHN 7

Verse 1. *After these things* refers to the happenings unfolded in the closing verses of the preceding chapter. *Jesus walked in Galilee* means he continued to walk there, for he was already in that territory. *Jewry* is another form of "Judea," and Jesus avoided going there, at least for the time being, because of danger from the Jews.

Verse 2. This feast is described in Leviticus 23: 34-43. It brought many Jews to Jerusalem, hence the risk to his life caused Jesus to remain in Galilee for a while.

Verse 3. His *brethren* means what the word usually does, and not his disciples as the Romanists teach, for the *disciples* are mentioned also in the same verse. He was in Galilee, the home territory of his family, and thus it is clear why his own fleshly brethren would be near him.

Verse 4. His brethren made their suggestion in a critical mood. They implied that Jesus was inconsistent in avoiding publicity. If he wished to be known by mankind as the Saviour of the world, he should not be acting in such a secret manner.

Verse 5. John explains the criticism of these brethren by saying they did not believe in him. It doubtless was on the principle stated in chapter 4: 44.

Verse 6. Jesus explained his plans on the ground that it was not time yet for him to come out entirely in the open. Jesus was never afraid of man as far as his own comfort was concerned, but in his wisdom he never did anything prematurely. The brethren were not in any danger, hence their time (to appear in the gathering) would be whenever they wished to go, without waiting for the feast even to get started.

Verse 7. *Cannot hate you* does not mean it was literally impossible for the fleshly brethren of Christ to be hated. But it was wholly unlikely to occur, because all of the conditions were against it. They were regarded as ordinary citizens along with other men and were not "out on the firing line" as teachers against sin as was Jesus.

Verse 8. This verse has the same thought as verse 6, and states the reason why Jesus was not in any hurry to attend the feast.

Verse 9. Having explained his reason for not going to Jerusalem with the others, Jesus continued his stay in Galilee for a short time only.

Verse 10. After the brethren of Jesus were gone, he could go up unnoticed, being alone. This secrecy was maintained for the reason expressed in verses 6 and 8.

Verse 11. It was natural to expect Jesus at the feast, for it was a national occasion for the Jewish race. *Where is he* is explained by the state-

ment in verse 10. Jesus did not intend to be prominently visible for a while.

Verse 12. The people were divided in their sentiments about Jesus; some for and others against him. While his presence was still generally unknown, the conflicting sentiments created an atmosphere of unrest among the crowd. The *murmuring* was as far as those sentiments exhibited themselves which is explained in the next verse.

Verse 13. The undercurrent referred to in the preceding verse was caused by fear of the Jews. Not knowing just what course they would take as to the treatment of Jesus, people did not commit themselves on the subject, for fear of finding themselves in an embarrassing situation when the issue came out entirely into the open.

Verse 14. The feast was about four days along when Jesus came out of his "hiding" and appeared first in the temple. It being the capitol of the Jewish religious system, it was proper for Jesus to show up there in order to do his teaching, which was the main purpose he had all the time he was among the people. *Taught* is from *didasko*, which Thayer defines at this place, "To hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic [instructive] discourses." So Jesus did not merely utter some single sentences, but continued his speech to the extent of displaying a general knowledge of important subjects pertaining to the salvation of man in the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 15. *Letters* is from a Greek word that means something that has been written by an educated person. Jesus had never taken a course of instruction in any of their institutions of learning, hence it baffled the Jews to hear him speaking like an educated man on matters of such great concern pertaining to human conduct.

Verse 16. This verse answers the questions of the preceding one. Jesus was teaching the doctrine of his Father, and did not need the instruction coming from man.

Verse 17. The construction of this verse might seem to have things backward. We would think it to be necessary to *know of the doctrine* before one could *do his will*. That is true; however, if a person is not disposed to do the will of God, he will stumble and waver and be so unfavorably disposed toward the truth, that he will fail to grasp it when it is presented to him.



Verse 18. A man might be found who claimed to be from God, yet if he depended on the instruction given in human institutions, it would show his desire to make a display of his attainments for his own glory.

Verse 19. The particular part of the law of Moses that Jesus refers to, is the sixth commandment which is the one against murder. The sabbatarians try to make a distinction between the law of God, which they say is the Decalogue or ten commandments, and the law of Moses which is the "ceremonial law" as they call it. But here is Jesus referring to one of the ten commandments and calling it the law of Moses. All of this shows how inconsistent people will be when they wish to defend an unscriptural theory.

Verse 20. *Thou hast a devil* was their way of saying that Jesus was possessed with a devil (demon), and it had rendered him demented; they denied any desire or attempt to kill Jesus. Their memory seemed to fail them, for chapter 5: 16 says that the Jews "sought to slay him." That was after he had cured a man on the sabbath day, which they claimed was a violation of the law. But the law about the sabbath was a part of the same Decalogue that contained the commandment against murder, the very crime they sought to commit against Jesus.

Verse 21. Jesus was soon to remind them of the occasion when they sought to kill him. He first comments on the case by referring to their astonishment at the *one work* that he had done, while they also would do something even on the sabbath day that was as certainly a *work* as curing a sick man would be.

Verse 22. The Jews pretended to have great respect for Moses, whose law they accused Jesus with violating. In specifying a work they did on the sabbath, Jesus mentioned circumcision which also came from Moses. However, lest they misunderstand the real history of that ordinance, he interposed an explanation that it had been given to the fathers of old before the time of Moses. Notwithstanding this, they professed to regard the law of Moses so highly, that they insisted on performing his ordinance of circumcision, even though it should be done on the sabbath day.

Verse 23. The act of performing circumcision, which was a surgical one, was certainly as much a manual

labor as was that of curing an invalid. Yet they condemned Jesus for doing that, while they persisted in doing the other.

Verse 24. There are people who resent being penalized or even criticized for their wrongs, and then will try to make a defense for their acts by quoting Matthew 7: 1. If they wanted to be fair in the matter, they would consider all that Jesus said on the same subject. In the present passage, the Lord gives more specific information on the act of judging others. *Appearance* is from *opsis*, and Thayer defines it in this passage, "The outward appearance, look." Robinson defines it, "External appearance, show." The Englishman's Greek New Testament translates it by the single word "sight." The outward or mere appearance of a situation does not always provide all the facts in the case, hence the honest thing to do is to investigate and get the whole truth. Then a judgment rendered on that basis will be a *righteous judgment*, and not the kind the first part of this verse says not to do, and the kind that Matthew 7: 1 says not to do.

Verse 25. These people of *Jerusalem* were local citizens, who knew about the plans of the rulers to kill Jesus. They thought they recognized Him as the victim who was to be slain, and were puzzled that he was still at liberty.

Verse 26. These people observed that Jesus was speaking *boldly* without being molested. They wondered if the rulers had concluded that Jesus was actually the Christ who was predicted by the Scriptures, and that they better not interfere with him.

Verse 27. There is a vein in the human mind that discounts a "home product" as being of little special value. That is why Jesus said what he did in chapter 4: 44 and similar passages. It was true these people were acquainted with the earthly surroundings of Jesus as a man, and there is no information that anything of a supernatural or even unusual nature occurred in his home life. That was because his divine personality was not to be manifested until the proper time, which would be after his baptism and he was ready to enter upon his public ministry. Another thing, these people had an idea that is not explained in any work of reference that I have, that the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament was to make his entrance into

this world in some mysterious manner (which was true, but not in the way they meant), and that he would come from some unknown territory.

Verse 28. In the first part of this verse Jesus agrees with their statement, that they knew him and whence he had come. However, that applied only to his earthly family life, which is commented upon in the preceding paragraph. But as to his divine origin and personality, they did not know him because they did not know his Father.

Verse 29. The reason Jesus knew God was that he had sent his Son into the world. When Jesus came he was not in the dark as to why he had come. (See Hebrews 10: 5-9.)

Verse 30. It seems that any reference to the divinity of Christ always stirred up the anger of the Jews. Jesus asserted again that he had come from a source with which the Jews were unacquainted. That could only mean to them that the one they were hating was claiming to be of a higher origin than they. It was more than they could stand, but they were not able to do anything about it. The explanation for it is in the words *his hour was not yet come*. As long as the work of Jesus was unfinished, the Father saw to it that nothing would seriously interfere with it.

Verse 31. The people were not all as prejudiced against Jesus as were the Jewish leaders or rulers. Seeing the miracles that he was performing, they could not understand why there was any reason for looking for another to come as the Christ. On the strength of this, many of the people believed on him.

Verse 32. *Heard that the people murmured*. The last word usually means to complain in a low or undertone kind of voice, but it does not have that meaning always. One phrase in Thayer's definition of the original word is, "say anything in a low tone." The people had actually expressed themselves favorably toward Jesus, but they were doing it in a subdued voice. But the Pharisees heard about it and were envious of the kindly attention that Jesus was receiving, and decided to stop his work by arresting him. The outcome of this attempt will be learned near the close of the chapter. In the meantime Jesus delivers one of his wonderful discourses, the several verses whereof will be commented upon in their order.

Verse 33. This was a notice that the work of Jesus on earth was about to end.

Verse 34. As Jesus expected to return to his Father, he meant those unbelievers would not be able to follow him, even though curiosity might prompt them to desire to.

Verse 35. Since these Jews did not believe that Jesus came from the presence of God in the first place, they now would not grasp the thought that he was going back to Him. They wondered, therefore, if he meant he was going to disappear among some people that were beyond their visible association. *Dispersed* refers to the Jews who were scattered throughout various Gentile countries. Smith's Bible Dictionary says the following on the subject: "The Dispersion was the general title applied to those Jews who remained settled in foreign countries after the return from the Babylonian exile, and during the period of the second temple."

Verse 36. The whole subject was baffling to the Jews of Jerusalem.

Verse 37. *Last day, great day of the feast*. The day is described in Leviticus 23: 36. It is called a great day because certain religious activities were done on that day that were not done on the seven other days. Also because the closing day of any important period is regarded with special attention. The Jews had been engaged for a week, having a time of rejoicing, and enjoying the good things produced by their fields and flocks. It was hence an appropriate time for Jesus to call their attention to something else of which they might partake, that was of vastly more importance than these temporal blessings. Jesus offered to give the blessing of spiritual drink to any man who would come to him for it.

Verse 38. The original word for *belly* is defined by Thayer in this place, "The innermost part of a man, the soul, heart, as the seat of thought, feeling, choice." Robinson defines it virtually in the same way. The pronoun *his* refers both to Christ and to anyone who accepts the living water that he offers. Christ is the source of living water, and if a man opens his heart or inner being (here translated *belly*), that stream of living water will enter therein. Then such a man in turn will become a source of that precious water, supplying both himself and those he influences, with that which will contribute to his spiritual

life and growth. This verse is the same in thought as the teaching of Jesus which he gave the woman of Samaria at the well. (See the comments on that instance in chapter 4:14.)

Verse 39. The living water to which Jesus had specific reference, was the spiritual instruction to be given through the kingdom of heaven that he had been promising. That instruction would require a means of delivering it to the members of the kingdom, which was to be the Holy Ghost or Spirit. But that gift was here spoken of in prospect only, for it was not the will of God that it be sent upon the disciples until Christ was glorified, which was to be after he returned to his Father.

Verse 40. Jesus fills so large a place in the scheme of human redemption, that it takes many terms to comprehend the various parts that he was to play. Hence he is referred to as Christ which means "anointed," because he was to be a king. He is called Jesus which means "saviour," because he was to save the people from their sins. And he is termed a prophet, because he was to teach and prophecy. All of these functions and characteristics were predicted of Him, in one form or another in the Old Testament. The Jews knew about these various predictions, but did not realize they referred to the same person. For that reason we read about their mention of the different offices of Jesus as referring to separate persons. In the present verse they speak of him as the prophet, meaning the one predicted by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:18.

Verse 41. Others thought of Jesus as the Christ or anointed One which means king, who had been prophesied to sit on David's throne (Acts 2:30). But some of them rejected this idea on the ground that such an important person should have a more dignified residence than one located in Galilee.

Verse 42. They supported their idea against Galilee by citing the scripture that said Christ was to come out of Bethlehem. Their application of this scripture was correct, but they evidently did not know that while Jesus was generally known as a Galilean, yet he was born in Bethlehem according to the prophecy.

Verse 43. There was a division (in sentiment) among the people. That means with regard to their attitude toward Jesus; some for and others against him.

Verse 44. The sentiment of some who were against Jesus was so strong they would have taken him. The original Greek for that word is defined by Thayer at this place, "To take i. e., apprehend." He then explains his definition to mean, "a man, in order to imprison him." Among those whose sentiments were against Jesus were doubtless the officers who had been sent out by the chief priests and Pharisees. They would have acted upon authority as far as these Jewish leaders were concerned, had they arrested Jesus. They did not do so, and their excuse to their "superiors" will be stated in verse 46. However, the Lord in Heaven was watching over his Son, and was not going to permit any actual interference with his work until it was accomplished. Hence the inspired reason why these officers did not take Jesus is given in verse 30; *because his hour was not yet come.*

Verse 45. The officers who were sent to arrest Jesus returned without him. The chief priests and Pharisees doubtless were disappointed, and called for an explanation.

Verse 46. The brief but significant answer was, *never man spake like this man.* Spake is from LALEO, and it has such a wide range of meanings that the definitions will not be quoted in full. The word includes the act of speaking with authority, information, impressiveness, and on all of the subjects pertaining to human conduct. It is no wonder, then, that these officers said what they did.

Verse 47. The Pharisees concluded their officers had been captured by the teaching of Jesus, instead of capturing him as they were sent to do.

Verse 48. It was bad enough for their officers to be thus influenced by the hated Teacher, but they thought it would be a great misfortune for any of the religious leaders to be "deceived" by him.

Verse 49. *Knoweth not the law.* The statement of Nicodemus (next verse), and their reply shows the chief priests had Jesus in mind when they used the indefinite phrase, *this people.* It was not Jesus, but the chief priests who did not know the law, for it was the document that made favorable predictions of the very person whom the leaders of the Jews were condemning. (See the comments on chapter 5:39.)

Verse 50. *Being one of them.* This means that Nicodemus was one of the

Pharisees. Chapter 3: 1 says the same thing in so many words.

Verse 51. All that Nicodemus insisted on was that the justice of the law be carried out in the case of Jesus. The question he asked would have been fair, regardless of whether Jesus was a good man or not.

Verse 52. This verse denotes that the Pharisees accused Nicodemus of siding with Jesus. The preceding verse only called for the regular procedure of the law, therefore their objection proves they did not want to do the fair thing about Jesus. The only thing they mentioned as a basis for their condemnation of Jesus, was his humble home territory of Galilee which was usually referred to unfavorably from a social standpoint.

Verse 53. The meeting "broke up" without any formal action being taken against Jesus, and the people all went to their places of stay.

### JOHN 8

Verse 1. The Mount of Olives plays such a prominent part in the affairs of Palestine, especially in the time of Christ and the apostles, that I believe it will be well to quote from Smith's Bible Dictionary on the subject. "This mountain is the well-known eminence on the east of Jerusalem, intimately connected with some of the gravest events of the history of the Old Testament and the New Testament, the scene of the flight of David and the triumphal progress of the Son of David, of the idolatry of Solomon, and the agony and betrayal of Christ. It is a ridge of rather more than a mile in length, running in general direction north and south, covering the whole eastern side of the city . . . on the east the mount is close to the walls, parted only by the narrow ravine of the Kidron. It is the portion which is the real Mount of Olives of the history." The brief statement is made that *Jesus went unto the mount of Olives*, but in Luke 21: 37 it is stated that "at night he went out" and abode there.

Verse 2. The people evidently understood where Jesus spent the nights, and that he would return in the morning. In the early morning the people were on hands to greet Jesus. He did not disappoint them, but sat down and taught them.

Verse 3. The Jewish leaders had made a number of unsuccessful attempts to entrap Jesus in his teaching. They concluded to try the plan of play-

ing upon his great compassionate nature, in the hopes of having him try to set aside one of the ordinances of Moses. They brought a woman who had been taken in the act of adultery and placed her in their midst.

Verse 4. Since the woman was taken in the act of adultery, they had the same chance of bringing the guilty man as they did the woman. The fact they did not is proof they were not concerned about the law of Moses. Leviticus 20: 10 and Deuteronomy 22: 22 is the law referred to, and it required that both the man and woman should be stoned. But they brought only the woman, because they thought the natural leniency of a man for the feminine sex would cause Jesus to set the law aside unconditionally.

Verse 5. The Pharisees made the correct interpretation of the law in the case, but their use of the word *such* condemned them, for that applied to both the man and woman. *What sayest thou?* This direct question was said in the tone of a challenge, thinking Jesus would say, "it would be harsh to stone a woman, so turn her loose." Such a statement would have furnished the Pharisees a pretext for accusations.

Verse 6. The inspired writer tells us these Jews said this to Jesus to tempt him. He knew all of that, and delayed giving them any answer at all. *As though he heard them not.* No one of these words is in the Greek text, but have been added by the King James translators as their comment on the action of Jesus in writing with his finger and saying nothing. He certainly did not pretend not to hear the accusers, for that would have been unreasonable for One who had been able even to read the minds of men before they said anything. My comment on the circumstance is that Jesus thereby showed his distaste for the whole thing. Another thing that was accomplished by ignoring them, was to force them to repeat their cowardly remarks, which would render their humiliation all the more evident when the time came. He finally stood before them and made a statement that must have surprised them. He did not advise releasing the woman (as they desired), neither did he give direct instruction to slay her. Another thing, even had Jesus directed that the woman should be stoned, they did not stop to think that they would have to be the executioners, having forgotten the stipulations in Deuteronomy 17: 7.



*He that is without sin.* This could not mean one who was absolutely sinless in every respect, for that requirement would have made it impossible for anyone to be punished, seeing their own Scriptures declare there is no man who "doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7: 20). The only conclusion possible is that Jesus meant the one who casts the stone must be innocent of the sin for which he wished the woman to be slain. That doubtless put them out of the right to act, for Jesus had called that generation of Jews an "adulterous" one (Matthew 16: 4).

Verses 7, 8. Jesus placed the termination of the case at the feet of these hypocrites, then stooped down and resumed his writing to let them think upon the proposition.

Verse 9. *Conscience* is from *SUNEIDESIS*, and the lexicons give a various description. The outstanding definition of the word as Thayer gives it is, "The soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending the one, condemning the other." These accusers were convicted by their conscience, which means it condemned their own conduct. That was because they knew they had done that which was bad, and hence were not qualified to be the executioners of the law at hand. *Went out* means they left the temple where they had been in their pretended attempt to enforce the law, leaving Jesus and the woman yet together.

Verses 10, 11. Jesus asked the woman if no man *condemned* her. This could not mean whether any man accused her, for they had already done that. The word is from *KATAKRINO*, and Thayer defines it, "To give judgment against one, to judge worthy of punishment, to condemn." Jesus did not excuse the woman's act, but he would not require that the ordinance be executed upon her. The accusers failed to execute it, which is what she meant when she said, *No man, Lord.* Jesus said, *neither do I condemn thee*, and immediately admonished her to *sin no more*. It was somewhat like a case where a judge hears evidence against a prisoner. He might consider all the facts in the case, and decide he would give him another chance. He would probably say, "I will let you off this time, but don't be guilty again." Another thing, the witnesses were the only ones who could lawfully execute this ordinance, and

they had left the assembly. Jesus did not care to act the part of executioners, hence bade the woman go, giving her an admonition concerning her future conduct.

Verse 12. After disposing of the incident with which the Pharisees interrupted his main work, Jesus resumed his teaching pertaining to spiritual matters. When Jesus said *I am the light of the world*, he only repeated what John the Baptist said of him in chapter 1: 6-9. Walking in this light means to conduct one's self according to the teaching that Jesus gives.

Verse 13. It is a commonly-accepted principle that one's personal testimony is lacking in force unless there is something or someone else to support it. The Pharisees knew this, and thought they could apply it to the assertion of Christ concerning himself.

Verse 14. Jesus did not call in question the rule to which they alluded, yet he maintained the truthfulness of his own testimony. He was speaking from personal experience and did not have to rely on other facts for its support. This truth gave Jesus a distinction above the situation of the Pharisees, for they did not have any "inside information" at all. But Jesus was soon to show that his own personal information was confirmed by that of another, and that therefore he was not alone.

Verse 15. *Flesh* is from *SARX*, which Thayer defines in this passage, "Man as he appears, such as he presents to view, man's external appearance and condition." No doubt the bodily appearance of Jesus was like that of the ordinary Jew, and the Pharisees classed him among the others on that account. Jesus did not judge any man on that basis, for he was able to see through the veil of flesh and read his mind.

Verse 16. Here Jesus states the reason for his assertion in verse 14 as to the assurance of his testimony, that it was verified by that of his Father. He testified to the divinity of his Son at the baptism (Matthew 3: 17), and also enabled him to perform miracles which no man could do on his own human strength.

Verse 17. Jesus often referred to the *Old Testament for proof of his statements*, because the Jews professed to have great respect for that document. (See the comments on chapter 5: 39.) In our present verse they are reminded of an established rule concerning the

force of testimony that their law contained. That rule is written in various places, and one outstanding passage is Deuteronomy 19: 15.

Verse 18. Jesus and his Father would make two witnesses testifying to the same truth. According to the ordinance of their own document of law, that would establish the divinity of Jesus, the fact that was especially offensive to these Jews.

Verse 19. The Pharisees would not deny the principle that Jesus just uttered, but thought to weaken it by pretending to be unacquainted with one of his witnesses, hence they asked, *where is thy Father?* To know a person in the practical sense, meant to acknowledge him and give full consideration to all his claims. This the Pharisees refused to do with Jesus, consequently they did not know him nor his Father.

Verse 20. The *treasury* was one of the departments of the temple where the people came who wished to make certain financial contributions. It would be where a great many could see and hear Jesus as he was teaching. That teaching did not suit many of them, but they kept hands off because *his hour was not yet come*. (See comments on chapter 7: 30.)

Verse 21. *I go my way* refers to the return of Jesus to his Father. *Shall seek me* does not mean they will seek to find Jesus as their Saviour, for he did not intend ever to get out of reach of any man who was honestly disposed unto eternal life. It refers to the desire for the benefits that had been bestowed upon man while Jesus was in his personal ministry. (See the comments on Luke 17: 22.) With only such a selfish motive for seeking Jesus, they would fail to find him and would die unsaved, which would make it impossible for them to go into his presence.

Verse 22. *Will he kill himself?* This was not said in seriousness, for had Jesus meant that, he would not have said they could not follow him; any man can commit suicide. They took this method of "changing the subject," for they knew Jesus had predicted his own death at the hands of the Jews, but they were unwilling to recognize their connection with the sad deed.

Verse 23. The human side of the person of Christ was from beneath, but otherwise he was from above the earth. This verse is another statement of the divinity of Jesus.

Verse 24. The thought in this verse is the same as that in chapter 3: 16, for one must believe in the "Only Begotten Son of God" to have everlasting life. These Jews were persisting in their unbelief, hence Jesus warned them that they would die in their sins.

Verse 25. *Who art thou?* This question was asked in pretense of interest, for they had been told in plain terms about the personality of Jesus. He understood their motive, and only referred them to what he had said to them previously.

Verses 26, 27. Jesus could have said many things truthfully against these Jews, that he knew from personal association among them; however, he was supported in all this by his Father. But the hardness of their hearts prevented the Jews from "catching on" to what Jesus meant.

Verse 28. This lifting up refers to the crucifixion, which Jesus had predicted in chapter 3: 14. The fulfillment of that prediction, and the Gospel facts that immediately were to follow, would convince some of them that Jesus was a true prophet and teacher. Having proved that he was true, the people would have reason to believe that He was the one sent to the earth from God.

Verse 29. God was not with Jesus in person, but was in spirit, and gave evidence of it by supporting him in his great works. Jesus did not come into the world to do his own will, but to do that of his Father. (See Hebrews 10: 7.)

Verse 30. *Many believed on him*. The evident fairness of Jesus in leaving the truthfulness of his claims to rest on proposed facts to come, had its effect on some of the people, so that they professed confidence in it.

Verse 31. A mere profession of belief is not enough to satisfy the Lord. That profession must be followed up with adherence to his teaching.

Verse 32. This verse was still addressed to the believers directly, but it was in the hearing of all those present, so that its application was general.

Verse 33. *They answered him*. This means the ones who had not become believers. They interpreted the statement of Jesus to mean the bondage enforced upon people by man, in the social and political realm. But even from that standpoint, their claim was not correct if they were speaking of Abraham's descendants as a whole.

They had spent four centuries in bondage in Egypt, and 70 years in captivity in Babylon.

Verse 34. Jesus explained that he was considering another kind of bondage. *Servant* is from a Greek word that means "slave." Many people who boast of their personal liberty, are slaves under the cruelest of all masters, that of sin.

Verse 35. Passing from the moral and spiritual phase of the subject, to the social and political for the purpose of illustration, Jesus shows these self-righteous Jews that they are detained to be thrust out unless they change.

Verse 36. A favor backed up by a servant might be of short duration, for that servant could be put out of the household at any time, and hence that favor would go out also. But a son's place in a home is permanent, and favors brought about by him would be permanent also. That is why the favor of being made free would be lasting (*free indeed*) if the son had caused it to be given.

Verse 37. Jesus did not deny the fleshly relationship of these people to Abraham, but that did not excuse their resistance to his word. Instead, it should have inclined them to think favorably upon the teaching of Jesus, for Abraham had been informed of this very great seed of his, and his belief in that promise had obtained for him the title "friend of God" (James 2: 23).

Verse 38. A rule is for a son to speak as his father speaks, and to walk in his footsteps. Jesus applied that rule to himself and to these self-important Jews.

Verse 39. *Abraham is our Father.* All that could be meant by this was their blood relationship to the patriarch. *If ye were Abraham's children.* In this phrase Jesus meant to question their true relation to Abraham in faithfulness. Had that been the case they would have shown those traits of the worthy ancestor.

Verse 40. These Jews had sought to kill Jesus for telling them the truth, which was something that Abraham would not have done. On that account, they were not worthy of being considered the children of Abraham.

Verse 41. The Jews would swing back and forth from one position to another, as they felt the need to keep up their defence. When they thought it was to their credit to be the children of Abraham, they were inclined

to boast of it. They knew that Jesus would not say anything against Abraham, yet he implied by this last statement that they were begotten of some unknown man; one among the morally promiscuous. Then they changed their base and denied any parentage but that of God.

Verse 42. Jesus made the same kind of reply to this claim that he did when they boasted of being children of Abraham (verse 39). Their conduct toward Jesus indicated they were not of God, for he was the Father of Christ whom they did not love.

Verse 43. As long as people are devoted to the devil (as these Jews were) they cannot hear (heed) the words of Christ. By the same token they would not understand his speech when he spoke to them upon the matters of correct living.

Verse 44. The Greek word for *father* is *PATER*, and it is used 417 times in the New Testament. The definitions are so numerous that lack of space forbids copying them all. The first definition of Thayer is, "Generator or male ancestor." As a secondary definition he gives, "The founder of a race or tribe, progenitor [ancestor in the line] of a people, forefather." In his comments or explanations of one of the secondary definitions, Thayer says, "The originator or transmitter of anything . . . one who has infused his own spirit into others, who actuates [causes to act] and governs their minds." The last sentence Thayer applies to the verse of this paragraph. That is true, for it was the spirit of the devil that caused Cain to slay his brother, then lie about it when he said he did not know where he was. It is the same spirit that has caused men to lie and commit murder all down through the centuries. Hence it was perfectly just for Jesus to call these wicked Jews the children of the devil.

Verse 45. This short verse is a logical deduction from the description of the devil as given in the preceding verse. The reason the Jews would not believe what Jesus told them was because it was the truth, for the devil does not want the truth, neither do his children who are following after his principles.

Verse 46. *Convince* is from a word that means to convict or prove one to be guilty of sin. The question of Jesus was a challenge which amounted to a denial beforehand. Since they knew

they could not convict Jesus of sin, that would mean that all he said was the truth. On that basis, the only correct answer to his last question would be that their unbelief was due to their relation to the devil.

Verse 47. *Of* is from *ἐκ*, and Thayer uses three whole pages in his lexicon in defining and explaining the word. The reader may thereby form some estimate of the importance of the term. But his first and general definition is, "From out of, out from, forth from, from." He also explains that it is the opposite of the terms "into" and "in." In composition such as our verse, it means one whose character and principles of life originated with God. Jesus affirmed that all whose character came from God would hear his words. These Jews were refusing to hear them, therefore it proved they were not of God, which is the conclusion which Jesus charged against them.

Verse 48. *Thou art a Samaritan*. This was said to show their contempt of Jesus, in view of the low estimate the Jews had of the Samaritans. A description of that subject is given with the comments on chapter 4: 9. *Say we not* refers to chapter 7: 20 where they first charged Jesus with having a devil. See that passage for comments on their charge as they said *thou hast a devil*.

Verse 49. A sober denial of their charge was the first reply of Jesus. He then made a logical statement, based on his relation to God. Jesus honored his Father and they dishonored Him (Jesus). That was the same as accusing them of dishonoring God also, although these Jews made great claims of respect for God.

Verse 50. The outstanding thought that John stresses in his record of Jesus, is his divinity or close relationship with God. And that seems to have been the point on which the Jews showed their bitterest feeling for Him. And that explains why Jesus so often referred to that relationship, which is the thought in the words, *I seek not mine own glory. There is one*. It is stated in many places that Jesus came into the world to do his Father's will, therefore the *one* in this phrase is God.

Verse 51. *Shall never see death*. The Bible recognizes two kinds of death, the physical and the spiritual. The man who accepts the words of Jesus and keeps them will never suffer the spiritual death. (See chapter 11: 26.)

Verses 52, 53. The Jews either did

not know or they deliberately refused to recognize the two kinds of death. With that as the basis for their speech, they repeated the charge they first made at chapter 7: 20, and pretended to ascribe His statement about dying to the effects of the devil in him. Adhering to their notion of there being only the physical death, they referred to the death of Abraham and the prophets as proof against the statement of Jesus.

Verse 54. This verse has the same reasoning Jesus gives in verses 14-18.

Verse 55. The Jews made a great profession of knowing God, yet they constantly refused to recognize his Son. In rejecting Jesus they were also rejecting God, which is a principle that is taught in numerous passages throughout the New Testament. If Jesus had denied any knowledge of God, it would have been untrue, and that would have placed him in the same class as the Jews who were guilty of falsifying.

Verse 56. God told Abraham that he was to have a seed or descendant in whom the whole world would be blessed. (See Genesis 22: 18.) That promised seed was Christ, and Abraham believed the promise that was made concerning him. That is the sense in which he *rejoiced to see the day of Christ on the earth*.

Verse 57. The Jews were still thinking of Jesus as an ordinary human being only, who had been born less than fifty years before. Abraham had been dead for more than 20 centuries, hence they denied that Jesus could ever have seen him.

Verse 58. *Am* is from *εἰμι*, a Greek verb whose fundamental meaning is, "to be." The word is used in the Greek text without inflection (suffixes), therefore it has its full original meaning. As Jesus used the word in this verse, it means that Abraham had a definite time at which he came into being, that is why he used the word *was*. Jesus existed always, hence he says *I am* with reference to himself. A noted writer has worded this much better than I can, hence I shall give the reader the benefit of it. "Divinity has no past tense, nor future tense, but always the present."

Verse 59. This assertion was completely beyond the comprehension of these Jews, and in sheer desperation they thought of stoning Jesus. But "his time had not yet come," hence he miraculously passed from their midst.



## JOHN 9

Verse 1. The appearance of a man would not indicate how long he had been blind, hence they had other information concerning this case.

Verse 2. The question the disciples asked Jesus could only have been on the theory known as the "transmigration of souls." This notion is explained at Matthew 14: 2. Jesus did not endorse the theory, because it was untrue and foolish, but he did not take time to deal with every kind of error he met. However, both he and the apostles sometimes used the popular notions to illustrate a point or expose some inconsistency among the people. The present instance is one of them, which was used by Paul when he spoke of "eternal judgment" in Hebrews 6: 2. And being "baptized for [in place of] the dead in 1 Corinthians 15: 29, is another instance where the apostle used an erroneous practice without endorsing it, but to expose the inconsistency of those who did it.

Verse 3. No special act of God had been done to cause this man to be born blind. However, the misfortune will furnish the Lord an opportunity of manifesting divine power. Jesus was always able to turn unfavorable conditions into good account.

Verse 4. *Day and night* are used figuratively as we will see in the next verse.

Verse 5. *As long as I am in the world.* This phrase is directly connected with the words *while it is day* in the preceding verse. This would mean that *night* as used in the present instance refers to death. It was never intended that man should work day and night to make a living. Therefore, when language is used figuratively, day (the proper time for work) is likened to a life on earth, because that is the only period in which a man can work for the Lord. It is appropriate that we often sing, "Work, for the night is coming." But Jesus did not mean to teach that after he left this world all spiritual light would cease. He was considering only that light which he personally could shed upon the human beings with whom he came into contact.

Verse 6. Sometimes Jesus used certain things in connection with his miracles that could have no logical effect in the case. There was an important point in such performances. Had something been used that might have a physical relation to the result

desired and obtained, it might have been claimed that such was the cause. But since these things could have nothing to do with the actual problem, the conclusion is clear that the result was obtained through divine power.

Verse 7. Jesus never needed the help of any man in accomplishing his work, but it was well to teach the lesson of cooperation between man and God. Hence Jesus required the people to feed the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5: 43), and directed others to remove the cover from the tomb of Lazarus (John 11: 39). Had this blind man not washed the clay from his eyes he would not have been healed of his blindness.

Verse 8. In the mean time, Jesus had moved on out of the throng, and when the man was returning from the pool with his sight given to him, the people were surprised at his appearance. The absence of eyesight often makes more difference in a man's general appearance than may be thought. Yet in spite of the change wrought by the restoring of that function, some thought they recognized the former blind man.

Verse 9. Some of the people seemed to be very certain of the man's identity, while others professed only to see a resemblance. But the man settled the discussion by informing them that he was the man who had been blind.

Verse 10. This question was asked for the simple purpose of information, as they were not present at the time Jesus talked with the man.

Verse 11. *A man that is called Jesus.* All this blind man knew was what he heard, for he was blind and had to get his information by hearing only. Hence this verse is a statement of facts, without any reasoning or conclusions upon those facts.

Verse 12. While the man was going to the pool, Jesus passed on, so that up to the time of this questioning he had never seen his benefactor. The method Jesus took in this case served a purpose other than requiring the man to go wash in the pool and thus cooperate in his favor of being healed. It left him free to reason on the case without being prejudiced favorably by the appearance and personal presence of the one who had healed him. Under the circumstances, it was all the man could do to say he did not know where the person was then. We should bear in mind that all this conversation was between the man and the people who

had no prejudice especially in the case, it not having been called to the attention of the Pharisees.

Verse 13. The text does not tell us why the man was brought to the Pharisees. We know, however, that they were the leading sect of the Jews, and were supposed to be interested in anything especially pertaining to miracles. The man said he was directed in his case by the one called Jesus, to go wash at the pool, with the result that he was made able to see. So it was logical that the case should be taken to these religious leaders since the very name *Jesus* brought up the subject for religious consideration.

Verse 14. There is no evidence in the life of Christ that he made any distinction between days, when he had opportunity for working a beneficial miracle. But John knew what was coming up over this case, and made the statement of this verse as an explanation beforehand, of the disturbance soon to be thrust into the work of Jesus. *Made the clay* was a manual act, and that was sufficient to give the Pharisees an excuse for their quarrel with the man for whom the work had been done.

Verse 15. The Pharisees asked this man how he received his sight, and were given the same answer that the people had received. We should note that the man said *I washed*, which was as much of a manual act as what Jesus had done. But in all of the controversy over this case, not one word will be said against the man for what he did on the sabbath day. This shows the Pharisees were not caring anything about the holy day, but were showing their hatred of Jesus and took this circumstance as a means of repeating their old hypocritically-inspired complaints.

Verse 16. This *division* was between the friends and enemies of Jesus. The former reasoned rightly, that if Jesus were a "sinner," (which means one of that particular class as listed in those days), he would be unable to work miracles, for God would not grant miraculous power to such a character. The others were merely using the question of the sabbath as an excuse for their hatred of Jesus.

Verse 17. The *blind man* did not have any more positive knowledge in the case than did the others, for he had not even seen Jesus up to this time. But the crowd wished to get him to commit himself on the subject; es-

pecially that part of the group which was Jews. Had the man expressed an unfavorable opinion of Jesus, it would have been used by the Jews as a significant circumstance. If the very man who had been benefitted by the performance was unfavorably impressed with Jesus, then surely there must have been a reason for it. But he replied with a direct and favorable verdict, *He is a prophet*. That meant not only that Jesus was a good man, but one endowed with supernatural talents to be able to do such a miracle as the one at hand.

Verse 18. The Jews failed to get any satisfaction from the man who had been blind. Their next move was to show that the whole thing was a fraud; that the man had never really been blind. Perhaps the parents can help them in their wicked design.

Verse 19. They asked the parents two questions concerning their son. One of them pertained to fact and the other to theory.

Verse 20. They answered the first question very positively, saying *we know*, etc. It would have been useless for them to deny the facts, for such as the birth of a child without eyesight, and suffering that handicap for all the years up to manhood, would be too well known to be denied.

Verse 21. The parents could literally say *we know not* on the question of how their son was healed as far as personal knowledge was concerned. But if they had been willing to show friendliness for Jesus, they would at least have referred to the case as it was reported by eyewitnesses. They therefore evaded that point for the reason mentioned in the next verse and told them to ask the son himself. *Of age* is from a Greek term defined by Thayer, "Adult age, maturity."

Verses 22, 23. *Put out of the synagogue* is all from *APOSYNAGOGOS*, and Thayer defines it, "Excluded from the sacred assemblies of the Israelites; excommunicated." The privilege of assembling with the Jews in their religious gatherings was indeed a valuable one. For that reason it was a strong means of punishing a man who became objectionable to the Pharisees, to cast him out of the synagogue and withdraw the fellowship from him. (See chapter 16: 2.) The parents of this man chose rather to deny to Jesus the credit due him, than lose their privilege of entering the synagogue. They took the cowardly way out of

the embarrassment by referring the question to their son.

Verse 24. The Jews did not accomplish what they expected from the parents, so they thought they would make another effort with the son. But this time they did not trust the case to an unbiased question, but tried to prejudice him beforehand by framing the answer for him. It was similar to a case of our day where a judge will deliver a "directed verdict" instruction to a jury, when that jury had been sworn to decide the case themselves according to the evidence as they understood it.

Verse 25. But this blind man was not one to betray his conscience as a jury sometimes does. He did not pretend to decide for the present whether his benefactor belonged in the class known as "sinners," but he was not afraid to affirm what he did know. That statement was the simple truth that he was blind but now was able to see.

Verse 26. This question was entirely unnecessary if the Jews were honestly seeking information. The blind man had already stated all the facts in the case as he understood them, and had nothing more in that line that he could say.

Verse 27. The useless question caused the blind man to realize that his questioners were not sincere in their inquiries. Or if they were, it was just their way of pressing the investigation further in order to learn what they could of Jesus. As a means of testing whether that caused their persistence, he asked them if they were interested in becoming the disciples of Jesus.

Verse 28. The Jews realized they had committed themselves a little farther than was intended. They showed their bitterness by accusing the man of being a disciple of Jesus. That would not have been anything of which to be ashamed, but his remarks were purely logical and could have been properly uttered regardless of his personal feelings or intentions. The Jews showed their ignorance of the very document and writer they pretended to respect. Any true disciples of Moses could be disciples of Jesus also, for Moses prophesied favorably of Him. (See Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18.)

Verse 29. Jesus had shown fully as much evidence of having been inspired of God as did Moses. Therefore the statements made by these Jews were

unfair and amounted to a false accusation against the doer of this good deed to the blind man.

Verse 30. The man thought it was strange they did not know from where or whom Jesus had come. He thought they ought to have known the kind of source that produced him, judging by the works he was doing. It is a law of cause and effect that is recognized by everybody, that a tree is known by its fruit. Here is a man who has given sight to a man born blind, a feat equal in principle to a creative act, and the Jews pretended not to have any evidence by which they could figure out the background of his operations and general work among mankind.

Verse 31. This verse has been misused by many well-meaning disciples. They may be discussing the question of "who has the right to pray," and they will quote this passage to show that only the children of God have that right. That sinners are outside the family of God and hence are not on "praying ground" before God. All such statements are true and are abundantly taught in the New Testament, but this passage cannot be used as a proof text. This man was uninspired and could not speak with authority, therefore his words cannot be used to prove the idea stated above. But the man could make the statement as an argument, just as one of us could do, knowing that the Word of God teaches it in various places.

Verse 32. This verse is a statement of truth that is backed up by the history of mankind, but it did not require inspiration to say it, for any person could say the same thing on the strength of history.

Verse 33. Since these were all statements of truth that could not be denied, the blind man could freely make them in his argument against the Jews. And on such a basis, he reasoned that *this man* (Jesus) must have come from God, else he could not do the wonderful things accredited to him and which were known to the public in general.

Verse 34. The truth of history agreed with the statements of this man, or the Pharisees would have confronted him with some case of healing that had been done. They knew they could not do that, so they tried to dodge the issue and call in question his right even to reason on the truth. *Born in sin* was a phrase that the Jews used

to show their contempt for a truth which they could not otherwise meet. Referring to the theory of "Transmigration of souls" (see at verse 2), they wanted to weaken the force of the man's teaching by implying he was of a low origin among men. On the pretense that such a person was unworthy of their fellowship, they *cast him out*. This phrase means they excommunicated him as explained in the comments at verse 22.

Verse 35. This verse gives the first meeting of Jesus and the man after receiving the use of his eyes. The man had been insisting with the Jews that his benefactor must have been a man of God, but that was as definite as he professed to understand it. The question Jesus asked him was for the purpose of advancing him in his spiritual growth. His reasoning with the Jews before they cast him out, was evidence that he would appreciate a fuller insight pertaining to Jesus.

Verse 36. This question asked by the man is clear when we remember that he had not seen Jesus, and hence did not recognize his person. In other words, he evidently had learned that the one talking to him was a good and great man, but did not know of his Sonship with God.

Verse 37. The conversation had continued far enough for Jesus to make his claim. *Thou hast both seen him* must have been a thrilling reminder for one who had been blind all of his life until that day. How gracious it was in Jesus to seek for the man on whom he had bestowed the blessing of sight, and make it a point that among the first, if not the first, real friend he was enabled to see, was the very One who had healed him and who was his Lord in the form of man.

Verse 38. The man who had been blind made the good confession. The miracle of opening his eyes convinced him that his benefactor was a man of God, and that would mean that any claim he would make would be true. Now that they have met personally and Jesus claims to be the Son of God, the man sincerely confessed his faith. We are not told in what manner he *worshipped* Jesus, and since that word has such a wide range of meaning, it will be well to see the note in connection with Matthew 2: 2.

Verse 39. A man who has been blind physically all his life and then been given sight, would certainly be a good subject to address concerning spiritual

light. In this verse Jesus speaks of both kinds. After the man had been enabled to see physically, he gladly accepted the opportunity to see spiritually, which he manifested when he professed his faith in Christ. The last sentence of the verse refers to the Jews who had normal sight physically, but their stubbornness against the spiritual light made them as blind spiritually as the man had been physically.

Verse 40. The Pharisees felt the force of the teaching of Jesus and knew it applied to them. *Are we blind also?* This is in the form of a question, but Jesus knew it was their way of denying being blind. It could have been indicated either by the tone of their voice, or it was what they were thinking in their heart. Whichever it was, Jesus was able to read their motives and so expressed it in the next verse.

Verse 41. *If we were blind . . . no sin.* Jesus is not teaching that ignorance of one's duty will justify him in sin; the general teaching of the New Testament is against that. (See Acts 17: 30.) But if a person is actually uninformed on the matter of his duty, he would not be guilty of "sinning against light and knowledge," which is the sin Jesus meant these Jews might not have been guilty of. *Ye say, we see.* These Jews were really blind to the truths they so much needed, but their pride of self-importance kept them from giving the spiritual light a chance to shine into their heart. That caused them to be just as responsible for the obligations imposed by the spiritual enlightenment as if they actually possessed the knowledge of it.

## JOHN 10

Verse 1. The first five verses constitute a certain sheepfold, the flock of which consisted of the Jews whom John baptized for Christ the "Good Shepherd," and I shall comment on the verses from that standpoint. Some people apply this verse to the church, which is incorrect for more than one reason. No one can steal into the church, for even if he does act the hypocrite in his confession, and get the local congregation to accept him into the fellowship, that will not make him actually a member of the church. Acts 2: 47 says the Lord adds to the church those that are being saved, and that can be accomplished only by sincere obedience, hence no person can get into the church as a robber. But



in our case, certain ones actually get in though unlawfully. So the necessary conclusion is that it refers to men who succeeded in deceiving the people and actually gained entrance into the confidence and fellowship of the Lord's people. The cases in Acts 5: 36, 37 will serve as illustrations of this kind of deception.

Verse 2. The person entering the door into the sheepfold would thus be denoted as the true shepherd for two reasons. First, none but the true shepherd would attempt to gain entrance at that place. Second, even if anyone should try to get through it who was not entitled to enter, he would not be permitted to do so. (See next verse.)

Verse 3. When a flock was taken from the pasture in the evening, it was led through the gate into the fold. A gatekeeper was employed to guard the entrance until the shepherd was again ready to lead his sheep out for pasture. When he appeared at the gate, the keeper or *porter* as he is called here, would recognize him and open the entrance to the fold. But if a stranger should appear, claiming to be the shepherd, the porter would know he was a fraud and would not admit him, which was referred to in the preceding verse. A sheep is naturally adapted to affectionate relationship with his master, and it is stated in history, that shepherds in the east had the practice of naming each individual animal, very much as a child will name his pets.

Verse 4. The sheep recognized the voice of their master because he was the one who called them by name. It is characteristic of pets to notice when their name is mentioned. One may see an advertisement in the press for a lost animal, and probably the ad will state, "he recognizes the name," and then follows the name of the animal.

Verse 5. On the basis of the foregoing, if a stranger should come near a flock of sheep, they will flee from him instead of following. His voice will be strange to them which would make them fearful, hence they would flee in their fright.

Verse 6. *Parable* is not from the same Greek word that is generally used for the English term, but its practical purpose is the same. It means an illustration that is expressed in figurative language, where the comparison is to be discovered in the facts and truths that pertain to the subject.

Since the Jews were not informed in all those facts, it is stated that they *understood not* what Jesus spake. With the record of the case as we have it in the work of John and Jesus, we should be able to see the comparison implied in this group of verses. The fold is the ones John prepared for Jesus as explained at verse 1. John is the porter, and he *opened* the door into the confidence of his disciples when he introduced Jesus as the "Lamb of God" in chapter 1: 29. The door does not apply to that through which the sheep were to pass, but it was the shepherd who was to enter it. That door is the prophecies that had described him, and as soon as John learned the truths about Jesus he knew He was the one predicted, and then he opened the door to his disciples by the statement in chapter 1: 29.

Verse 7. Up to this point the speech of Jesus pertained exclusively to his relation with the disciples of John who constituted the "sheepfold," and to John who acted as the "porter" for that group of his disciples. From here through verse 18 Jesus enlarges the subject, and will make remarks that pertain to the church as another fold. For this reason we shall see many changes in the implied comparisons, which can be understood only by considering what the New Testament teaches about the church, and what Jesus means to those who desire salvation through the great institution. However, he will continue to use many of the same terms since they are as true in many respects in the second case as in the first. There will be one distinct reference to the first fold which will be pointed out and commented upon when we reach that verse. The word *again* is what introduces the second line of thought just mentioned a few lines above. In the second fold Jesus is the door as well as the shepherd. That is because no one can enter a saved condition now except through Christ (chapter 14: 6), and after entering thereat he must still be subject to him as his great Shepherd.

Verse 8. This verse was true from a general standpoint. It would include the cases mentioned in Acts 5: 36, 37, and also the false prophets and false Christs who rose up from time to time and claimed to be the fulfillers of the law and the prophets. To the extent of their success in misleading people, they were robbers. But others were well enough acquainted with the Old

Testament that they were not deceived, and they "turned a deaf ear" to the impostors.

Verse 9. The terms or expressions used in an illustration, are generally drawn from the characteristics of the subject, concerning which the comparison is made, and the application cannot always be made literally. One such expression is *go in and out*. Jesus had already selected a shepherd and his work for his illustration, and that made such a phrase appropriate. A shepherd will lead his flock into the fold in the evening for the night, then lead them out the next morning for pasture. In its application it simply means that if a man accepts Jesus as his Shepherd, he will be saved from the wolves of sin, and also will be abundantly supplied with spiritual pasture or food.

Verse 10. A thief attempting to get possession of a flock not belonging to him, could have no good motive for his action. He would count on slaughtering the animals, either for food or material for clothing or for both. The true shepherd would love the flock and would be interested in its growth in numbers and increase in weight.

Verse 11. *Good shepherd giveth his life*. Smith's Bible Dictionary says the following which will explain why a shepherd would run the risk of losing his life in defending the sheep: "The office of the eastern shepherd, as described in the Bible, was attended with much hardship, and even danger. He was exposed to the extremes of heat and cold, Genesis 31: 40. . . . He had to encounter the attacks of wild beasts, occasionally of the larger species, such as lions, wolves, panthers, and bears, 1 Samuel 17: 34; Isaiah 31: 4; Jeremiah 5: 6; Amos 3: 12; nor was he free from the risk of robbers or predatory [destructive] hordes."

Verse 12. A man who is hired to care for a flock of sheep would have no personal or affectionate interest in them. Such a person would not be expected to risk his life in defence of the flock, for he is acting only because of his financial interests. This would illustrate a man in the religious world who pretends to be laboring in behalf of the people of God, but who is in the business only because of personal interest in the form of money or popularity. Neither should he be expected to endure persecution or other disadvantages on account of the profession he is making. *Catcheth them and scattereth the sheep*. That is, the wolf

gets hold of some of the sheep which he mangles, while the others will flee in terror, the shepherd having already deserted them.

Verse 13. See the comments on the preceding verse about hirelings.

Verse 14. This mutual recognition is due to the affectionate relation between a shepherd and his flock, in which each sheep has its own name. See the comments on this point at verses 3 and 4.

Verse 15. The Father and Son are interested in the same flock, hence their mutual knowledge of each other is manifested in their common care for the flock. If the shepherd is called upon to give his life in defence of the sheep, the Father will give that life back to Him.

Verse 16. This is the verse that was referred to in the comments on verse 7. *This fold* means the one described in verses 1-5, consisting of the Jews whom John baptized in preparation for Christ. There was a special need for that group to be ready for Jesus, because the Jews as a nation had become so corrupt that none of them would have been good enough for the personal use of Him. But that was not because they alone were to be given a chance to save their souls. In the course of time the people of every race and nation were to be invited to come into the one fold which is the church. These are the *other sheep* of this verse. The term *I have* is in the present tense as to grammatical form, but it was spoken prospectively because Jesus knew that the Gentiles would hear his voice and come into the church. It was on the same principle that the Lord told Paul, "I have much people in this city" (Acts 18: 10). He knew that many of the Corinthians still in sin would accept the truth when they heard it, and by divine inspiration he could say, "I have." Jesus used the term *other sheep I have* in this verse in the same inspired prediction. *One fold and one shepherd* means there was to be one church, and that all of the Lord's sheep whether Jews or Gentiles would be in it.

Verse 17. Had the death of Christ been involuntary, his Father would not have raised him to life again. This willingness on his part caused God to love his Son.

Verse 18. Yes, man was the instrument through which Jesus died. But had it not been the will of the Son to die, no man would have been able to

slay him. (See Matthew 26: 53.) Because of his willingness to carry out this part of his Father's will, he was given the *power* (EXOUSIA, authority) to lay his life down and then take it up again. This *commandment* refers to the will of God that his Son should come into the world and die as a sacrifice for sin. When Jesus came it was for the purpose of doing that very thing. Paul wrote about this in Hebrews 10: 5-7 in connection with the new covenant.

Verses 19-21. These verses are explained at chapter 7: 20 and 9: 16.

Verse 22. This *dedication* was not any part of the law of Moses. A wicked king of Syria named Antiochus Ephiphanes, drove the priests from the altar of sacrifices at Jerusalem and burned the flesh of swine on it. After some years of struggle, a zealous Jew by the name of Judas Maccabaeus got possession of the altar. He cleansed it and dedicated it anew to the lawful service. In honor of that event the Jews established a feast that was celebrated annually. John refers to it only as a matter of date, indicating the occasion on which the things took place of which he was writing. This sacrilege by the wicked king is predicted and commented upon at Daniel 8: 9-12, in volume 4 of the Old Testament Commentary.

Verse 23. *Solomon's porch*. Thayer explains this as follows: "A porch or portico built by Solomon in the eastern part of the temple (which in the temple's destruction by the Babylonians was left uninjured, and remained down to the times of King Agrippa, to whom the care of the temple was intrusted by the emperor Claudius, and who on account of its antiquity did not dare to demolish and build it anew)." It is elsewhere described as a covered walk where people would be protected from the weather and sun. All of this explains why we read of various gatherings of the people at this place.

Verse 24. These Jews were not really wanting information, for Jesus had already furnished an abundance of evidence that he was the Christ. They hoped that by repeated demands they would catch Jesus unawares, and that he would say something on which they could base some accusation of disloyalty to Moses or to Caesar.

Verse 25. Jesus made a very brief reply to their demand. He referred to what had previously been said and

done concerning his works in the Father's name.

Verse 26. All who accepted the teaching of John became sheep for the fold that was being prepared for Christ. If they refused to accept that work of the forerunner, they naturally would not believe the teaching of the shepherd when he came. That is why Jesus told these Jews the reason they did not believe his word was because they were *not of my sheep*.

Verse 27. Jesus made more believers through his personal teaching and that of his apostles. These became sheep also and came under the same rules that regulate a flock with its shepherd, whose voice the sheep had learned.

Verse 28. *They shall never perish* is on the condition that the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd. He will give them eternal life, whereas a temporal shepherd leads his flock into temporal pasture. This verse does not teach the false doctrine known as "once in grace always in grace." But if a man is faithful to the law of Christ, then it is true that no other person can pluck him out of the hand of the Shepherd.

Verse 29. The Father will not hold a sheep regardless of whether it is faithful and satisfied with the spiritual pasturage which He provides for him. But if the sheep is thus true to the Father, then no man can get that sheep out of His grasp.

Verse 30. The Father is greater than all other beings in existence. Since He and his Son are one (in spirit and purpose), the security of a sheep that is true to them is established and is based on the unfailing power and goodness of the Lord.

Verse 31. At every climax of the arguments of Jesus, the conclusion was so unanswerable that the Jews were enraged. Instead of acting in a fair manner and accepting the teaching, they would threaten him with violence.

Verse 32. In reality it was the good works of Jesus that angered the Jews. They did not like to see the favor that he was receiving from the multitude, but were not honest enough to admit it. As a screen for their envious hypocrisy, they pretended to object to some of his personal claims.

Verse 33. The specific grievance they put forward was that Jesus made himself God. He did not make such a claim directly (although he could have

done so justly if taken rightly) but only had claimed to be the Son of God.

Verse 34. In reply to the charge of the Jews, Jesus made a quotation from Psalms 82: 6. Incidentally, let us note that Jesus called the book of Psalms *your law*, which tells us that the writings of Moses do not contain all of "the law" of the Jews. In this citation are the words *ye are gods*; they were addressed to the Jews of old to whom the law was sent, and in such a form of speech they were called *gods*. There is nothing strained in attributing such a title to God's people. The name God is a family one and includes every member of that family. Every member of the Jones family is a Jones, and likewise every member of the family of God is a God in the sense of relationship. It was in that sense the passage in Psalms was used.

Verse 35. The mere fact of being the ones to whom the word of God was sent, entitled them to the family relationship and the right to its name, which was God. *The scripture cannot be broken* denotes that these Jews had no right to speak of Jesus in a way that would criticize the scripture just quoted.

Verse 36. *Sanctified* is from HAGIAZO. It has such varied applications in the New Testament, sometimes pertaining to man and at others applying to the Lord, that I think it will be well to copy the definitions (the parts in italics) of Thayer. The reader should acquaint himself with these different clauses, and when using them in any given place in the scripture, always use the one that is appropriate. "1. To render or acknowledge to be venerable [worthy of high regard], to hallow. 2. To separate from things profane and dedicate to God, to consecrate. 3. To purify, to cleanse externally. To purify internally by reformation of soul." Jesus never had any impurities in his character, hence the definitions 1 and 2 should apply to him. The Father acknowledged the Son as being worthy of high regard, when he said he was his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased (Matthew 3: 17), and he dedicated him to the great work of God when he gave the command, "Hear ye him" (Matthew 17: 5). If the people who were honored only by having the law sent to them were entitled to be called gods, then certainly the One on whom God bestowed all these latter honors has the right to be called Son of God.

Verse 37. Jesus was willing to rest

his reputation upon the works that he did. The Jews would not have been able to name a single thing that Jesus performed that God condemned in the Scriptures. That would indicate the works were of the Father and it should have caused them to become believers.

Verse 38. The gist of this verse is the willingness of Jesus to pass over his personality for the time. Yet he insisted that the Jews should at least accept him as a worker of good things.

Verse 39. Again the Jews were baffled by the reasoning of Jesus. Instead of acknowledging their inability to meet the issue, they were inclined to take bodily possession of him. He escaped because his time had not yet come. (See chapter 7: 6.)

Verse 40. Since it was not yet time for Jesus to be taken in hand by the Jews, he moved out of the territory of Jerusalem. It was his desire to continue his good work, and he selected a community where John had done work before he was slain. His preaching had doubtless sown the seeds of truth that prepared the soil for Jesus.

Verses 41, 42. This paragraph confirms the comments on the preceding verse. The people saw in Jesus the fulfillment of many of John's sayings, and it made believers of them. *John did no miracle*. These people used the word in its physical sense, and there is no account of any such a work done by him. However, the predictions that John made of Christ and which were fulfilled, required supernatural knowledge, and such a manifestation could rightly be called miraculous.

The word *miracle* fills such a prominent place in the New Testament that I shall explain it in detail, with the hope the reader will make a note of it for reference, as it will not again be given in full. It comes from two different Greek words, and they have also been rendered by several other English words in the King James Version. Before giving the lexicon definitions of the original words, I shall state how each has been translated and how many times. One of the Greek words is DUNAMIS, and it has been rendered ability 1 time, abundance 1, meaning 1, miracle 8, power 77, strength 7, violence 1, virtue 3, wonderful work 1. The other Greek word is SEMION, and it has been rendered miracle 22 times, sign 51, token 1, wonder 3.

Since the last word is the one from which the significant words "miracle" and "sign" come usually, I shall give



the lexicon definitions of it only. Thayer defines it, "A sign, mark, token; A sign, prodigy, portent." He also explains his definitions, "That by which a person or thing is distinguished from another and by which it is known. . . . An unusual occurrence, transcending [going beyond] the common course of nature." From the foregoing information, it can be seen that the word "miracle" has a very wide range of meaning, and the specific definition to apply in any given place must be determined by the connection in which it is used. Any unusual or great or wonderful thing that is done, whether by the Lord or man, may rightly be called a miracle. But the rule is that a miracle means something that only God can do, whether he does it directly or through the agency of man.

### JOHN 11

Verse 1. Bethany was a small town a short distance from Jerusalem. Though small, it was a noted place because of the frequent visits Jesus made to it, and because of the famous sisters who lived there. The importance of Lazarus was due to the relation he had with these sisters, and that importance was increased by the miracle performed upon him described in this chapter.

Verse 2. There were several Marys in those times, and John wanted his readers to know which one he was writing about, so he specified by referring to her deed of wiping the feet of Jesus with her hair. That event had not occurred at the time of Lazarus' sickness, but it had been done at the time John wrote his record. He knew it would be read, and mentioned the incident as a mark of identification. Note that John did not merely say "it was that woman which anointed the Lord," etc., for that deed was performed by another woman also (Luke 7: 36-50), and the cases were different in some respects. The other woman was classed as a "sinner" which did not apply to Mary. That woman washed the feet of Jesus with tears (of penitential sorrow), while Mary only anointed his feet before wiping them with her hair. Hence the writer says it was that *Mary* which anointed the Lord with ointment, etc.

Verse 3. *He whom thou lovest*. We are taught that Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners, and that he loved everybody. That is true, of course, but Jesus was human as well as divine, and he could have his per-

sonal favorites as well as other human beings could have. There is nothing wrong in such affection as long as one does not allow that sentiment to influence him in the wrong direction, which we know it did not do with Jesus. But the word *love* is so much used in the New Testament, and has so many applications because of the definitions of the original Greek, that I insist the reader see the long critical note given at Matthew 5: 43.

Verse 4. *Not unto death* means the death of Lazarus was not to be permanent. Jesus knew he was going to die, but that he would be restored to life after a few days. The purpose of the event was that the Son of God might have an opportunity to be glorified by performing the miracle upon Lazarus.

Verse 5. This is commented upon at verse 3.

Verse 6. *When he had heard* has virtually the same meaning as "when the Lord knew" in chapter 4: 1; see the comments at that place. At the time the news was sent to Jesus, Lazarus was still living but nearing death. In order to have an unquestionable proof of His power, he remained two days longer where he was (verse 6), which place is named in chapter 10: 40.

Verse 7. Going into Judea did not necessarily mean going to Bethany. When Jesus proposed going into that general territory, the disciples did not know that the conditions with Lazarus had anything to do with it.

Verse 8. This intended stoning of Jesus is recorded in chapter 8: 59 and 10: 31. Having escaped the wrath of the Jews, the disciples wondered why Jesus would expose himself again and thus give them another opportunity to carry out their evil intentions.

Verse 9. Jesus used the hours of literal daylight to illustrate the idea of acting according to the light of truth and right doing. It was necessary for him to go even into Judea, in order to perform the righteous deed of raising Lazarus in the presence of witnesses. That being a proper act, it would be like a man working while he had the light of day so that he could see what he was doing. It would follow, then, that the Father would see after the safety of his Son.

Verse 10. This verse is to be understood in the light of the comments on the preceding one. That is, the *night* is just the opposite of the *day* in that passage.

Verse 11. Having given the disciples the preliminaries of the great subject, Jesus named that subject in a manner that will need further information.

Verse 12. All the disciples knew about Lazarus' condition so far was that he was sick, and they thought that since "sleep is the best medicine," it would be well not to disturb him. They did not realize the uses of figurative and literal language, which the Bible as well as other compositions uses. The reader may see a full explanation of these forms of speech in the comments at Matthew 9: 24.

Verse 13. The literal fact about Lazarus was that he was dead. The figurative appearance was that of sleep, and that is what the disciples had in mind.

Verse 14. *Plainly* is the same as saying that Jesus spoke literally.

Verse 15. This verse explains why Jesus tarried the two days in verse 6.

Verse 16. Thomas was one of the apostles, and is the one who is popularly referred to as "doubting Thomas," on account of the incident in chapter 20: 24-29. He was called Didymus as a surname, but the word in the Greek means "a twin." Why the title was applied to him as part of his name is not very clearly stated in the reference works I have seen. *Die with him* was said according to verse 8. He was so certain that Jesus would be slain as soon as he reached Judea, that he proposed to the other apostles that they share in his fate.

Verse 17. This verse with verse 39 indicates that people were buried the same day of death. When Martha suggested that the body of Lazarus was decaying, she based it on the fact that it had been dead four days. That cause for the decay would have been the same whether the body had been put into the cave or retained in the home.

Verse 18. This verse gives us about two miles for distance from Bethany to Jerusalem.

Verse 19. Jerusalem being so near to Bethany explains how *many of the Jews* could come to the home to show their sympathy for the sisters.

Verse 20. No specific reason is given why Martha only went to meet Jesus. It was not for any lack of interest or confidence in Jesus on the part of Mary, for each of them expressed the same belief in his ability to prevent death. However, from the account in Luke 10: 38-42, it seems that Martha

was the head of the house and generally more forward in social and personal demonstrations.

Verse 21. Martha presumed that Jesus would have prevented the death of her brother had he been there. Whether he would have seen fit to prevent it is another matter, for he would have been able to prevent it though absent. He prevented the death of the nobleman's son though absent (chapter 4: 46-53). But the remark of Martha showed her faith in Jesus, and the feeling of friendship on which she based it.

Verse 22. Her faith was not put to any strain even by the death of her brother. Yet she recognized the co-operation that existed between Jesus and his Father, and based her expectation on their joint wills.

Verse 23. This statement was so indefinite that it did not satisfy the sorrowing sister. But Jesus took that plan of introducing the subject.

Verse 24. Martha thought Jesus had reference to the general resurrection at the last day. She spoke of that as if she had previously been informed of its truth and had fully believed it. Doubtless it was often the subject of conversation between Jesus and these dear personal friends as he was passing the time in their humble home.

Verses 25, 26. It would be difficult to do justice to these verses without including them in one paragraph. In thought or subject matter they correspond with Revelation 20: 5, 6. In the forepart of the chapter we are studying, Jesus spoke of the physical death of Lazarus in both figurative and literal language. In this paragraph the language is partially figurative, but Jesus is speaking of spiritual death and life. *I am the resurrection* means that Jesus is the giver of life. It is true of him in two senses; in him all mankind will be brought to life physically at the last day whether good or bad (chapter 5: 28, 29; 1 Corinthians 15: 22). But the spiritual death is that of men in sin, referred to by the words *though he be dead*. Such a person will be brought to spiritual life, saved from his past sins, if he will believe on Christ. After he has thus been made alive through belief in Christ (which includes primary obedience to the commands of the Gospel), he becomes one of the persons designated by the word *liveth*. But he must be faithful to the rest of the commands and so continue to show that he *believeth*, by a faith-

ful life as a Christian. Such a person has the assurance that he *shall never die*. This death means the second one, when those who are not faithful to the end of life will be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, which is the second death (Revelation 20: 14).

Verse 27. In answer to the question of Jesus, Martha made the good confession of the divinity of him as the Son of God. She coupled her confession of faith with the fact that it had been predicted of him as the one to come into the world.

Verse 28. We did not hear when Jesus made the request for Mary to come, but the statement of Martha gives us that information.

Verse 29. How sweet it was for Mary to go *quickly* to Jesus.

Verse 30. Jesus was not far from the town, but tarried until Martha could return with her sister.

Verse 31. Verse 28 says Martha called her sister "secretly," which explains why the others in the house did not know why she left the room. *Goeth to the grave to weep there*. While that was not the reason Mary left, yet the remark shows it was a practice in those times to manifest sorrow for a departed loved one in such a manner. It is natural and right for us to sorrow for our dead friends, but it is worse when we have to sorrow as those without hope. In the case of the sisters of Lazarus it was the sorrow that was lightened by their hope for the resurrection of the just.

Verse 32. Mary expressed the same faith in the power of Jesus to control disease as did Martha. See the comments on the subject at verse 21.

Verse 33. *Groaned* is from EMBRI-MAOMAI, and Thayer defines it, "To be very angry, to be moved with indignation." *Weeping* is from KLAIO, and Thayer's definition is, "To mourn, weep, lament." It has the idea of outward and audible demonstrations. We should note that Jesus not only saw Mary weeping, but also the Jews that were with her. Mary's actions were genuine and prompted by true sorrow for her dead. The Jews were merely going through it as the usual formality of mourning for the dead. Jesus knew the hearts of all of them and could see the coldness therein, notwithstanding their outward show of sympathy. It was this fact that moved him to indignation. Yet he restrained himself

from expressing his feelings, but *groaned in the spirit*.

Verse 34. Jesus never had to ask a question for information, but he wished to show a sympathetic interest in the case, and asked where they had laid him. Have you ever visited a home where death has entered? You asked to see the form of their dear dead and were told to "come this way." The look of utter dejection on the faces of the relatives as they said this, then started toward the silent chamber where lay the loved one, could not be described in words.

Verse 35. Such a look as the preceding verse describes was doubtless on the faces of these sisters as they led Jesus to the tomb of their brother. There could be no question as to the sincerity of that look or of the tone of voice when they bade the Lord to "come and see." *Jesus wept*. The second word is different from the one in verse 33. It is from DAKRUO, which Thayer defines, "To weep, shed tears." This is the only place in the Greek New Testament where this word is used. It does not indicate any audible expressions. Jesus had restrained himself from such demonstrations, even when he saw Mary convulsed in sorrow, because he wanted to ignore the hypocritical performances of the Jews. But the sight of these sorrowing sisters, and the pathos in their sweetly-sad voices, was so overwhelming that he burst into tears that were so generous that they could be seen.

Verse 36. The Jews missed the point as to why Jesus wept. It is true he loved Lazarus, and that feeling blended with his sympathy for the sisters. Yet he had as much love for him at the time of his death, although he was many miles away; but there is no indication that he wept then. This flow of tears was caused by his sympathy for the sisters. (See the comments on Verses 33-35.)

Verse 37. The Lord did not see fit to prevent the death of Lazarus, and the people implied that it was because he *could not* do so.

Verse 38. *Jesus therefore*. Because of these cruel words of the people, it caused Jesus to have a renewal of the feelings described in verse 33. Moffatt's rendering of this place is, "This made Jesus chafe afresh." By this time he had reached the grave or tomb, and found it closed by a stone.

Verse 39. Jesus told them to take the stone away. "The Lord helps those

who help themselves," is an old and true saying. The people could not restore Lazarus to life, but they could remove the stone. The statement of Martha about the condition of Lazarus' body was a mild protest against opening the tomb. We are not given any explanation of this, in the light of her great faith as expressed in verse 22. She could not have doubted the ability of Jesus to raise him even out of his state of decay, when she had already affirmed belief in his ability to resurrect him out of death at the last day (verse 24), at which time the entire body will have returned to dust. Her statement was a suggestion that Jesus restore her brother to life before removing the stone, to save those present from the offensiveness due to decomposition of the body.

Verse 40. Sometimes people will propose faith in the Lord's power to do the greater things, and then manifest doubt concerning the lesser ones. For instance, they will ascribe to Him the power necessary to create the universe with its millions of items, then question his ability to cleanse a man's soul by washing his body in water. Not that one miracle really is greater than another, only it might appear to be so. Martha professed to believe that Jesus could raise the body of Lazarus out of the grave long after it had been absorbed by the elements of the earth, but manifested doubt about his ability to care for the sense of smell over a decaying body after but four days since death.

Verse 41. In obedience to the instruction of Jesus, they removed the stone from the grave or cave that was being used for burial. Before proceeding with the act of resurrecting the dead, Jesus first went to God in prayer, thereby setting a good example for others who claim to be children of God. This also was to demonstrate to the ones present that He was accomplishing his great works in cooperation with his Father. If the prayer is answered, it will show also that God is recognizing that cooperation. It was appropriate to express gratitude for the past support his Father had given him.

Verse 42. Jesus never had any doubts of his Father's assistance, but the people might have had some questioning in their minds about it. This thought is suggested by verse 37, where they intimated that Jesus had been unable to prevent the death of Lazarus. Now if these same people

hear him appeal to his Father, and then see the favorable response to that appeal, they will know they were wrong in their accusation as to his failure to intervene and prevent Lazarus from dying.

Verse 43. *Loud* is from *MEGAS*, and in the King James Version it has been translated by "loud" 33 times, and by "great" 145 times. It means here that the voice was not only of great volume as to degree of tone, but was one that indicated authority.

Verse 44. Even after reviving Lazarus from death, it required miraculous power to enable him to come out of the tomb, for he had been bound hand and foot. That is why Jesus instructed them to *loose him, and let him go*.

Verse 45. This miracle caused many of the Jews to believe on Jesus. That was one of the purposes for which the deed was done. (See chapter 20: 30,31.)

Verse 46. While many of the Jews believed, some of them did not. And of that class, some went to the Pharisees in the spirit of talebearers and reported the event of the resurrection of Lazarus.

Verse 47. This *council* was the Sanhedrin, the highest court the Jews were allowed to have in the time of Christ. Upon the report brought to the Pharisees from the tomb of Lazarus, they became alarmed and called a special session of the council. For detailed information about the Sanhedrin, see the note with comments on Matthew 26: 3.

Verse 48. The Jews finally lost their place (Palestine, with Jerusalem as the capital) and nation as a governmental unit. But it was because they persecuted Jesus, and not because they allowed him to teach the people. (See Matthew 23: 38, 39; 27: 25.) The first reference in the parentheses is a prediction of the desolation of Jerusalem, and the second is the rash proposition of the Jews for that very thing to happen, although they did not realize what their mad statement would mean to their people.

Verse 49. *Ye know nothing at all* means the same as if Caiaphas had said: "You have not gone far enough in your suggestion." The speakers in the Sanhedrin had suggested only that something should be done to stop the miraculous works of Jesus.

Verse 50. The proposition the high priest had to offer was the very thing that God intended should come to pass. However, the motive Caiaphas had



was only that it would be a short and sure way of stopping the work of Jesus. But God used the mouth of the high priest to deliver this weighty speech to the Sanhedrin.

Verse 51. Such a use of the high priest as stated in the preceding verse was nothing new. (See Leviticus 10: 11; Deuteronomy 17: 9; Malachi 2: 7.) As time went on after the writings of Moses were completed, it was necessary occasionally to give the people further revelation of truth. That was done through the words of prophets or the lips of the priests as the passages cited show. That is why it says he spake this not of himself, which means it was not something that originated with him. The Holy Ghost (Spirit) was guiding him in this lofty speech, just as it had done to the prophets in Old Testament times. (See 2 Peter 1: 20, 21.)

Verse 52. No mere human being, especially a wicked man like Caiaphas, would or could make such a grand statement as this verse. *Not for that nation only* denotes that Jesus was to be the sacrifice for all nations of the world. *The children of God* is spoken prospectively, just as Jesus spoke of his "other sheep" in chapter 10: 16, referring to the Gentiles who would accept the Gospel when it was offered to them.

Verse 53. The Jews accepted the proposition made by the priest, and began at once to plot the death of Jesus. In so doing they would not only gratify their wicked personal designs upon the Lamb of God, but would unconsciously carry out the great work of Jehovah in "providing for himself a Lamb" for the atonement of the human race.

Verse 54. Jesus knew the Jews were plotting to kill him, but his time for death had not yet come, hence he maintained some privacy in his walk. He went to a city called Ephraim that was near the wilderness, and thus evaded the evil schemes of his enemies.

Verse 55. *Nigh at hand* is a comparative phrase, for the first verse of the next chapter shows that it was at least six days before. *To purify themselves*. The law of Moses required all persons to be both physically and ceremonially clean before participating in the passover. (See Leviticus 22: 1-6).

Verse 56. When these Jews gathered in the temple in the days before the feast, they became curious as to

whether Jesus would come to it. He had disappeared sometime previously and gone into the region of the wilderness. This fact led some to intimate that he would be afraid to attend the passover.

Verse 57. This was like an official advertisement for the whereabouts of some wanted criminal. The Jews did not realize that whenever his "time had come," Jesus would be at hand and not make any effort to escape from them. The truth of this statement is clearly shown in chapter 18: 4-11. Jesus fully intended to let his presence be known as soon as it was the proper time. In the meantime he associated with his disciples and personal friends, making his last visit in the town of Bethany near Jerusalem, as the next chapter shows.

## JOHN 12

Verse 1. Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem, and was the scene of some of the most personal experiences of Jesus. The significance of mentioning the case of Lazarus will be seen later in this chapter.

Verse 2. According to Matthew 26: 6, this supper was in the house of "Simon the leper," who evidently had been healed by Jesus. *Made him a supper* denotes that Jesus was the honor guest, but his disciples also were present. *Martha served*, even as she did in her own house on another occasion (Luke 10: 38-40). *Lazarus was one of them*. The supper was had in honor of Jesus, but Lazarus was given special mention because of the miracle that had been performed upon him.

Verse 3. This anointing should not be confused with the one in Luke 7: 37-50. That was done by a woman from the outcast ranks and was known as a "sinner," but the present case was by the sister of Lazarus, who was one of the personal friends of Jesus.

Verse 4. *Should betray him* is translated, "was about to deliver him up," by the Englishman's Greek New Testament. The statement was made to explain the actions of Judas here and elsewhere as they pertained to money.

Verse 5. *Three hundred pence*. Weights and measures, as well as money values, changed from time to time and in different places. But in any way it is estimated, the value Judas placed on this ointment was great, which agrees with the statement of John (verse 3) that it was *very costly*.

Verse 6. No doubt Judas sincerely regretted seeing this valuable product used in this way, but it was not because of his interest in the poor. He was covetous and it hurt him to see that much value bestowed upon another. *Had the bag* means Judas was the treasurer for the group, and hence he was especially interested in anything that looked like money value. *Bare* is from *BASTAZO*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "To bear away, carry off." The general meaning of the word is to have charge of the money, but the more specific meaning applies to Judas according to Thayer's definition. In chapter 13: 29, 30, the bag was still in the hands of Judas just as he was ready to leave the group. He went out with the bag and was never again with Jesus and the other apostles, so that he truly "carried off" the treasury as the specific definition states, and verifies the charge of John that he was a thief.

Verse 7. *Against the day of my burying*. It was an old custom to anoint the dead and use spices at the time of burial. (See 2 Chronicles 16: 14; John 19: 40; Luke 23: 56.) Mark 14: 8 quotes Jesus as saying, "She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

Verse 8. *Poor always . . . with you*. Jesus did not criticize the idea of giving something to the poor, for he regarded that as a good work. He instructed the rich young man (Matthew 19: 21) to give his possessions to the poor. But this statement was about the idea of using present opportunities that are soon to pass. He was soon to leave the world and that would stop all chances of doing him a bodily favor, while they would never cease having opportunities for helping the poor.

Verse 9. The presence of Jesus only would have brought the people out to Bethany, but they had a special interest in seeing Lazarus alive, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. This was a visible evidence of the power that Jesus possessed, for the deed had been done in that very place where Lazarus had lived, and there could be no question about his identity.

Verses 10, 11. It would be difficult to form a just description of minds as wicked as those possessed by the chief priests. We frequently hear of witnesses being slain or otherwise removed to prevent their testifying in an important case. But generally it is done on behalf of a felon who is about

to be brought to trial for his crimes. Lazarus was only enjoying his natural right to live after having been restored from the dead by the Lord. And the motive for removing him was to destroy a visible but silent testimony in favor of Jesus, who had incurred the wrath of these priests by exposing their hypocrisy. No wonder such people could find it in their hearts finally to cause the death of the Teacher they hated.

Verse 12. Bethany was near Jerusalem, and the movements of Jesus were being made known in the city. The news evidently came back by the ones who had gone out to Bethany, mentioned in verse 9.

Verse 13. It was an ancient custom to honor an approaching dignitary by making a carpet of garments and the foliage of trees on which he might proceed. The season of the Passover was at hand, and great numbers of Jews from all over the world were at Jerusalem to attend it. That is why the preceding verse mentions *much people*. *Hosanna* is a Greek word and Robinson defines it, "Save now, succor now, be now propitious." He says further that it is from a Hebrew word that means "a joyful acclamation." Thayer's definition agrees with this but is more condensed. The passage denotes an expression of good will to Him who is able to save others because he is coming in the Lord's name.

Verse 14. *Found a young ass*. The accounts of Mark, Luke and John, leave out all mention of the mother of the colt, and the reader may be somewhat confused over it. The subject is fully discussed in the comments on Matthew's account (chapter 21: 1-7), and I urge him to see that place.

Verse 15. The passage cited is in Zechariah 9: 9. The prophet not only predicted the triumphal entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, but said he would come "having salvation." It would be useless repetition to say this means "saving himself," as the margin renders it, for that truth is included in the fact of his riding triumphantly into the city. But Jesus was coming into the capital of the Jewish nation to bring salvation to all people in the world, whether they be Jew or Gentile.

Verse 16. The word *glorify* has several shades of meaning, and the one to apply in any given place must be determined by the context. In verse 23 it is stated that *the hour is come*

(is at hand or very near), when the Son of man was to be glorified. This denotes that as yet He had not been glorified in the sense the word is used in this passage. Furthermore, chapter 7: 39 says the reason the Holy Ghost was not yet given, was because Jesus was not yet glorified, and chapter 16: 7-13 shows that the Holy Ghost was not to be given until Jesus had gone to his Father. All of these truths give us the meaning of *glorified* in this verse to be the eternal form of Jesus in Heaven; the form referred to in 1 John 3: 2. After that great circumstance of the glorification of Jesus, the disciples recalled the many things He had said to them, and the meaning of them became clear to their understanding.

Verse 17. These *people* related what they had seen and heard on the occasion of the resurrection of Lazarus. *Bare record* means they made their statements as eye and ear witnesses of the miracle that had so deeply impressed many in the community.

Verse 18. The testimony of the witnesses mentioned in the preceding verse, caused many others to believe on Him, which accounts for their actions described in verse 13.

Verse 19. *World* is from *kosmos*, which means the inhabitants of the earth. The statement of the Pharisees was one of envy and fear. Their complaint was among themselves, as if each one thought the other should "do something about it."

Verse 20. The question may arise why these Greeks (who were Gentiles) were permitted to worship at the feast, which was primarily a Jewish affair. In 1 Kings 8: 41-43 is a part of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. He predicted that "strangers" (people outside the Jewish nation) would come to the temple to pray, which is one act of worship. Solomon asked God to grant the prayer of these people. Then in chapter 9: 3 of that book, the Lord told Solomon that his prayer was heard, which means it was to be granted, and that included what was asked on behalf of the prayers of the strangers. It will help the reader to understand this matter if he will consult the note on "worship" at Matthew 2: 2. The word has such a wide range of meanings, that it would have been easy for these *Greeks* to perform some phase of it on the present occasion, without infringing upon any ceremony that was the exclusive right of the Jews.

Verse 21. Philip was of Galilee as stated here and in chapter 1: 44. It was natural, therefore, for these Greeks to contact him in their inquiry to see the greatest of Galileans. The fame of Jesus had reached so far that these visitors had heard of it.

Verse 22. I have not seen any account of the previous association of Philip with Andrew, but they seem to have been close personal friends. Philip passed on to Andrew the request of the Greeks, and together they reported it to Jesus.

Verse 23. We have no information as to what was done about the aforementioned request. However, Jesus stated to Philip and Andrew (perhaps in the hearings of these Greeks), that the hour was at hand when the Son of man was to be *glorified*. The last word is explained in the comments at verse 16. This glorification was to take place in Heaven, which had to be preceded by His death and resurrection. That brought the conversation to the point where it was necessary to say something about the death of Jesus, which will be the subject in the next verse.

Verse 24. The original word for *corn* is defined "grain" in the lexicon. Jesus used the subject to show why his death was necessary. If a grain could be kept alive, it would never be able to grow into another stock of the species. All that its owner would have would be the single grain; no reproduction. Likewise, if Christ had not died, he would never have produced others to share with him in the glorified state.

Verse 25. The meaning of this verse is set forth at some length in the comments on Matthew 10: 39, as it pertains to the two kinds of life. As the word *hate* is used here, it is defined by Thayer to mean, "To love less, to postpone in love or esteem, to slight." Robinson defines it, "Not to love, to love less, to slight."

Verse 26. *Serve* is from a different Greek word from the one that suggests a slave. It means to minister to or wait upon, such as serving one with the necessities of life. No one can render such service to Christ today directly. But that kind of service can be given to his disciples as he taught in Matthew 25: 35-40. On the principle that such service is regarded by Jesus as if it were done for him personally, so the Father will honor that servant for his loving ministry

as having been done for his Son. But this material ministrations should be considered only as one phase of our service to Christ. We should be even more concerned with rendering service to Him in the great Cause for which he died and "fell into the ground."

Verse 27. *Troubled* means to be agitated, which was the condition of mind that was upon the Saviour. He was beginning to feel the awful emotions that came to him in greater force later in the garden. *Save me from this hour* was equivalent to his prayer for the removal of the "cup," mentioned in Matthew 26: 39. More will be said on that subject when we come to John 18: 11. Jesus asked his Father to save him from *this hour* (not the cross). When later He prayed "if it be possible" let the cup pass, it meant virtually the same resignation of spirit that is expressed here in the words, *for this cause came I unto this hour*. The human nature of Jesus longed for relief from his mental suffering, but his divine knowledge told him that he must endure it.

Verse 28. The original word for *glorify* as used here is defined by Thayer as follows: "To make renowned, render illustrious, i. e., to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged." God answered the prayer of Jesus in an audible voice but in words the people did not understand. This made the third time God spoke with words that could be heard; at the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3: 17), and at the transfiguration (Matthew 17: 5), being the other two. That voice was not heard in audible form again that we have any account of, but the Almighty demonstrated his majesty on behalf of his Son more than once afterward, particularly when he raised him from the dead.

Verse 29. The voice from heaven was somewhat indistinct so that the people did not understand it, yet sufficiently different from the noise of thunder that some of them knew it was some form of speech addressed to Jesus in answer to his prayer, and they interpreted it to be the voice of an angel.

Verse 30. Jesus did not need the voice of his Father to satisfy Him, but some kind of demonstration was necessary as evidence for the crowd.

Verse 31. *Now* denotes that the time was very near when the great test was

to be made. Jesus was soon to be slain as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and thus counteract the work of the *prince of this world*. Chapter 14: 30; 16: 11; Luke 4: 6; Ephesians 2: 2, shows this *prince* is Satan.

Verse 32. This verse is directly connected with the preceding one, showing that Christ was to be lifted up on the cross to accomplish the sacrifice. *Draw all men unto me*. Jesus never contradicted himself, and since he taught (Matthew 7: 13, 14) that most people will be lost, he would not here teach that all would come to him. The point is with reference to what person was to be the most important drawing power. Hitherto it had been the influence of Satan and his agents, but the lifting up on the cross of the Son of man would draw men to Him and not Satan.

Verse 33. This verse is added to indicate that the lifting up mentioned in the preceding one was to be a literal action upon his body.

Verse 34. As usual, the people failed to recognize in Jesus a person who was both human and divine. As a result, they could not understand how he could die bodily, and yet establish a kingdom that would "stand forever."

Verse 35. Jesus did not give the people a direct reply, for he had already given them many lessons about his great work in cooperation with his Father, and they seemed to be overlooked by most of them. But he intimated that his personal instructions would soon be ended, and they should make use of them while they could.

Verse 36. Jesus gave them one more parting exhortation to walk in the light that had been offered to them, then he disappeared from the crowd.

Verse 37. The hardness of men's hearts prevents them from taking a fair view of the plainest evidences. The miracles that Jesus performed were so many and under such varied circumstances, that it should have been more difficult to doubt than to believe.

Verse 38. God never did force a man to do wrong; but He knows all about the future, and can see the actions of men for centuries before they are born. With such knowledge of the future, God inspired his prophets to write about it. The common phrase "that it might be fulfilled," means the same as if it said, "and in so doing, it fulfilled," etc. The prophecy of Esaias



(Isaiah) cited is in chapter 53: 1 of his book.

Verse 39. *Could not.* The first word is from DUNAMAI, and the definitions of Thayer and Robinson agree, but the latter is clearer and I shall quote it as follows: "To be able, I can." He then adds the following explanations: "Both in a physical and moral sense, and whether depending on the disposition and faculties of the mind, on the degree of strength or skill, or on the nature and external circumstances of the case." Upon further consideration, I think it will be helpful to quote Thayer's definition also: "To be able, have power," and his comments are, "Whether by virtue of one's own ability and resources, or a state of mind, or through favorable circumstances." This information from the lexicons teaches us that these people had deliberately closed their eyes and hardened their hearts against the light of God's truth. In such a state of mind they *could not* believe in the sense of the word as explained by the lexicons. *Because that Esaias said* means that Esaias (Isaiah) said it because God knew it would happen, and caused the prophet to write it. (See comments, preceding verse.)

Verse 40. This verse is to be understood in the light of comments on verses 38, 39.

Verse 41. The account of this vision is in Isaiah 6: 1-10. *Saw his glory* is described in the first four verses of the passage cited.

Verse 42. The significance of being put out of the synagogue is set forth at chapter 9: 22, 23. But though it was a great privilege to be admitted to these assemblies, neither that nor any other personal advantage should have been counted above the honor of being a believer in Christ.

Verse 43. This verse states the motive of the conduct mentioned in the preceding one. It is hard to understand, but perhaps it is because the favor of God is connected with requirement that one shall sacrifice some of his selfish practices.

Verse 44. Jesus means that believing on him did not stop there; it includes belief in God also. The truth is that no man can truthfully say he believes on either the Father or the Son without believing on the other.

Verse 45. This verse embraces the same principle as the preceding, but the difference is due to the personalities of the two. In order for man to

see Jesus, he had to take on himself the fleshly body. But in spirit and purpose they are the same, so that seeing Jesus was virtually equivalent to seeing God.

Verse 46. By coming into the world in human form, Jesus was enabled to bring the light of Heaven within the grasp of man, thereby delivering him from spiritual darkness.

Verse 47. The original word for *judge* has several shades of meaning; one of them is, "to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong." The world had already been pronounced wrong or "in unbelief" (Romans 11: 32) before Jesus came into it, hence he did not come for that purpose. Instead, He came to provide a plan whereby the world might be saved from its bondage of unbelief.

Verse 48. If a man rejects the plan offered by Jesus for his salvation, then God will judge him in the last day. When that day arrives, God will bring condemnation upon the disobedient man, finding him guilty under the words that were spoken by his Son, and using him as the acting judge (Acts 17: 31).

Verse 49. It will be consistent for the Father to judge the unbeliever by the words of Jesus, because He has delivered to mankind the words that his Father gave him.

Verse 50. Jesus could speak in this positive manner about the laws of his Father, because he was with Him from the beginning, and had direct and personal knowledge of their eternal character. (See chapter 1: 1, 14.)

## JOHN 13

Verse 1. This was the fourth and last passover that Jesus attended after his baptism. *Before the feast* means just before, for the hour of his death was in sight; he was to die the next day. *Loved them unto the end.* Regardless of the many weaknesses the apostles had shown at various times, Jesus never wavered in his love for them.

Verse 2. This chapter corresponds with Luke 22: 1-23 in most respects. There are some items of that last night given in Luke's account that John does not give, and vice versa. The most significant difference being at the point when Jesus instituted his own supper. Not that any disagreement exists, but the items are more detailed in some accounts than in the others, and I shall comment on that

when we come to verse 23. Until then the comments will be made on the verses in their order. *Being ended* is translated "taking place" by the Englishman's Greek New Testament. That is correct, for the passover supper was far from being ended when Jesus did the things that are recorded now. *The devil having put*. This was done when Judas saw what he called the "waste" of the precious ointment. (See the comments at Matthew 26: 14.)

Verse 3. Jesus knew that the work his Father had given him to do was about done, and that he would soon return to Him from whom he had come into the world.

Verse 4. The *garments* Jesus laid aside were the outer ones that were worn over the closer-fitting ones next to the body. They were discarded for the time in order to give more freedom for the manual performance he intended to do.

Verse 5. A great deal of confusion has come upon the religious world over the subject of feet washing. I shall quote from Smith's Bible Dictionary concerning this: "Washing the Hands and Feet. As knives and forks were not used in the East, in Scripture times, in eating, it was necessary that the hand, which was thrust into the common dish, should be scrupulously clean; and again, as sandals were ineffectual against the dust and heat of the climate, washing the feet on entering a house was an act both of respect to the company and refreshing to the traveler. The former of these usages was transformed by the Pharisees of the New Testament age into a matter of ritual observance, Mark 7: 3, and special rules were laid down as to the time and manner of its performance. Washing the feet did not rise to the dignity of a ritual observance except in connection with the services of the sanctuary. Exodus 30: 19, 21. It held a high place, however, among the rites of hospitality. Immediately that a guest presented himself at the tent door, it was usual to offer the necessary materials for washing the feet. Genesis 18: 4; 19: 2; 24: 32; 43: 24; Judges 19: 21. It was a yet more complimentary act, betokening equally humility and affection, if the host himself performed the office for his guest. 1 Samuel 25: 41; Luke 7: 38, 44; John 13: 5-14; 1 Timothy 5: 10. Such a token of hospitality is still occasionally exhibited in the East."

Verse 6. The mere act of having his feet washed would not seem strange to Peter, but he was astonished that his Lord was going to do that for him.

Verse 7. *What I do thou knowest not now*. The customary practice of washing the feet, and the conditions that originated it, were known to Peter. (See the historical quotation at verse 5.) Hence we know that Jesus meant to teach a lesson aside from those facts, that would have a moral and spiritual significance.

Verse 8. Still seeing only the lowly service of hospitality in the act, Peter protested having Jesus wash his feet. This statement opened the way for Jesus to begin the lesson he intended by the performance. He introduced it by the assertion that such a protest was equivalent to rejecting the partnership with Him.

Verse 9. This suggested to Peter that he had missed the point of the whole performance, and that some great benefit was to be derived from his Lord that was not visible in the literal washing. With such a thought about it, he concluded he wanted even a fuller amount of the favor, and asked Jesus for a more general washing.

Verse 10. Jesus understood that Peter still had literal or material washing in his mind, although he seemed to expect some mysterious effects from it. He therefore made his first remarks from that standpoint, meaning that since they were normally clean in the main except their feet, those parts would need washing since they had just come in from a journey on foot. After saying that much on the material side of the subject, admitting them all to be clean in that respect, Jesus immediately added the exception that must be understood from the moral or spiritual standpoint, when he used the short phrase, *but not all*.

Verse 11. John explains in this verse what Jesus meant in the preceding one. The act of Judas in betraying Jesus was planned by an unclean heart, and hence the Lord referred to him in this indefinite way as being unclean.

Verse 12. Jesus completed the feet washing while making the aforesaid speech, resumed wearing his outer garments, and again took his place at the table where the passover supper was still in progress. *Set down* is from

ANAPIPTO, which Thayer defines, "To recline at table." In old times people reclined while eating, at a table only a few inches higher than the floor. The diners would lie on their sides and rest the head on one hand while serving themselves with the other. They lay at a 45-degree angle with the table, which placed the head of one person virtually in the bosom of the one behind him, and in very intimate cases the two would be very near each other. This position explains how Jesus could wash their feet even while they were eating without disturbing them, and without getting into any inconvenient or unbecoming posture, as would have been necessary were they sitting at a modern table with their feet under it. It explains also how the woman could stand behind Jesus while he was eating (Luke 7: 36-38). After Jesus had taken his place again at the table, he asked them if they knew what had been done; meaning whether they knew what it signified.

Verse 13. *Master* is from a word that means teacher, and *Lord* means a ruler. The apostles had recognized Jesus as having both of these functions over them.

Verse 14. As the world would look at the matter, each of the aforesaid qualifications would entitle a man to the services of others. Instead of assuming such a superior attitude, Jesus acted the part of a servant in performing a necessary though humble favor. He specified the washing of each other's feet as an example of the kind of spirit they should manifest in their dealings with each other.

Verse 15. This verse is more general and shows Jesus intended his act to be an example of humility, a characteristic that had been wanting so many times in their conduct.

Verse 16. This verse is more teaching along the same line as the preceding ones. In the kingdom of Christ there are to be no great and small members as men count greatness.

Verse 17. This short verse contains a great principle that permeates the entire structure of man's relation to God. No one can serve Him without knowing what will please Him, but even that knowledge is useless unless it is carried out in performance.

Verse 18. *I speak not of you all*. Jesus knew his lesson of humility would not benefit all of his apostles, for a man

like Judas would not be influenced by anything that did not contribute to his selfishness. Jesus did not name the traitor, but cited a prediction about him that is in Psalms 41: 9. *Lifted up his heel* is a phrase based on the ancient manner of reclining at table while eating. (See the comments at verse 12.) In that position a person could receive a morsel of bread from another, and at the same time make the personal attack against him with his heel.

Verse 19. This verse shows another instance where a prediction becomes an evidence after it is fulfilled. (See the comments at Luke 21: 13.)

Verse 20. This verse teaches the relation between God, his Son and the apostles. They all are so connected in the divine plan, that no man can either accept or reject either part of the group, without doing the same thing to the others. Jesus taught this same great truth in Matthew 10: 40, which was just after selecting his 12 apostles and was giving them their "first commission."

Verse 21. *Troubled* is from the same Greek word as that in chapter 12: 27, and the definition is the same in each place. However, the cause of His agitation in the present instance was the thought of being betrayed by one of the group at the table.

Verse 22. When Jesus announced in general terms that one of them was going to betray him, they each gave an inquiring look at the others. There was only one man among them who knew whom Jesus meant, and that was Judas the traitor.

Verse 23. The events of this last night, especially as they pertain to the Lord's supper, are not all stated in any one of the Gospel records; neither are the accounts given in chronological order. Before going any farther with this chapter, the reader should see the notes at Matthew 26: 20. I shall now comment on the verses here in their order. *Leaning on Jesus' bosom*. This act is explained by the comments on verse 12, concerning the position of the body while eating. *Whom Jesus loved*. According to chapter 21: 20, 24, this apostle was John. Jesus was human as well as divine, and had his personal friends as other men do. (See the comments at chapter 11: 3.)

Verse 24. As John was nearest to Jesus, Peter made a sign to him that

he should ask Jesus to point out the traitor.

Verse 25. John then asked Jesus direct whom he meant.

Verse 26. When Jesus answered John's question Judas did not hear it. The answer was accompanied with the act of dipping a piece of bread in the dish containing the broth. He did this at the same time that Judas did, which was part of the sign to the other apostles, that answered their question of who was to be the betrayer. (See Matthew 26: 23.) There was nothing strange in their both dipping into the dish at the same time. (See the comments about hands and feet washing at verse 5.) The unusual thing was that of giving the piece to Judas when he had already served himself with one. According to Matthew 26: 25, when this act was done, Judas asked Jesus if it was he who was to betray him. Judas could not have asked the question for information, for he had already contracted with the chief priests to betray his Lord. But all of the others had asked the same question, and if he had kept silent, it would have been so conspicuous as to manifest his guilt.

Verse 27. *Satan entered into him.* Not that it was the first time (Luke 22: 3), for he had previously made his agreement with the chief priests to betray Jesus. But Satan made another and more insistent demand that he carry out his wicked promise. Jesus knew all about it, and hence he added the words of the last sentence. It means the same as if Jesus had said: "Since you have determined to betray me, do not delay to perform the act according to your agreement with the chief priests."

Verses 28, 29. *Need of against the feast.* Not the passover feast, for that was a one-day affair, and it was about over at this time. But that day was followed immediately with seven more days of unleavened bread which was also called a feast (Leviticus 23: 5, 6). The apostles thought that possibly Jesus meant for Judas to go and attend to that matter, since he was their treasurer and handled the money. They had just learned that Judas was going to betray Jesus, but they did not connect that with the suggestion of Jesus about the promptness to be exercised by Judas.

Verse 30. Judas "took Jesus at his

word" and *went immediately out* after receiving the sop. He went to the chief priests and obtained a band of men for his wicked use. Thayer defines this band as "a detachment of soldiers." The *sop* was used as a part of the passover feast. Judas went out as soon as he had received the sop and never came back. The Lord's Supper was instituted after the passover supper. (See the comments at Matthew 26: 20.) From the aforesaid truths we will see that Judas was not present when the Lord's supper was instituted.

Verse 31. *Now is accommodative* and means the time was at hand when the Son of man was to be glorified, referring to the scenes that were to end with the crucifixion. *Glorified* is from *doxazo*, which Thayer defines at this place, "To exalt to a glorious rank or condition." The supreme sacrifice which Jesus was soon to make would exalt him to the highest rank of worthiness, for it would constitute Him the atoning sacrifice for the whole world. It would also glorify God since it was his Son who was to be given to the world in this great loving sacrifice. (See chapter 3: 16.)

Verse 32. This means virtually the same as the preceding verse.

Verse 33. *Little children* was an endearing term, used to indicate the nearness that Jesus felt for his apostles. *Ye shall seek me* means that after Jesus was taken from them, the apostles would long for his presence again, because they would miss his loving counsel. They would not be able to follow him *then* (verse 36), because he was going to die soon, and they must remain in the world to do the work for their Master.

Verse 34. *New commandment.* The people of God have always been commanded to love each other, hence that was not what was new. But the motive for that love was new, namely, because *I have loved you*. This was not an arbitrary reason but a logical one. If I know that Jesus loves my brother, I would conclude that the brother was entitled to that love. And if he is good enough to obtain the love of the Master, surely he is good enough for the love of me who am only a fellow-servant of the Master.

Verse 35. Since such love as the forementioned is so different, then when men see it manifested between



the apostles, they will take it to mean they are disciples of Jesus.

Verse 36. Peter was referring to the statement of Jesus recorded in verse 33. Jesus repeated the statement, then added that Peter would follow him afterwards. He said this with reference to the manner in which Peter would die. (See chapter 21: 18, 19.)

Verse 37. Peter was always inclined to be rash and impulsive. In his eagerness to go with Jesus (wherever that was to be), he made this exaggerating assertion.

Verse 38. This prediction of Jesus is recorded in Matthew 26: 34; Mark 14: 30, and Luke 22: 34. In some of the passages the prediction includes a few more details than the present one. There is a special feature of the fulfillment in Luke 22: 61.

### JOHN 14

Verse 1. Jesus and his apostles are still at the table where they have just concluded the passover supper. We might properly refer to this chapter as an "after-dinner" conversation between the Master and his beloved disciples. He had frequently told them that he would have to leave them, and they were naturally saddened by the announcement (chapter 16: 6). In this speech Jesus wishes to give some words of consolation for their benefit. *Troubled* means "agitated," and Jesus bids them not have such a feeling, and the basis of the opposite state of mind was to be their belief in the relationship between the Father and the Son.

Verse 2. If a dear friend is about to leave us, it would be some consolation to know that his leaving was not to be a permanent separation, and also that he was going away to arrange a special and better place than the one we now occupy. And what is especially cheering is the promise that he will find a place where we and our departing friend can again be together, never to be separated. Such a consolation Jesus offered to his apostles. The *Father's house* means Heaven, the personal dwelling place of God and the holy angels, and the place where Jesus lived before coming to the earth. *Mansions* is from *MONE*, and Thayer defines it, "A staying, abiding, dwelling, abode: John 14: 2." There is only one place called Heaven as the dwelling of God, and it was in existence before Jesus came to the earth. He therefore was not going away to build

or create such an institution. But he was going to make arrangements for the residence of his apostles in that celestial city. If a man writes ahead to a hotel for reservations, he does not expect the managers to build some more rooms, but to reserve those already there for the use of the expected guests. That is what Jesus meant he was going to do when he said, *I go to prepare a place for you*. He was going to Heaven to make "reservations" for his apostles (as well as for all others who faithfully serve Him).

Verse 3. This verse sets forth the following truths. Jesus was going away from the world to his Father's house to prepare a place for his apostles. After making that preparation he was coming to get his apostles. The purpose for coming after his apostles was that they might be with Him in the place prepared for them in his Father's house. All of this allows but one conclusion, namely, the *mansions* promised in verse 2 are in Heaven and not on the earth.

Verse 4. This short verse has two important parts, namely, the place to which Jesus was going (to his Father's house in Heaven), and the way to reach that place with reference to those who would go there after Him. The apostles should have known all this from the abundance of teaching Jesus had given them through the past three years.

Verse 5. In spite of all the teaching Jesus had given them, they seemed to be rather confused. Hence Thomas said they did not even know where he was going, much less know the way to it. His memory certainly was dull, for Jesus had just told him he was going to his Father's house. As to the way in which they (and others) could follow him, Jesus had not spoken as definitely on that point, at least not so lately.

Verse 6. In answering the last question of Thomas, Jesus made his speech more general in its application. That is, he laid down the principle on which all must act who would reach that blest abode in the Father's house. *I am the way* was the answer, and he asserted that no man would be able to reach the Father except by the Son.

Verses 7, 8. These were not new subjects, for Jesus had spoken to them many times along that same line. The human mind is sometimes very frail,

especially when it is agitated. The shadow of sorrow over the near departure of their Lord, seemed to dull the thoughts of the apostles. This is directly indicated by what Jesus said in chapter 16: 6. That is why Philip requested to see the Father, although Jesus had previously taught the principle that seeing Him was equivalent to seeing the Father.

Verse 9. *Been so long time with you.* Jesus selected his apostles in the early part of his public ministry (Matthew 10: 1-4), and hence Philip had enjoyed the advantage of that association all that time. It is significant that when Philip asked to be shown the Father, Jesus asked him if he did not know Him. Not that God and Christ are one in person, but they are one in purpose and spirit, and no man can treat or mistreat either one without doing the same thing to the other.

Verse 10. Since a father and his son are of kindred flesh, so the heavenly Father and his Son are thus closely related. In this sense they are in each other, though they are not the same person, even as an earthly father and son are not the same person. But if an earthly father and son were as united in character, purpose and spirit, as are God and Christ, than a man would need only to become acquainted with the son to learn the character of the father.

Verse 11. The strongest evidence of the divinity of Jesus was the work he was doing. He could not have accomplished his wonderful works without the aid of his Father. That is why he told the apostles they ought to believe him *for the very works' sake.*

Verse 12. The *greater works* the apostles were to perform were not what are commonly called miracles. Jesus had raised the dead, cast out devils and cured all manner of diseases. No greater miracles of that kind could be performed by anyone. The key to this statement of Jesus is in the words, *because I go unto the Father.* The absence of Jesus did not enable the apostles to do any miracle that was greater than the ones referred to above. But Jesus could not bring men and women into the church, because that institution was not in existence until He had gone *unto the Father.* After that, the apostles could and did bring people into the kingdom of Christ by the preaching of the Gospel. Those were the *greater works* that

Jesus promised they would be able to do after he had gone to his Father.

Verses 13, 14. To ask anything in the name of Jesus means to ask it by his authority. Jesus never asked anyone to do something that would have displeased his Father (chapter 8: 29), therefore when he authorized his apostles to come for a favor or some assistance, the Father would see that it was granted.

Verse 15. This verse words the sentence in the form of a request or requirement. Verse 23 makes it more conclusive; places the keeping of the words of Jesus as proof that the apostles loved him.

Verse 16. This and the next verse contain a promise of the Holy Spirit to be sent to the apostles. This promise was made a number of times in the last hours that Jesus was with his apostles. It pertained to the same Spirit since there is but one (Ephesians 4: 4), but its work through the apostles was so extensive, that Jesus referred to it in different forms of speech. I shall give the reader the several references on the subject which he may form into a chain if he wishes, as follows: John 14: 16, 17, 26; 15: 26; 16: 7-15. I now resume my comments on the present paragraph. It was appropriate to call the Spirit a Comforter, because Jesus was about to leave his apostles and the Spirit would furnish them consolation in the absence of their Lord. *For ever* means "age-lasting," hence the Spirit was promised to abide with the apostles as long as they lived, as a personal guide. It was also to abide in connection with their work to the end of the Christian Age (Matthew 28: 20).

Verse 17. It was called the Spirit of truth because it was to guide the apostles *into all truth* (chapter 16: 13). *Whom the world cannot receive.* None but the apostles were to receive the Holy Spirit in baptismal measure (except the special case of the household of Cornelius, which was temporary), and no one else was ever promised it in any measure until after he had come out of the world into the family of God (Galatians 4: 6; Acts 5: 32). *Seeing him not.* The world does not exercise its mental or spiritual eyes, by which only anyone could see the Holy Spirit.

Verse 18. The Greek word for *comfortless* is ORPHANOS, which is so much

like our English word that a lexicon definition is unnecessary. In its application here it means that Jesus would not desert his apostles whom he considered his "little children" (chapter 13: 33). *I will come to you.* This was to be fulfilled figuratively or spiritually by sending to them His representative, the Holy Spirit. It will be fulfilled personally when He comes to take them with him to the home he has gone to prepare (verse 3).

Verse 19. *See* is used in two senses, literal and figurative or spiritual. Jesus was to be slain the next day, and in a few weeks was to leave the earth. After that the world would lose sight of Him literally. But the apostles were to continue seeing him spiritually through the association made possibly by the Spirit. *Because I live.* This was to be fulfilled for Christ both bodily and spiritually. He was to come forth from the dead to die no more, and also was to live continuously in the church for which he died and in which all of his faithful disciples would live spiritually.

Verse 20. *At that day ye shall know.* The apostles had professed faith in the promises of Jesus, but when the power of the Spirit was bestowed upon them, they would have personal evidence of the divine truth of them all.

Verse 21. This is virtually explained at verse 15.

Verse 22. *Not Iscariot* is inserted to distinguish the two men of the name of Judas. This one was the same whose shorter form was Jude. Judas did not observe the difference between the material and the spiritual manner of being manifested, hence he asked Jesus the question reported in this verse.

Verse 23. *Come . . . make our abode* is explained in the first part of the verse. The spiritual association of God and Christ with the disciples, was to be based on the condition that they keep the words of Jesus.

Verse 24. As the love for Christ is proved by obedience to his sayings, so the failure to keep them requires an opposite conclusion. God and Christ are one in Spirit and purpose, hence to reject the words of Christ is the same as rejecting God.

Verse 25. As long as Jesus was with his apostles, he could keep them informed on the necessary subjects by personal conversation. But they were human and their memory would be

uncertain, therefore they would need some kind of helper that could renew it after Jesus was personally gone. That called for another statement of the promise that Jesus had already made in verses 16, 17. The said statement will be seen in the next verse.

Verse 26. *Comforter* is from *PARAKLETOS*, and Thayer defines it, "A helper, succorer, alder, assistant." He then explains his definition, "So of the Holy Spirit destined to take the place of Christ with the apostles (after his ascension to the Father), to lead them to the deeper knowledge of gospel truth, and to give them the divine strength needed to enable them to undergo trials and persecutions on behalf of the divine kingdom." In view of the meaning of the Greek word, we can understand why the King James translators gave us "Comforter" in these passages. The apostles had been used to leaning on the counsel of Jesus for guidance, and to have that taken from them would give them a feeling of helplessness as well as loneliness. The Spirit would thus overcome this state of mind and really give them comfort. The inaccuracy of unaided human memory would have made the historical reports of the apostles rather uncertain. But with the guidance of the Spirit, they could relate the various conversations of Jesus with infallible accuracy.

Verse 27. The Greek word for *peace* is *EIRENE*, and its proper or general meaning is a state of mind that is satisfied. It does not mean that no trials or hardships were to be expected, for Jesus had frequently told his apostles that such experiences were to be their lot. Notwithstanding such conditions, the assurance that Jesus would care for them was to give them a peace of mind that the world could not give. Hence Jesus again bade them not to be *troubled* or agitated.

Verse 28. They should not rejoice over the fact of His absence, but because of what it would mean for him to be again with his Father. In other words, as a feeling of unselfishness, or "rejoicing with them that do rejoice" (Romans 12: 15), they should be glad for his sake. *Father is greater than I.* Jesus and his Father were perfectly united in spirit and purpose, but there are many respects in which a parent is greater than his child, and Jesus recognized that truth.

Verse 29. *I have told you.* This is a general reference to the instances in which Jesus told his disciples of his departure from them. By telling them beforehand, they would be prepared for the shock. Also, when the sad affair came to pass, it would have the virtue of evidence based on fulfilled predictions.

Verse 30. This was the Lord's way of repeating what he had said before, namely, that his conversations with them would soon be ended. According to Luke 4: 6; John 12: 31; 16: 11; Ephesians 2: 2, the *prince of this world* is Satan. *Hath nothing in me.* 1 John 3: 5 states that "in him [the Son of God] is no sin." There was nothing in the character of Jesus that was of interest to Satan, hence he determined to have Him removed from the world, and thus from the association with his apostles.

Verse 31. The wicked motive of Satan was to drive Jesus out of this world by a shameful and violent death. But the deed was to be turned into a demonstration of the love that Jesus had for the Father, in that he was willing to die to fulfill the will of his Father (Hebrews 10: 7-9). *Arise, let us go hence.* This meant to arise from the table since the passover supper was over. But having given his apostles the consolation speech while still at the table, recorded in the preceding chapter, the Lord concluded to spend the few remaining hours he had left to be with them, by further instructions and admonitions. But while they left the table, there is no evidence that they left the room at once. That movement did not take place till chapter 18: 1.

### JOHN 15

Verse 1. One of the leading industries in Palestine was the production of grapes, which called for the cultivation of the vine. It was fitting that Jesus should use it as the subject of his parable at this time. Only a few minutes before he had partaken of the fruit of the vine while in the passover supper, at which time he said he would not drink of it again until he did so in the kingdom. That product having been before their eyes so recently, the apostles could appreciate a parable along the line of its production. *True vine* means that it is not counterfeit. The word is from *ALETRINOS* which Thayer defines, "In every respect corresponding to the

idea signified by the name, real and true, genuine." The nation of Israel was compared to a vineyard (Isaiah 5: 1-6), but the vine turned out to be a false one, while Jesus asserted that He was the *true* vine. The *husbandman* was the person who planted and cared for the vine, and the Father is the one in the parable who has that part.

Verse 2. *Purge* is from *KATHAIRO*, and Thayer's definition is as follows: "To prune." A vinedresser will observe the branches that are inclined to be productive, and will prune off all unnecessary growths that would sap the life from the vine without producing any fruit. If he discovers a branch that has not produced any fruit, he will remove it entirely from the vine as being detrimental to the growth and productivity of the whole plant. This pruning will be given fuller attention further on in the chapter.

Verse 3. *Clean* is from the same word as "purge" in the preceding verse. Jesus teaches that the pruning is done by his word, and hence that the process is a spiritual one. Even a branch (a human being) that is alive and inclined to bear fruit, may have some useless traits developing that would finally damage the general life of the whole plant. It is the divine Husbandman's purpose to cleanse (prune) away those traits, so that it can bear more and better fruit.

Verse 4. Everyone understands the law of nature that requires continuous connection between a vine and its branches in order to bear fruit. The spiritual law is no less established concerning the relation between Jesus and his disciples. There is no salvation apart from Christ, as taught in too many passages to cite now.

Verse 5. *Ye are the branches.* Much speculation has been done over this statement. It is true that Jesus was talking to his apostles only at this time, but that was because no other disciples were present. It is also true that the apostles were the first branches because of their official place in the great "plant of renown" (Ezekiel 34: 29), but all vines have branches besides the first ones. Most of the things Jesus said about the branches and the necessity of their connection with the vine (Himself), are true of all disciples. *Without me ye can do nothing.* The first word is from *CHOIS*, which Thayer defines, "Separately, apart,"



and he explains his definition at this passage, "without connection and fellowship with one." It is the same truth stated in the preceding verse, of the necessity of being connected with Christ in order to bear fruit. To be connected with Christ today means to be in his body (the church), because if one is excluded from that body he is out in Satan's territory (1 Corinthians 5: 5), where he cannot bear any spiritual fruit.

Verse 6. Observe the phrase, *if a man*, which is too general to be restricted to the apostles. Everything that is said here is true of all disciples of Christ, therefore all of them are branches of one vine. *Cast forth as a branch* means he is rejected because of being separated from the vine and has become withered. As all such dead branches are burned by the men caring for the vineyard, so all disciples who are severed from Christ will be cast into the fire at the judgment day. (See Matthew 25: 41.)

Verse 7. *Ask what ye will* seems unlimited if considered alone. The proviso is in the words about abiding in Jesus, and letting them abide in the apostles. As long as a person's requests are according to the words of Jesus, they will be lawful and will have the assurance of being granted. The line of comparison is still drawn from the vine and its branches. A branch obtains the sap and germinating principles from the vine. Everything that the branch is expected to produce, will be fully supplied for it by the vine. Should the branch call upon the vine to furnish it with the materials necessary to produce apples, the vine would ignore such a request because the branch is not supposed to produce such fruit. Likewise, if a branch of this spiritual vine should ask the vine (Christ) for ability to start a wild plant, that request would be denied because the branches (disciples) are not supposed to produce any such fruit.

Verse 8. *Disciples* is a more general term than apostles, although Jesus was talking to the latter. The idea is that what Jesus was teaching was true of all disciples of Jesus. If a person should see grapes growing on a branch, he might not be able to see anything but the branch due to its being uncovered only, while the vine was hidden from view. But later he might be permitted to see a vine only of a

tame variety. From this combined circumstance he would be able to conclude that the branch on which he saw the tame grapes was connected with that tame vine, because no other kind of plant could produce such fruit. Also, when people see certain kinds of spiritual fruit being produced by men and women, they will know them to be disciples of Jesus, seeing that no other relationship can produce that kind of life. That is why Jesus said, *so shall ye be my disciples* in the eyes of the world.

Verse 9. A husbandman supplies his vine with soil and other necessary material for producing fruit so that it can pass on the material to the branches that are still connected. Likewise, the Father has bestowed infinite love on his vine (the Son), so that he can pass that love on to the branches (the disciples), that are still connected with the vine. Hence Jesus here exhorts them to *continue ye in my love*.

Verse 10. The figurative form of speech is discarded now, and Jesus expresses the same thoughts in direct language, and exhorts his disciples to keep the commandments in order to abide in His love. (See chapter 14: 23.)

Verse 11. Jesus was about to be crucified, yet he speaks of his joy; Paul refers to this joy in Hebrews 12: 2. Jesus would never pretend having a joy that he could not or did not have, and the joy attributed to him was not the literal experience of the scenes at the cross, for the very anticipation of that ordeal caused his sweat to coagulate while in the garden (Luke 22: 44). The joy was over what He knew would result from the great sacrifice. He wished this joy to be shared by his apostles, and that was why he had taken so much care about giving them an abundance of information.

Verse 12. This is virtually the same as verse 11.

Verse 13. True friendship and love are best manifested by what a man is willing to do on behalf of the ones whom he professes to love. He will be willing even to give up his life for their sake if the necessity arises. Jesus was soon to do that very thing, and hence he wished his disciples to be prepared in mind for the separation.

Verse 14. Jesus did not ask his disciples to give up their lives in the physical sense as he was required to do. Of course, if the enemy should

bring bodily persecution upon them, they should be willing to die rather than betray their devotion to Him. But that would be a result of their services, and not a deliberate part of it according to their own arrangement. What Jesus meant was that the true followers of Him would devote their lives to his service. That is why he said what he did in this verse about showing their friendship for Him. They were to be regarded as his friends *IF* they did whatever he commanded of them. Hence if a man specializes on being a "Friend" of Jesus religiously, yet at the same time refuse to obey the commands of the Lord (one of which is to be baptized), such a man is making a false claim and is not a true friend of Jesus.

Verse 15. There were different kinds of *servants* in Bible times, and the distinction should be considered to avoid confusion. In the present passage the word is from *DOULOS*, and Thayer's definition is, "A slave, bondman, man of servile condition." Robinson comments on the word as follows: "In a family the *DOULOS* was one bound to serve, a slave, and was the property of his master, 'a living possession' as Aristotle calls him. . . . According to the same writer a complete household consisted of slaves and freemen. . . . The *DOULOS* therefore was never a hired servant." It was in that view of the word that Jesus said he would not call his disciples his *servants*. The distinction is set forth by the confidential relation between Jesus and his religious household which was composed of his faithful disciples. A hired servant was not informed about the intimate affairs of his master, while Jesus wishes his disciples to know all about the things that pertain thereto. Of course this was especially true of the apostles, since the Master depended upon them to pass the information on to the unofficial household members.

Verse 16. See the comments on the preceding verse as to the special need for information to be given the apostles. The English word *ordain* occurs a number of times in the New Testament, and does not always have the same meaning. Much confusion has existed in the religious world over this word, and most of it is due to the erroneous principles taught by Rome, and brought over into the so-called Protestant groups by their teachers. It will be helpful to give the reader a

complete view of this word as it comes from the various Greek originals. It will not be quoted in full again, hence he should make note of its location for ready reference. The following table gives all the words in the Greek New Testament that are rendered "ordain" in Authorized Version, together with the references where they are found, followed by the definitions according to Thayer.

DIATASSO. 1 Corinthians 7: 17; 9: 14; Galatians 3: 19. "To arrange, appoint, ordain, prescribe, give order." KATHISTEMI. Titus 1: 5; Hebrews 5: 1; 8: 3. "To set, place, put; to appoint one to administer an office; to set down as, constitute, to declare, show to be." KATASKEUAZO. Hebrews 9: 6. "To furnish, equip, prepare, make ready; to construct, erect; adorning and equipping with all things necessary." KRINO. Acts 16: 4. "To determine, resolve, decree." HORIZO. Acts 10: 42; 17: 31. "To ordain, determine, appoint." POIEO. Mark 3: 14. "To (make i. e.) constitute or appoint one anything." PROORIZO. 1 Corinthians 2: 7. "To predetermine, decide beforehand." TASSO. Acts 13: 48; Romans 13: 1. "To place in a certain order, to arrange, to assign a place, to appoint." TITHEMI. John 15: 16; 1 Timothy 2: 7. "To set, put, place." CHEIROTONEO. Acts 14: 23. "To vote by stretching out the hand; to elect, appoint, create." PROGRAPHO. Jude 4. "To write before." PROTORMAZO. Ephesians 2: 10. "To prepare before, to make ready beforehand." GINOMAI. Acts 1: 22. "To become, i. e., to come into existence." The reader should note that most of these Greek words have been translated also by other words in the New Testament, but I have given only the places where they have been rendered "ordain." The latter part of the verse is explained at verse 7.

Verse 17. This verse is a repetition of verse 12.

Verse 18. It should have been regarded as an honor for a disciple of Christ to be hated by the world. Such hatred began when He attacked the wickedness of the world, and it would be logical for the followers of such a teacher to be accorded the same sentiments. The truth is that one of the evidences of a man's relation to Christ morally is the persecution that is heaped upon him (2 Timothy 3: 12).

Verse 19. The clannish characteristics of the people of the world will

lead them to love their own. See Matthew 5: 43-47.) By the same token, when they see that a man's manner of life is the opposite of theirs they will naturally hate him. Such a sentiment is a form of envy or a feeling of (moral) inferiority complex. It is similar to the motive of a spoiled boy who tries to puncture the balloon of his playmate, because he does not have one himself.

Verse 20. The thoughts of this verse are the same that have been mentioned in preceding ones under different terms of relationship. In this passage the relation of ruler and servant is considered.

Verse 21. *Know not him* is said in two senses. The people of the world did not have an understanding of the goodness and greatness of God. Also, they were unwilling to recognize Him for his greatness and hence would not respect his Son's disciples.

Verse 22. The subject of responsibility is what Jesus is teaching in this verse, especially that which is dependent upon instruction. The Lord will not hold men responsible for not accepting any truth that was never offered to them. Jesus had come personally among mankind and been teaching by word of mouth. It is true that most of them stopped their ears so they would not hear, yet the opportunity for receiving the gracious truths made them fully responsible for all the teaching offered to them.

Verse 23. This is taught in chapter 14: 23, 24 and other places.

Verse 24. This verse teaches the same principle of responsibility as verse 22, but from a different standpoint. No intelligent man should fail to grasp the evidence of his own eyes. The people had seen the miraculous works of Jesus through a period of more than three years, and they should have known that no one like them could perform such deeds. The conclusion which they could not avoid was that Jesus was doing the things by the help of God. That is why Jesus accused them of both seeing and hating him and his Father.

Verse 25. *Their law*. The pronoun refers to the Jews who had rejected the teachings of John and Christ. The Sabbatarrians teach that the law of Moses was intended to be perpetual and hence to be in force over all mankind. Had that been true, then the

Old Testament would not have been "their" law any more than it was that of Christ and his apostles. The writing cited is in Psalms 35: 19, and according to chapter 10: 34, the Psalms were a part of the law.

Verse 26. This verse is a link in the chain of passages about the Holy Spirit, that was suggested at chapter 14: 16. Jesus was to send this Spirit as a Comforter, and it was to be obtained of the Father. Everything that the Spirit would say would be according to what Jesus had said, and in that sense he was to *testify of Him*.

Verse 27. The apostles had been personally with Jesus from the beginning of his personal work (Mark 3: 14; Acts 1: 21, 22). That would qualify them to speak as eye and ear witnesses, and the *Spirit of truth* would see that their memory was accurate.

## JOHN 16

Verse 1. *To stumble* is from SKANDALIZO, and Thayer defines it at this place, "To cause a person to begin to distrust and desert one whom he ought to trust and obey; to cause to fall away." Jesus warned his apostles of what they would have to encounter in their service for Him. The information was to forearm them so that they would not be surprised into error when it came.

Verse 2. *They* refers to the people, especially the leaders of the Jews, of whom Jesus had been saying much in the preceding chapter. Being put out of the synagogue is explained at chapter 9: 22, 23. Paul was a prominent case of this form of persecution as is revealed in Acts 26: 9-11.

Verse 3. Jesus always emphasized the close relationship between his Father and Himself. He maintained that all treatment that was accorded either of the two, was to be considered as being done to the other. Not *knowing* the Father meant not to acknowledge him and not to accept his truth. The Jews had rejected the teaching of Jesus, and he used that fact as evidence that they did not know his Father.

Verse 4. *That . . . ye may remember*. A prediction becomes evidence after it has been fulfilled. (See Exodus 3: 12 and Luke 21: 13.) *Said not . . . was with you*. Being with the disciples in person, Jesus did not consider it necessary to go into as much detail

with his teaching as he did when he was about to leave them.

Verse 5. Jesus knew about the question asked in chapter 13: 36 and 14: 5, but he meant they were not repeating it; the explanation is in the next verse.

Verse 6. Their great sorrow so overwhelmed the apostles that they did not "have the heart" to inquire into the subject of their Lord's departure.

Verse 7. This verse through 15 forms the final link in the chain that was suggested at chapter 14: 16, 17. This passage gives a more itemized statement of what was to be accomplished by the Spirit through the apostles. I shall comment on the present verse, also the others in their order. *Expedient* means "to help or be profitable," according to Thayer. As long as Jesus was with the apostles in person, the Comforter or Holy Spirit would not come to them, for it was not the Father's will that two persons of the Deity should be working personally on the earth at the same time. That being true, it was necessary for Jesus to "retire" from the scene and give way to the other. The Spirit would come to stay with the apostles throughout their work, which would give Him the opportunity to accomplish certain ends that it was not intended for Christ to do.

Verse 8. This verse is a general statement of the work of the Spirit after it has come upon the apostles. *Reprove* is from *ELEGCHO* and has various shades of meaning, including the conviction of those who are guilty of wrongdoing, and bringing to light what constitutes a life of righteousness. The work of the Spirit (through the mouths and pens of the apostles) that is stated in general terms in this verse, will be considered in its several parts in some verses to follow.

Verse 9. *Of sin*. The Holy Spirit was to convict the world of the sin of unbelief. John 3: 18 teaches that unbelief in Christ constitutes sin, and the apostles were to bring that truth before the attention of the world, inspired by the Comforter which is the Holy Spirit.

Verse 10. We have seen at verse 8 that a part of the definition of *reprove* is to bring to light what constitutes a life of righteousness. While Jesus was in the world personally, he taught such principles orally. But after going back

to his Father, that teaching would have to be done otherwise, and He purposed to do it through the guidance of the Holy Spirit working through the apostles.

Verse 11. The *prince of this world* is Satan (chapter 12: 31; 14: 30; Luke 4: 6; Ephesians 2: 2) who is to be judged. But Matthew 25: 41 states that unsaved men and women will be cast into the same place as the devil and his angels. That denotes the unsaved will be judged likewise, hence the Comforter was to teach and warn mankind of the judgment day and the only way to prepare for it.

Verse 12. *Bear* is from *BASTAZO*, which Thayer defines at this place, "To take up in order to carry or bear; to put upon one's self something to be carried." Things which would be spoken are not literal or material such as would be taken by one upon his body. The meaning of the statement, then, is that their understanding and memory would not be able to embrace all of the things that Jesus wished his apostles to hear. This thought will be verified by the following verse.

Verse 13. With the Spirit to *guide* them *into all truth*, the apostles would not need to be overburdened with the load, but could always have the assurance that no truth would be omitted that was necessary for their work. The Holy Spirit is the third being in the Godhead, and is wholly subject to the authority of God and Christ who are the two other members thereof. That is why Jesus said that he would *not speak of himself*. *Will show you things to come*. Romans 8: 27 and 1 Corinthians 2: 10, 11 teaches us that the Holy Spirit is fully aware of the purposes and desires of God. That is why he was able to tell the apostles *things to come*; he would learn it from God.

Verse 14. The Holy Spirit would glorify Jesus by receiving the truth, then passing it on to the apostles. Jesus called this truth his (*mine*), and by giving it over to the ones whom He had chosen, it would redound to the glory of the Son.

Verse 15. This verse is Christ's explanation of the statement he made in the preceding verse. The Father and Son were so united in the great scheme of human redemption, that what pertained to one was a concern of the other.



Verse 16. A *little while* is uttered twice; the first means the time until Jesus was to be crucified and buried; the second is the time of three days he would be in the grave. After Jesus went to his Father the disciples could not see him, it is true, but in order for him to go to the Father, it was necessary for him to come forth from the grave, and then would come the period that would make the second absence a *little while* also to which Jesus referred in this important conversation.

Verses 17, 18. These remarks were made among the apostles, unknown to Jesus (as they thought), but he always knew what men were thinking about.

Verse 19. Knowing the tension in the minds of the apostles over his remarks, Jesus relieved it by taking up the subject without waiting for them to ask him.

Verse 20. This verse was said in view of the same periods of time that were meant in verse 16. When Jesus was dead, his disciples wept and lamented (Mark 16: 10). At that time the enemies of the Lord were in rejoicing because they thought they had conquered the man who exposed their wickedness. But after the resurrection, and the disciples came to realize that their Lord had risen again, their sorrow was *turned into joy*. (See Matthew 28: 8; Luke 24: 41; John 20: 20.)

Verse 21. The original word for *sorrow* also means "pain," so that it applies to the bodily feeling in this case, as well as the state of nervous anxiety of a woman at such a time. That condition would make the contrast all the more apparent when the joy of the happy termination was experienced. Likewise, the sorrow of the disciples at the death of their Master was more than overbalanced by the rejoicing that came upon his resurrection and reappearance among them.

Verse 22. *Joy no man taketh from you*. The enemies could plunge the disciples into sadness by slaying their Lord, but the joy that would follow could not be taken from them. That was because He would be the final victor over the grave, and ascend to the Father after having filled them with joy over the resurrection.

Verse 23. The ascension of Jesus was soon followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. That was to guide them in *all truth*,

so that they would not need to ask Jesus personally for information, as they did when he was with them. That was the time meant by *that day*. When that time arrived, instead of asking Jesus for favors and information directly, they were to ask the Father, but were to do it in the name of Jesus or by his authority.

Verse 24. *Hitherto* they had not asked anything in *His name* which would mean by his authority. The time finally was to come when he would have "all power" (Matthew 28: 18), to which he refers here by words *ask, and ye shall receive*.

Verse 25. *Proverbs* means a figure of speech, and Jesus evidently refers to his comparison of the expectant mother. *The time cometh* meant the occasion when the apostles were to receive the Holy Spirit in baptismal measure. As that would guide them "into all truth," they would not require any explanatory passages.

Verse 26. *At that day* still has reference to the complete inspiration of the apostles, at which time they would make their requests *in the name* or by the authority of Jesus. *Say not . . . will pray the father*, yet chapter 14: 16 expressly says that he would pray the Father. We are sure that Jesus never contradicted himself, but the next verse will show he meant that the favor of God upon the apostles did not depend solely on the prayer of his Son.

Verse 27. The love of the Father for the apostles of his Son, would be a sufficient motive for sending the Spirit upon them for their guidance.

Verse 28. The former intimate association of Jesus with his Father, agrees with the idea that God would be inclined to honor his Son's apostles by sending them the Spirit. It also would make it appropriate for the Son to return to his Father, after his work on earth was finished.

Verse 29. The apostles grasped the meaning of the words of Jesus, and they admitted that he had already fulfilled the prediction made in verse 25, to speak to them in direct language, and not depend upon figures of speech.

Verse 30. The apostles did not mean to express any previous doubt. The passage denotes that the conversation of Jesus had strengthened their faith and understanding.

Verse 31. Jesus knew the weakness of the human being. He did not ques-

tion the sincerity of their faith when he asked them *do ye now believe?* But he was using that as an introduction for the sad prediction about to be made when their human weakness would prevail over their faith for a time.

Verse 32. *Every man to his own.* The margin adds the word "home" to the pronoun, and Moffatt's translation does the same. Jesus predicted that the apostles would desert him in his hour of trial, and Mark 14: 50 states the fulfillment of the prediction. *Leave me alone* meant as far as the apostles were concerned Jesus would be alone, but he would still have the comfort of his Father.

Verse 33. All of the foregoing conversation of Jesus was for the purpose of preparing the minds of his apostles for the great crisis that was near. He knew it would be a severe trial of their courage, and he wished to leave them all the consoling assurances they were able to comprehend.

### JOHN 17

Verse 1. The passage in Matthew 6: 9-13 is popularly referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." That is not accurate, but in refuting it we may hear another statement that is likewise not accurate. After criticizing the aforesaid phrase, a speaker may ask, "where do we find the Lord's Prayer," and with an air of finality another person will say, "John 17 is the Lord's Prayer." One would get the impression from the above conversation that Jesus uttered just one prayer while on earth. It is true that this chapter is the longest prayer of Jesus that is recorded, but prayers of Jesus are recorded in Matthew 11: 25, 26; 26: 39, 42; 27: 46; John 11: 41, 42 and Luke 23: 34. Besides these recorded prayers, Luke 6: 12 tells of one instance when he prayed all night. *Hour* is from *HORA*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "The fatal hour, the hour of death." Jesus knew that ere the setting of another sun, he would lie in death at the hands of his enemies. But that very tragedy was to bring glory on both the Father and the Son. *Lifted up his eyes to heaven* means he looked up toward the sky, that being one of the definitions of the Greek word translated "heaven." Heaven as the place where God dwells, is neither up or down, since those words are relative only, and would not

mean anything as to direction were it not for the existence of the earth.

Verse 2. *Power* is from *EXOUSIA*, and its first definition is "authority," and it is the same word that is rendered "power" in Matthew 28: 18. *Over all flesh* means Jesus was to have dominion over the Gentile as well as the Jew, and that he would exercise that dominion for their salvation.

Verse 3. *This is life eternal* denotes that the fruit of knowing (recognizing and obeying) God and Christ is eternal life. There is no way of obtaining such a reward except through a life on earth that is patterned faithfully according to divine law.

Verse 4. The verb *glorify* is from *DOXAZO*, and Thayer's definitions of it include, "1. To think, suppose, be of opinion. 2. To praise, extol, magnify, celebrate. 3. To honor, do honor to, hold in honor. 4. To make glorious, adorn with lustre, clothe with splendor. To cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged. To exalt to a glorious rank or condition." The word has such a wide range of meanings, that we need to consider who is being glorified and who is doing it, before we can know which part of the definition should be applied. By *finishing* the work on earth that God gave him to do, Jesus did honor to the name of God.

Verse 5. *Glory* is the noun form of the same word for *glorify*. Before Jesus came to the earth he was wholly divine. In order to fulfill the work his Father had for him to do, it was necessary for him to take upon him the nature of man in the flesh. That required him to "lay aside his robes of glory" and humble himself to the rank of a servant (Philippians 2: 7). Now that his mission was performed, and he was about ready to leave the earth, he prayed his Father to restore him to his former place in the glory world. The passage in 1 John 3: 2 indicates that his prayer was answered, since "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 15: 50).

Verse 6. This refers to the apostles who had been chosen from among the men whom John baptized. *Thine they were.* John did not baptize any of the Jews into the name of Christ; he only baptized them for the remission of sins, and they belonged to God in a special sense as those who had

been reformed according to Malachi 4: 5, 6. The pronoun "I" in that passage refers to God personally, who was to send John into the world. After that great era came, the Jews who came under the influence of John's work were prepared for the service of Christ when he came upon the scene. When he did so and received the men to be his apostles, baptized and prepared for his service, Jesus regarded them as having been given him of God. *Manifested thy name unto the men.* Throughout his association with the apostles, Jesus kept his Father's name and honor before their attention, impressing them with his dependence upon God in all that he did upon the earth.

Verse 7. The apostles were made to know this by the fact that Jesus constantly kept his Father's name before them. By such a procedure, they accounted for the forcefulness of the work of their Master by considering the might of God.

Verse 8. This verse has virtually the same thoughts as the preceding one, but with the application being made specifically to the teaching of Jesus. The perfect agreement between the words of Jesus and those of his Father (as far as they had heard them), was evidence that God sent Jesus into the world. He would not have corroborated the sayings of Jesus had his coming been without the authority of his Father.

Verse 9. *I pray not for the world.* That is, he was not praying for the world in that part of his prayer; that will come later in his petition. *They are thine* is explained by the comments on verse 6.

Verse 10. This beautiful verse shows the complete and affectionate unity that existed between Jesus and God, in all of the affairs concerning the plan of salvation.

Verse 11. *Am no more in the world* is accommodative language. It means that the life work of Jesus was so near the end that his departure from the world was virtually at hand. *These (apostles) are in the world.* They were to live on in the work for which Jesus had chosen them. *I come to thee.* This was true spiritually at that very instant, in that Jesus was coming to God in prayer on behalf of his apostles. It was true personally in that the time was near when He would leave his

chosen ones on earth and go to his Father. Hence Jesus saw the need for the grace of his Father to keep the apostles in the bonds of love that their work required. *One* is from *HEIS*, and Thayer's definition consists solely of the one word in the passage as we have it, which is "one." But he uses one whole page in his lexicon in discussing and commenting on the many phases of the word as it is used in the Greek Testament, and then indicates that he has not exhausted the subject. That is because the word may be used with regard to its numerical value, or in cases where various persons or things are being distinguished, or in compositions where unity of principle is the subject. Under the numerical phase of the word, it would be considering whether the things being spoken of were one in principle only, or one thing literally and bodily. We know that God and Christ were not one in person, hence the oneness of the apostles which was to be *as we are* could not mean they could be one personally. The only conclusion possible is that Christ wished his apostles to be one in purpose and activities in the Master's service.

Verse 12. *While I was with them* refers to the personal association of Jesus with his apostles. Such direct contact would be a strong preventive against being corrupted by the evils of the world. Jesus offered his good influence to all of his apostles alike, and it was not his fault that one man among them failed to profit by it. But such an event was to be expected because it had been predicted that one of the chosen apostles would betray his Lord. *Son of perdition* means that Judas went to perdition because of his deed of suicide. The first word is from *HUIOS* and is used figuratively. Thayer's explanation of this Greek word for *son* when used figuratively is, "One who is worthy of a thing." By destroying himself, Judas put it out of his reach to be saved, for there is no provision made for salvation that can be embraced after one has passed from this life. *That the scripture might be fulfilled* means as if it said, "and in so doing, the scripture was fulfilled."

Verse 13. *These things I speak in the world.* While Jesus was still with his apostles in person, he spoke the gracious words of instruction and consolation, so that He could thus leave

with them the benediction of his hal-  
lowed memory.

Verse 14. *I have given them thy word.* This is the oft-repeated truth that is so important that it cannot be spoken too often. Everything Jesus said to his apostles he received from his Father, because he was always in communion with Him. Such instructions could be delivered to them orally while he was with them, but he was soon to depart from them, hence they would need more direct instruction from God.

Verse 15. The work of God and Christ for the salvation of the world, required the personal presence and services of the apostles. That is why Jesus did not ask his Father to take them out of the world, but to protect them from the evils of the world, while they were fulfilling their task for the kingdom that was so great.

Verse 16. While the apostles were human beings and hence were creatures of earthly birth, yet their conversion to the cause of Christ had lifted them to a "higher plane" of living, even as He had shown them the better way of life.

Verse 17. *Sanctify* is explained in a full quotation from the lexicon, in the comments at chapter 10: 36. If the reader will consult that place, he will see why Jesus asked his Father to sanctify the apostles by *His truth* which is the word of God.

Verse 18. God sent his Son from Heaven into the world in the form of a human being. He accomplished his mission within that part of the world that was in Palestine. The apostles were to accomplish theirs by going into "all the world" (Mark 16: 15). The part Jesus was to perform in the scheme of human redemption, did not require his bodily presence anywhere except the country that had been the headquarters of God's nation of Israel. That which the apostles were expected to accomplish required them to contact all peoples and languages in every land.

Verse 19. *Sanctify myself.* Jesus never had any impurities from which to be cleansed, hence the definitions 1 and 2 (at chapter 10: 36) should apply to him. *For their sakes* denotes that Jesus consecrated himself to the great work for the sake of the apostles. One result of the consecration of Jesus was the bestowal of divine truth, and

that was to be the means by which the apostles were to be sanctified. (See verse 17.)

Verse 20. Up to this point the prayer of Jesus has been on behalf of his apostles. Of course he was desirous that they should be saved, and also he wished their work for him to be effective. They were to take the words of truth concerning Christ to the people of the earth, and hence he now includes them in his prayer along with the apostles.

Verse 21. See the comments at verse 11 on the meaning of "one." The believers were to be *one* as God and Christ were, which would rule out the idea of their being only one person. It has to mean oneness of purpose and work. Not only must the believers be united in their work, but Christ prayed that they should be *one in us*. If the whole religious world should become a perfect unit in its practices, it would not avail anything unless its people were in Christ and God. The great object of that unity for which Christ prayed was *that the world may believe that thou has sent me*. No doubt many thousands of infidels are made by the divided condition of those who profess to be followers of Christ. It is not enough for the professed disciples of the Lord to insist that "at heart we are united and believe the same things." The world cannot see that, but the outward or bodily activities of the religious groups can be seen, and that is what Jesus was counting on as evidence of the truthfulness of the claims of the Gospel.

Verse 22. One of the commonest words in the definition of *glory* is "honor." It certainly is among the highest of honors to be in the service of Christ. That honor is emphasized by the fact that Jesus bestowed it upon his servants, having received it himself from the Father. Best of all considerations, is the object of the bestowing such honor, namely, that the whole group of interested persons, God, Christ and his disciples, should form a unit in the great cause of human salvation.

Verse 23. This is an emphatic repetition of verse 21.

Verse 24. This part of the prayer was looking forward to the time after the judgment. It is the same thing that Jesus promised them in chapter 14: 3. Again he refers to the glory he had with the Father when he was



wholly divine. In order for that to be possible with the disciples, so that they could also have at least some measure of the same personal glory, they would have to be faithful servants of their Master to the end of life. After the resurrection they will be in the glorified state and fit for the association with Jesus in glory. *World* is from *KOSMOS* which means the inhabitants of the earth. Jesus existed before all other beings except his Father, and enjoyed His love such as a fond parent bestows on his child.

Verse 25. The world in general did not know God in the sense of recognizing and obeying the divine law. *These* means the apostles, who had learned of the Father through their association with the Son and the teaching that he gave unto them.

Verse 26. The general unity of purpose and spirit between God and Christ, including the faithful apostles, makes up this closing verse of Christ's memorable prayer.

### JOHN 18

Verse 1. After Jesus finished his prayer, he left the room where they had eaten the passover supper, in company with his apostles. He took them out of the city and crossed *the brook Cedron*, which is otherwise called Kidron. Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary describes this place as follows: "Kidron: The name of the valley east of Jerusalem, the stream of which is dry during the greater part of the year. Originally the spring Ghon emptied its waters into this part of the valley." Thayer defines the original word for *brook*, "Flowing in winter, a torrent," which agrees with the note from the dictionary just quoted. It shows why it was no barrier against their walking on out to the desired destination. *Where was a garden* means the garden was over or beyond this Cedron. This garden is named Gethsemane in Matthew 26: 36 and Mark 14: 32, and a description is given of it at the first-named passage.

Verse 2. This garden had often been the resting place of Jesus with his disciples. A quiet retreat, he would retire to its shade amid the olive and other fruit trees, and there talk to his beloved disciples about the great work of the future. Had Jesus wanted to evade the mob that he knew would be hunting for him, he would never have

come into this place on the present occasion. He knew that Judas *knew the place*, and would bring his officers to it. But after *his time* had come, he made no effort to escape or to resist his capture, but submitted like a lamb being led to the slaughter.

Verse 3. John omits the events between the arrival of Jesus at the garden, and the coming of Judas with the mob. Those events are recorded in Matthew 26: 36-46; Mark 14: 26-42, and Luke 22: 39-46. *Band* is from *SPEIRA*, and Thayer defines it at this place, "Any band, company, or detachment of soldiers." This force had been delivered to Judas by authority of the chief priests and Pharisees. It was altogether unnecessary to form this posse, for Jesus had frequently predicted his own fate, and there never was any intimation on his part that he would give them any trouble. They were equipped with *torches and weapons*, which means clubs, as if Jesus would be hiding among the trees, and would have to be found with the aid of a torch, and then perhaps have to be taken by force.

Verse 4. The crowd was due a surprise, for instead of having to search for Jesus, he anticipated them and came forward saying, *whom seek ye?* The crowd as a whole was unaware of the person who asked them the question. It was night and they had not been around him enough even to recognize his voice.

Verse 5. When the band announced the name of the person they were wanting, Jesus identified himself as the man they were after. All that John records about Judas' part is that he *stood with them*. But the accounts of the other writers show us that sometime in the course of this conversation, he approached Jesus and gave him the betrayal kiss. It might seem that the kiss was unnecessary since Jesus was making himself known and showing no inclination to evade the crowd. But he had made his contract at a time when he did not know what the circumstances would be, and it was "according to form" for him to go through with his agreement for which he was to receive the money.

Verse 6. Had Jesus said nothing, and let them pursue their man hunt unopposed, they doubtless would have been surprised. But when he took a leading part in the search, even to the extent of boldly announcing himself

as their wanted victim, they were amazed and stunned, and fell prostrate to the ground.

Verse 7. We do not know what they would have done or said next, if Jesus had not aroused them from their daze by repeating his question. They had recovered sufficiently to answer the question as they did the first time.

Verse 8. *Let these go their way* refers to the apostles. Since Jesus plainly identified himself as the man they wanted, it was not necessary to hold the apostles as if the investigation had to be continued.

Verse 9. *Have I lost none* refers to the saying of Jesus in chapter 17: 12. It is true that the Saviour was to be deprived of the company of his apostles for the time being, but they would be free from the clutches of the officers, so they could take up His work when the proper time came, and hence would not be *lost* to Him.

Verse 10. Peter was always impulsive and rash, and seemed ready to defend his Lord as long as he could do so with material force. But he was a coward later when called upon to show moral courage in behalf of Christ.

Verse 11. This is not the same *cup* that is mentioned in Matthew 26: 39. In that instance Jesus meant the mental suffering he was just beginning to feel, which is more fully described in Luke 22: 42-44. Jesus asked to be spared that present suffering if God willed it so. The *cup* in the present verse means the ordeal of the crucifixion, against which Peter thought to defend his Lord. *Put up thy sword* is commented upon at length in the notes at Matthew 26: 52.

Verse 12. It was at this point that the apostles fled from Jesus, which is shown in Mark 14: 50. Binding Jesus was another unnecessary performance as far as actual security of the prisoner was concerned, for the conversation that had taken place immediately preceding it, showed that Jesus was not even protesting his arrest. But that was another routine act in connection with the services of an armed force of officers.

Verse 13. *Led him away to Annas first*. There was no provision made in the law of Moses for more than one high priest to be in office at the same time, but in the days of Christ the secular government was taking much part in the affairs of the Jews. In that

arrangement Annas was president of the Sanhedrin and Caiaphas was high priest. Verse 24 shows that Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas in the bonds put there by the mob.

Verse 14. This speech of Caiaphas with comments is given at chapter 11: 50, 51. John regarded him as an official of some note, hence made the second mention of him.

Verse 15. The *other disciple* evidently was John, judging from the indirect way he is mentioned in other connections. (See chapter 13: 23; 21: 20, 24.) *Was known* denotes that he had some personal acquaintance with the high priest that gave him more freedom in approaching his presence. By reason of this special intimacy, when they led Jesus into the palace of the high priest, John went in also.

Verse 16. Peter lingered at the door while John went on into the palace, doubtless for the purpose of obtaining permission to bring in also his brother apostle Peter. With such authority, he went to the damsel who was guarding the door, and from her he obtained the privilege of bringing Peter on in.

Verse 17. The foregoing conversation evidently called the attention of the damsel to Peter, and she asked him about his relationship with *this man*, meaning Jesus. Peter denied being his disciple, fearing that it might involve him in some trouble.

Verse 18. The reader should refer to the comments on Matthew 26: 69 for information concerning the palace. That will throw some light on how there could be a fire at the place. Being within hearing distance of the immediate presence of the high priest, it gave Peter an opportunity to "see the end" (Matthew 26: 58).

Verse 19. Jesus was never ashamed of his doctrine (teaching), and really wished it to be known. But the question of the high priest included the disciples as well as the doctrine, which opened the way for the next statement of Jesus.

Verse 20. *In secret have I said nothing*. All statements should be considered in the light of all circumstances and the context generally. We know the facts would not admit the conclusion that Jesus never said anything to his disciples away from the public, hence we should look for the explanation in the meaning of the language. *Secret* is from *krupotos*, which

Thayer defines, "hidden, concealed, secret." The idea is that Jesus never tried to keep his doctrine from the public. We know that is what he meant here, for in Matthew 10: 27 he told his disciples to preach upon the housetops what they heard in the ear, which means what they heard from Jesus in their private hours.

Verse 21. An officer does not take a man into court and then ask him to make out a case against himself. If one has spoken things against the government, then certainly someone knows about it, and he would be the proper person from whom to obtain testimony. That is why Jesus told the high priest to *ask them which heard me*. Jesus had stated in the preceding verse that he had done his teaching in the synagogue and temple, which were public buildings in which great crowds generally assembled. It surely should not be difficult to obtain legal witnesses if Jesus had been guilty of criminal activities in his teaching.

Verse 22. *Palm* is from RHAPSOMA, which seems to have a rather indefinite meaning. It is rendered "a rod" in the margin, but the lexicons do not require that translation, though they admit that the word sometimes may have that meaning. Both Thayer and Robinson prefer the definition, "A blow with the flat of the hand, a slap in the face." It was intended as an insult and indignity. *Answerest thou the high priest so?* They pretended that Jesus had shown disrespect to the dignity of the court.

Verse 23. Jesus had only exercised his "constitutional right" in demanding that if any charge was to be lodged against him, it should be upon the statements of eye or ear witnesses. In the absence of even any attempt to secure such testimony, he protested that they had no right to smite him.

Verse 24. This is commented upon at verse 13.

Verse 25. This was Peter's second denial of Jesus.

Verse 26. It had not been long since Peter had attacked this servant and cut off his ear, and he surely would recognize him. However, he leaves out mentioning the matter of being a disciple, directly, and treats the same subject by asking if he had not seen him *with him*. This conversation is significant, for it means that in the estimation of this servant, being *with*

Jesus was evidence of his being a disciple. His idea was correct as the scripture elsewhere teaches. (See Obadiah 11; 1 Corinthians 15: 33.) Many professed disciples of Christ today will deny any sympathy with the enemies of the church just because they have not taken any formal stand with them. At the same time, they may be seen often associating with them and thus giving them encouragement.

Verse 27. This was the third time Peter denied his Lord. According to Luke 22: 60, 61, Jesus looked upon Peter at this time which reminded him of their conversation, and in remorse the apostle went out of the crowd and wept bitterly.

Verse 28. *Hall of judgment* is from *PRATORION*, which Thayer defines as follows: "The palace in which the governor or procurator [administrator] of a province resided." Smith's Bible Dictionary says of this place, "It is the residence which Pilate occupied when he visited Jerusalem." (See notes on Matthew 27: 2 as to the position of Pilate.) Pilate represented the secular government, and it was necessary to bring Jesus before him to obtain a legal sentence of death (verse 31). The pronoun *they* occurs four times in this verse; the first means the Roman soldiers, the others are the "chief priests and elders of the people" (Matthew 27: 1). The soldiers had the charge of personally handling Jesus when he was turned over into the jurisdiction of the secular court; that is why *they* led him into this *judgment hall*. But *they*, the Jews, would not enter into that place, *lest they should be defiled*. It being a Gentile spot, they imagined it would defile them (ceremonially) to come in contact with such a place, and that would render them unfit to partake of the passover feast that was about due. The law of Moses required the Jews to be ceremonially (as well as physically) clean before they could participate in this feast. (See chapter 11: 55).

Verse 29. The Jewish leaders were waiting outside for the reason stated in the preceding verse. *What accusation bring ye?* Pilate was an officer in the secular government, representing that part of the Roman Empire known as Palestine. It was supposed that when a man was brought bound into a hearing of the penal courts, there was some specific and serious charge to be tried against him.

Verse 30. This verse states a cowardly reply to the question asked by the governor. The word *malefactor* is indefinite, meaning an evildoer of any rank or degree. The statement of these Jewish leaders implied that Pilate should take for granted that Jesus was guilty of lawlessness from the mere fact of their bringing him into court. This was contrary to the usages of all courts in any civilized land.

Verse 31. Their failure to name any specific charge, left Pilate to conclude that Jesus had not violated any ordinance of the Roman government, hence he should have no jurisdiction in the case. That is why he told them to *judge him according to your law*. The Jews stated the truth when they said it was not lawful for them to put any man to death, but that was not the true reason they did not want to act in the case. They did not let that truth keep them from killing Stephen, although they did not have even a judicial sentence of death against him.

Verse 32. The whole transaction was being directed by the Lord, who decreed that Jesus was to die on the cross, and the secular government only would put a man to death in that manner. That is why John says that it would be according to the kind of death Jesus had signified would be imposed upon him. (See Matthew 20: 19).

Verse 33. Luke gives us a fuller statement, which includes some false accusations against Jesus (Luke 23: 2). Pilate concluded that the complaint the Jews had was based on some claims of the prisoner that were opposed to the government of Rome. He therefore thought he could bring the issue to the foreground by asking him directly, *art thou the king of the Jews?* The whole situation was based on the idea that no two governments of whatever kinds, could lawfully exist in the same territory at the same time. That idea would be correct if the two were necessarily opposed to each other. But Pilate did not know anything about the character of the kingdom Jesus was heading, hence he asked the question quoted here.

Verse 34. Jesus never asked questions for his own information, for he knew all about men (chapter 2: 24, 25). He took this method of introducing the important conversation to follow concerning the nature of his kingdom.

Verse 35. Pilate represented the matter correctly by referring to his nationality. He stated the truth when he told Jesus that it was his own people who had brought him into this court to be tried before him as a representative of the government of Caesar.

Verse 36. The reply of Jesus was not evasive, but it was not direct, as yet. He wished to set forth the principle on which he could claim to be a king, and still not be any rival of the government represented by Pilate. That was what Jesus had in mind when he said *my kingdom is not of this world*. Jesus never intended to establish a kingdom of a secular nature, while the government of Rome was that kind. That was the reason why Jesus was making the claim of being a king, yet not admitting any charge of rebellion that was being made by the Jews. This verse has been perverted by extremists among professed disciples of Christ. They make Jesus teach that his disciples have no right to take part in the activities of secular governments, particularly those of doing military services, even in defense of their country. They not only err in their position, but make this statement of Jesus teach the very opposite of what he intended. Jesus plainly shows that citizens of secular governments have the right to *fight* in a defensive war for their country. But that does not make it right for Christians to resort to carnal warfare in defense of the kingdom of Christ. And that also does not touch the question of whether they may be citizens of an earthly government (which we know they may since Paul the apostle was one, Acts 22: 25-28), but that subject was not under consideration at all in the present case of Jesus and Pilate.

Verse 37. The speech of Jesus in the preceding verse was taken by Pilate as an affirmative answer to his question, yet he wished a more direct one. He therefore repeated his inquiry, except he said nothing about what people Jesus was to rule. And the answer of Jesus was also without any reference to the people who were to compose the citizenship of his kingdom. *To this end was I born* is in direct agreement with the question of the wise men, when they asked for him who was "born king of the Jews" (Matthew 2: 2). Very logically, if Jesus was to be born as a king, it



would be necessary that he *come into the world*. Also, the principles that were to rule in his kingdom would be so different from any the world had even known, that the king himself would have to bring the truth about them into the world. The citizens of the new kingdom would be those who showed a disposition to accept this truth. This is why Jesus exhorted men to take his "yoke" (government) upon them and "learn of me" (Matthew 11: 29).

Verse 38. *What is truth?* I do not believe that Pilate asked this question with any evil motive. The entire situation was new and somewhat bewildering to him. Here was a man brought bound into his court with a clamor for the death sentence from his complainants, yet against whom no specific charge was made. The nearest he could get to their grievance was the fact that the prisoner claimed to be a king. Furthermore, he seemed to claim kingship only over those who accepted the *truth* that he delivered to them. No wonder, then, that he asked *what is truth*. But he did not have time for further details into the mysterious subject, for the plaintiffs were outside waiting for some kind of answer from him. Going out to them, he said *I find in him no fault at all*. In a court where justice is carried out, such a verdict would have been followed by the dismissal of the prisoner.

Verse 39. Although Jesus was found "not guilty" by the court into which he was brought, yet he was not released from custody. Pilate was afraid of public sentiment and wanted to shift the responsibility of terminating the case from his own shoulders to others. He thought of a custom that had been followed, whereby the time of the passover was celebrated by releasing a prisoner. The guilt or innocence of a prisoner did not seem to have any bearing on the selection of the man, except as it might affect the sentiments of the people whose right it was to name the fortunate person. If Pilate could persuade the people to select Jesus for the occasion, it would effect a compromise whereby an innocent man (as Pilate believed Jesus to be) would be let go, without directly denying the clamorous demand of the crowd.

Verse 40. The plan of Pilate did not work. The people did not wish to abandon their custom either, so they

gave their unanimous voice that the release was to be given to Barabbas who was a robber and murderer (Luke 23: 18, 19).

## JOHN 19

Verse 1. Pilate failed in his effort to get Jesus released under the custom of the times in connection with the passover. He then tried to hope that he could work on the sympathy of the Jews, after they saw the appearance of Jesus as the regular procedure was followed. That began by scourging him, which was usually done to victims about to be executed. It was a cruel ordeal which is described by Smith's Bible Dictionary as follows: "Under the Roman method the culprit was stripped, stretched with cords or thongs on a frame and beaten with rods. (Another form of scourge consisted of a handle with three lashes or thongs of leather or cord, sometimes with pieces of metal fastened to them. Romans citizens were exempt by their law from scourging.)"

Verse 2. Matthew 27: 27 should be read in connection with this verse. The scourging had been done in the court, then Jesus was led into the common hall, where the whole band of soldiers was gathered to see the indignities to be imposed on him. He had said he was a king, and in mockery they put a crown of thorns upon his head. The thorns were those of a brier or bramble bush. Purple was one of the royal colors, so they put such a robe on Jesus which was also in mockery of his claim to being a king.

Verse 3. These derisive words were said in mockery with the same motive that prompted their actions in the preceding verse. *Smote him*. See the comments on chapter 18: 22 for the description and significance of this shameful act.

Verse 4. Having put Jesus through these cruel indignities, Pilate announced to the Jews in waiting that he was bringing their prisoner out to them. *That ye may know* was said with the meaning, "Although your prisoner has been treated with such indignities as you can see, yet no final sentence has been pronounced upon him. I am therefore offering him to you because I still find no fault in him."

Verse 5. With this "introduction," Jesus appeared on the scene, wearing the crown of thorns with its thousands of prickles having been pressed down

upon his head, and robed in the colors that only belonged to Roman kings. His appearance was plainly visible to all the mob, yet Pilate thought to arouse their pity by a pointed phrase, *behold the man*. The first word is from *me*, and Thayer defines it, "see! behold! lo!" He then explains it, "as the utterance of one who wishes that something should not be neglected by another." Robinson gives the same definition as Thayer, then follows with the comment, "As calling attention to something present."

Verse 6. When the chief priests had their attention especially directed to Jesus, it had the opposite effect upon them to what Pilate expected. They were enraged and caused to repeat their demand that Jesus be crucified. *Take ye him and crucify him*. This was not a judicial sentence; that came later. But it was another effort of Pilate to evade responsibility for punishing a man in whom he still found *no fault*.

Verse 7. *Made himself the Son of God*. This was a new charge as far as Pilate had heard. Up to the present he could get only the idea of a rival against the government, but which was not in any of the evidence so far produced. Pilate was a heathen in religion, and could not realize fully what it would mean to be called by such a title as the Jews named. Yet he was not entirely unacquainted with Jewish history as was indicated by washing his hands (Matthew 27: 24), an act based on Deuteronomy 21: 1-6.

Verse 8. From his knowledge of Jewish history, referred to in the preceding verse, Pilate had some idea of the importance attached to their God. Now here was a man in his court who claimed to be the Son of that God. If such claim was true, then it might be dangerous to mistreat him. All of this in connection with his wife's dream (Matthew 27: 19), filled him with uneasiness so that the record says *he was the more afraid*.

Verse 9. Pilate was still unwilling to let the matter drop, but made another effort to get Jesus to commit himself. The question *whence art thou* was related to the claim just made that he was the *Son of God*. Jesus made no answer to the question, but that was not because he could not do so, neither was it from pure contempt of the court, for he did speak presently. In the appearances of Jesus be-

fore the rulers, he was silent when his personal comfort or safety was all that was involved, and that fulfilled the predictions in Isaiah 53: 7. But when an important issue was called up, he would speak out and give the teaching upon it, as we shall see very soon.

Verse 10. Pilate thought Jesus was maintaining silence in contempt. He thought he would goad him into speaking by a sort of "threat of the law." The self-importance which he felt he possessed was expressed in the words, *I have power*.

Verse 11. Jesus considered it was the proper time for him to speak. He did not deny the power (or authority) that Pilate claimed to have, but informed him that this power was not his directly, but that it had been given him *from above*. It meant that Pilate was acting as the instrument of a Higher Power, and hence that his part in the solemn drama was not purely upon his own motive; he personally did not wish it to be so. But the Jewish leaders, though also acting in fulfillment of the prophecies, were yet carrying out their personal desires. That is why Jesus told Pilate that *he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin*.

Verse 12. It seems that every turn of the conversation and events only confirmed Pilate in his belief that Jesus was an innocent man. But his political interests outweighed his conscience, so that he made only such attempts at releasing the prisoner as would not endanger his standing with the government of Caesar. The Jews realized this situation, and used it with telling effect in this verse.

Verse 13. Pilate yielded to the political pressure which the Jews brought to bear upon him in the preceding verse, and concluded he would pass the sentence of death against Jesus. *Judgment seat* is from *BEMA*, which Thayer defines, "A raised place mounted by steps; a platform, tribune." He further says it was used as the official seat of a judge. This was the spot where Pilate brought Jesus for the final act in the tragedy.

Verse 14. The meaning of *preparation* will be fully explained at verse 31. The present verse puts the time of the crucifixion *about the sixth hour*, which seems to disagree with the account in Mark 15: 25 which puts it at the *third hour*. There is no contradiction in thought when the various kinds of

calendars that were used are considered. One method of dividing the day was by the single hours, starting in the morning at what corresponds with our six o'clock, which was the first hour in New Testament times. The hours were then numbered from one to twelve, and a reference to any certain hour (such as 3rd or 6th) meant a period of one hour only. Another form of calendar divided the twelve hours into four periods of three hours each and each period was named by the last hour of that period. By that method, the *sixth hour* would mean the period that really began with the hour that was called the *third* in the single hour method. John's statement is based on this calendar. As the source of my information, I will quote from Owen C. Whitehouse, Professor of Hebrew, Chesnut College, near London, on the Hebrew Calendar: "The later division of the day was: *Third hour*, 6 to 9 A. M.; *Sixth hour*, 9 to 12 A. M.; *Ninth hour*, 12 to 3 P. M.; *Twelfth hour*, 3 to 6 P. M." This same information is given by The Oxford Cyclopedic Concordance, under article "Day."

Verse 15. When Pilate asked the Jews to behold their king (in preceding verse), it enraged them still more and made them want the execution performed at once. Pilate gave them one last chance just before giving Jesus over to the executioners, to change their minds and snatch him as it were from the cross. He made the appeal as pointed as possible by asking, "Shall I crucify your King?" This desperate move of his reminds us of the language of Peter in Acts 3: 13, where he says of Pilate's attitude toward Jesus, "he was determined to let him go." The chief priests rejected all of Pilate's suggestions. Their statement, *We have no king but Caesar*, was not made except as a retort to Pilate's question, and not in the spirit of patriotic loyalty.

Verse 16. Pilate regarded the remark in the close of the preceding verse as final, and at once delivered Jesus unto the soldiers, who led him away to be crucified.

Verse 17. *Bearing his cross*. According to Luke 23: 26, Simon was compelled to help Jesus bear the cross. There was a rule that if a victim condemned to the cross was unable physically to carry it alone, someone would be made to take up the rear part and help

carry it, walking after the other to the place of execution. *Place of a skull*. There is a long note on this phrase at Matthew 27: 33, containing information gleaned from the lexicons and other authentic works of reference.

Verse 18. The *two other* were thieves according to Matthew 27: 38.

Verse 19. The *title* also means an inscription, in the form of a placard or poster, placed on the cross in full view of the passers-by. The wording on this poster was, *Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews*. The inscription was to inform the public of the charge on which the victim had been crucified. This one showed that Jesus was nailed to the cross for the "crime" of being king of the Jews.

Verse 20. The inscription was written in the three languages named, because people of those tongues were present at Jerusalem at that time and thus they could read it.

Verse 21. The title on the cross was such a flimsy reason for having Jesus slain, that the chief priests were ashamed as they saw the crowds reading it. They thought it could be made to seem more fitting if the charge would read so as to represent Jesus as an arch impostor; they requested Pilate to change the wording to that effect.

Verse 22. *What I have written I have written*, was a brief way of saying, "I have written the inscription as I wanted it, and I will not let it be changed."

Verse 23. We may learn from Smith's Bible Dictionary (article—"crucifixion"), that the victim to be crucified was stripped of his clothing before crucifixion. It was a custom that the soldiers performing the execution should have the victim's raiment as an extra pay in addition to their wages as soldiers. According to the present verse there were four of the soldiers, corresponding to the four parts of the body to be nailed; the two hands and two feet. This would call for four divisions to be made of the garments so each soldier could have a share. But the coat was woven in one piece in such a way that it could not be divided without ruining it.

Verse 24. In the case of the one-piece garment, the soldiers agreed to decide the question by casting lots for it. *That the scripture might be ful-*

*filled* means, "and in so doing the scripture was fulfilled," etc.; the prediction is in Psalm 22: 18.

Verse 25. This verse corresponds with Matthew 27: 56, with some variation in the names of some of the women. Mary the mother of Jesus was the same as the mother of James and Josue (Mark 6: 3).

Verse 26. The disciple *whom he loved* was John, the writer of this book (chapter 21: 20, 24). *Behold thy son*. The term *son* comes from *huios*, which has a great many shades of meaning besides the one commonly used. Thayer says it is sometimes used "of one who depends on another." Jesus used it in that sense as may be seen in the following verse. When he told his mother to *behold* John as her son, he meant for her to depend on him for support.

Verse 27. By the same token as set forth in the preceding verse, when Jesus told John to behold his mother, he meant for him to let Mary depend on him for support. John also understood it that way, for he began at once to take her as a member of his own household. And the arrangement was exactly on the same principle that was taught by Paul in 1 Timothy 5: 4, 16. In that place the apostle was writing about dependent widows, and the obligation of nephews to care for them. The same idea would hold good in the case of others who are able to care for worthy disciples who are dependent.

Verse 28. Not until after *all things were accomplished* did Jesus give expression to his dying desires. In the throes of his feverish last hours, he complained of being thirsty. *That the scripture might be fulfilled* denotes that in his thirst and its quenching he would fulfill the scripture.

Verse 29. The scripture prediction that was fulfilled by this is in Psalm 69: 21. When Jesus expressed his wants by stating the condition of thirst, someone dipped a sponge in vinegar (sour wine) and placed it upon hyssop so as to reach it up to the parched lips of the dying Saviour. This was the most convenient way either of serving or receiving it under the circumstances. It was done merely to quench his thirst and not as an oplate, since it did not have the gall mixed with it which he had refused (Matthew 27: 34). Some confusion might occur over this word *hyssop*,

since both Matthew and Mark say it was put on a reed. I shall quote from Smith's Bible Dictionary on the article in question. "Besides being thus fit for sprinkling, having cleansing properties, and growing on walls, the true hyssop should be a plant common to Egypt, Sinai and Palestine, and capable of producing a stick three or four feet long."

Verse 30. *It is finished*. In chapter 17: 4 as Jesus was praying he said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." That was said prospectively, because his work on earth was virtually completed then. In the present instance it was said literally, because it was among the last words Jesus uttered before death. *Gave up the ghost* (spirit), indicates that when a man dies, something in his body leaves it, which proves that the human being is not wholly material.

Verse 31. *Preparation*. Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary says of this day, "This term signifies in general any day which preceded a great feast. The usage is somewhat analogous [similar] to that of the English 'eve' (Christmas eve, New-year's eve, etc.)." The call for such a day lay in the restrictions of the law of Moses regarding holy days. On them it was unlawful to perform any manual labor, even to the gathering of sticks for fuel (Numbers 15: 32-36). It was therefore directed that all their baking and boiling be done the day before by way of *preparation* for the sabbath or holy day to come (Exodus 16: 23).

The law of Moses forbade letting a body on a tree (or cross) over night (Deuteronomy 21: 22, 23). The Jews were attentive to such items as this, and especially as it would have caused a dead body to be thus exposed on a *sabbath day*. What was still more important in this case was that it would have been on a *high day*. The word is from *MEGAS*, which Thayer defines at this place, "Of great moment, of great weight, important; solemn, sacred." Even without the definition from the lexicon, the way it is used indicates that the sabbath day referred to was not the ordinary or weekly one.

The explanation is in the fact that the day following the crucifixion was the Jewish Passover. Leviticus 23: 1-7 clearly shows that day was a holy one which made it a sabbath day. The regular sabbath came each week, while



this other came only once a year, and was commemorative of the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. No wonder, then, that John called it a *high* day. Crucifixion caused a slow death as a rule, so that the victims might linger on into the night and even up till the following day before dying. It was not lawful to permit them thus to remain there, neither could they take them down from the cross while alive. Hence it was a rule to hasten death before night by breaking the legs with clubs, the shock on top of what they had already endured being the final cause of death. That is why the Jews requested Pilate to have the legs of the three broken.

Verse 32. We are not told why the soldiers came to the thieves before Jesus. It was not because of their order on the crosses, for verse 18 says they were on the sides of Jesus. We might speculate and suggest that a humane feeling prompted them to put off the brutal performance as long as possible, but that would be a guess only, and I merely offer it for what it is worth. But the custom of the occasion was carried out under the authority of Pilate.

Verse 33. Jesus had suffered so much physical shock in addition to his intense nervous strain (Luke 22: 44), that he anticipated the soldiers and died before they arrived at the cross. The fact was unusual, and hence Pilate was surprised when he heard that Jesus was dead (Mark 15: 44). The only reason the soldiers had for not breaking the legs of Jesus was that the purpose for the act (to hasten death) was not present. But their refraining from doing it fulfilled another prediction, that his bones were not to be broken (Psalm 34: 20). The same fact was also typified by the restrictions on observing the first passover in Egypt, "neither shall ye break a bone thereof" (Exodus 12: 46).

Verse 34. The scripture does not tell us the motive of the soldier in piercing the body of Jesus with his spear. Doubtless the hand of God was in the act, using the heathen servant as the instrument in producing the greatest event in all history. *Blood and water*. In the very nature of the case, the source of the *water* had to be the circulatory system. The word is from *HYDOR*, and Robinson defines it, "A watery fluid, serum," and explains it at this place, "which flowed

from the wound in Jesus' side." This critical authority will justify another note, in the form of a medical comment, by Henry H. Halley, as follows: "Some medical authorities have said that in the case of heart rupture, and in that case only, the blood collects in the pericardium (the lining around the wall of the heart), and divides into a sort of bloody clot and a watery serum. If this is a fact, then the actual physical cause of Jesus' death was heart rupture. Under intense pain, and the pressure of his wildly raging blood, his heart burst open." Thus the spear of the Roman soldier started the flowing of the most precious stream that ever existed in the universe. In it was fulfilled the prophetic words, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened in the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zechariah 13: 1). And with that amazing circumstance in our minds, we sing the beautifully solemn words, "There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Emmanuel's veins; And sinners plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains."

Verse 35. This verse is virtually the same as chapter 21: 24, which lets us know that it means John. He *knew* that his record was true, not only because he was an eye witness (verse 26), but was one of the inspired apostles and wrote by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 36. This is commented upon at verse 33.

Verse 37. This prediction is in Zechariah 12: 10. The mere act of looking on Jesus might seem as an unimportant item. But Matthew 27: 36 says, "And sitting down they watched him there." This was not from mere morbid curiosity, but it was a part of their duty. Smith's Bible Dictionary says, "The crucified was watched, according to custom, by a party of four soldiers, John 19: 23, with their centurion, Matthew 27: 66, whose express office was to prevent the stealing of the body. This was necessary from the lingering character of the death, which sometimes did not supervene even for three days, and was at last the result of gradual benumbing and starvation. But for this guard, the persons might have been taken down and recovered as was actually done in the case of a friend of Josephus."

Verse 38. *Secretly for fear of the Jews* means that his being a disciple

had been kept secret up to this time. But he maintained that secrecy no longer, which he could not do if he performed the act he planned on doing in taking charge of the body of Jesus. The soldiers would not have permitted him to take the body, had he not been authorized to do so by Pilate, hence the record says that he "commanded the body to be delivered" (Matthew 27: 58). And the open manner of Joseph's actions is expressed in Mark 15: 43, that he "went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus."

Verse 39. The visit of Nicodemus with Jesus is recorded in chapter 3 of this book. Nothing is said at that place as to the impression made on the ruler, nor of what his attitude was afterward; but the present verse indicates that it left him with a favorable feeling. Also the protest he made against the unfair treatment accorded to Jesus by the Jews (chapter 7: 50, 51) agrees with that attitude. Hence he joined with Joseph in giving the body of Jesus this honorable burial. Thayer says that *myrrh* is, "a bitter gum and costly perfume which exudes from a certain tree or shrub in Arabia and Ethiopia, or is obtained by incisions made in the bark; as an antiseptic it was used in embalming." Of *aloes* he says it is "the name of an aromatic tree which grows in eastern India and Cochlin China, and whose soft bitter wood the Orientals used in fumigation and in embalming the dead." The immense weight of these materials that Nicodemus brought would indicate his respect for Jesus.

Verse 40. The products mentioned in the preceding verse were bound to the body of Jesus with the linen cloth, after which it was prepared for burial according to the Jewish custom in practice at that time and in that country.

Verse 41. *A new sepulchre*. This place had become the property of Joseph according to Matthew 27: 60. We are not informed when nor why Joseph had acquired this tomb, but having done so evidently for his own use whenever the occasion came that it would be needed, it was at this time unoccupied. That gave the occasion for the body of Jesus to be placed "wherein was never man yet laid" (stated here and in Luke 23: 53).

Verse 42. *Because of the Jews' preparation day*. Luke 23: 54 says it was

the day of the preparation, "and the sabbath drew on." The preparation day was a busy time for the Jews (see notes at verse 31), hence it was convenient from that standpoint to bury Jesus at this place, *for the sepulchre was nigh at hand*.

## JOHN 20

Verse 1. It is unnecessary to quibble over the particular hour in which Jesus arose from the grave. Neither should any of the indefinite statements about "darkness" be an occasion for confusion. Mark 16: 9 plainly says "Jesus was risen early the first day of the week." No one of the other accounts disagrees with this, hence the conclusion is that the first day of the week was the day on which Jesus arose from the dead. Matthew 28: 1 and Mark 16: 1 shows that Mary Magdalene was not alone in coming to the sepulchre. These women were coming with the intention of anointing the body of Jesus (Mark 16: 1; Luke 24: 1). But when they got to the tomb they saw that the stone was taken away. Matthew 28: 1-6 and Mark 16: 5, 6 adds the information that they found the grave empty, and that Jesus was alive although they did not realize it at first.

Verse 2. Luke 24: 3 tells why the woman ran to meet Peter. She had looked in and seen the empty tomb and thought the body had been removed and laid elsewhere.

Verse 3. *The other disciple* was the one *whom Jesus loved* (chapter 21: 20, 24), who was John. The two disciples started running toward the sepulchre.

Verse 4. John outran Peter and arrived first at the sepulchre.

Verse 5. John went near enough only to see the empty clothes.

Verse 6. Peter reached the sepulchre, and when he did, he did not pause on the outside as did John. *Went into the sepulchre*. This phrase will be better understood by reading the notes at Matthew 27: 60 on the description of tombs.

Verse 7. The order in which the clothes and napkin were neatly folded and laid back, indicates that no confusion or violence was present when Jesus was ready to depart from the tomb. The *linen clothes* was all the clothing the body of Jesus wore as he was laid away in this tomb, as all of his own raiment was taken from him

before he was crucified. (See the notes at Matthew 27: 35.) We are not told how he obtained clothing suitable for public appearances, but we know he was wearing some ordinary kind, for Mary thought he was the gardener when she saw him (verse 15).

Verse 8. By this time John was ready to enter the cave or tomb. The statement is that *he saw and believed*. This may be the origin of an old saying, "seeing is believing." The phrase is not strictly true, for what one sees, he knows, which is not the same as belief. However, the present passage is true, for the thing that John *saw* was not what he *believed*. He *saw* the empty tomb and the unoccupied grave clothes. This caused him to *believe* that Jesus was alive, though at that moment he could not see him.

Verse 9. *Knew not* means they did not realize the meaning of the scripture that predicted the rising from the dead. The writer makes this statement as an explanation of why it took these plain evidences to convince them that Jesus was really alive. The scripture prediction referred to is in Psalms 16: 8-10.

Verse 10. *The disciples* means Peter and John who had run to the sepulchre.

Verse 11. In the meantime, Mary had returned to the tomb, and was weeping in grief for her Lord. Her interest would not let her be inactive, so she stooped down and looked into the tomb.

Verse 12. This gave her a view of the place where the body of Jesus had lain, which was in the same condition it was when she was first at the sepulchre (Luke 24: 3). But this time she saw something she did not see the first time. That was *two angels in white* sitting at the head and foot of the place where Jesus had lain.

Verse 13. Mary still thought that someone had removed the body of her Lord; she told the angels this in answer to their question why she was weeping.

Verse 14. While this conversation was going on, Jesus had returned to the tomb and was standing near Mary. She *knew not that it was Jesus*. One meaning of the Greek word for *knew* is "to perceive." The circumstance here was perfectly natural because of the unexpectedness of the appearance of Jesus. Mary was so positive that

the body of her Lord had been stolen, that it caused her eyes to be restrained from their usual functioning. (See the notes on Luke 24: 15, 16.)

Verse 15. The salutation of *woman* was so formal and distant, that it helped to keep her in the dark as to his identity. She could think of no one who would be addressing her in this unfamiliar way but the man who had care of the garden. In that case he would likely be the one who had removed the body to some spot more convenient to his work. That is why she offered to take charge of it if he would tell her of it.

Verse 16. Jesus pronounced the one word *Mary*, which was so personal and direct that it roused her from her far-away state of mind. *She turned herself* does not mean that her back had been toward him before, for she had looked at him closely enough that she took him to be the gardener. The idea is that she assumed a more direct and deliberate attitude toward Jesus, for she then recognized him. In her surprised joy she saluted him with one of the most reverent title she knew, which was the Greek word *RHABDOUNI*, which John interprets to mean *Master*.

Verse 17. *Touch* is from the Greek word *HAPTO*, and Thayer's definition is, "To fasten to, make adhere to; to fasten one's self to, adhere to, cling to." As the word is used in this verse, Thayer explains it, "Do not handle me to see whether I am still clothed with a body; there is no need of such an examination." I believe this explanation is correct, and that Jesus did not mean merely that no personal contact with him would be right. We may be sure of such a conclusion, for a little later (verse 27), Jesus told Thomas to make a very decided contact with him, and his body was then in the same condition it was when he was talking to Mary. A similar use of words is in the instruction of Jesus to the apostles not to "salute" anyone in the way (Luke 10: 4). The explanation given in that place is as follows: "As a salutation was made not merely by a slight gesture and a few words, but generally by embracing and kissing, a journey was retarded by saluting frequently." *For I am not yet ascended to my Father*. This remark is plainly a logical one under the circumstances. Whenever Jesus went back to Heaven, he would no longer

have the fleshly body and other evidences of the eyes as to his identity. But since he had not yet made that change, her own eyes should tell her that it was the same Lord who was crucified. Therefore, instead of spending time with unnecessary handling of his body, she should go to his brethren and tell the good news to them. She was to tell them also that their Lord would soon ascend back to their God.

Verse 18. Mary obeyed the instructions of the Master.

Verse 19. *Same day . . . being the first day of the week.* This statement is another proof that the first day of the week was the one on which Jesus arose from the dead. The persecuting spirit of the Jews still hovered in the community, causing the disciples to meet "behind closed doors." Luke 24: 33-35 tells us the subject they were discussing was the report that Jesus had risen from the dead. *Jesus stood in the midst.* This is taken by some to mean that Jesus had already undergone a change in his body, since he was able to appear in their midst in spite of the closed doors. However, that act would not require any greater miracle than did his disappearance from them unnoticed before his death (Luke 4: 29, 30).

Verse 20. Jesus knew the disciples were puzzled by his sudden appearance, and Luke 24: 37 says they thought he was a spirit. But he clarified their confusion by showing them his hands and his side, which still had the wounds inflicted on him at the cross. This satisfied the disciples and made them glad to recognize their risen Lord.

Verse 21. Whenever Jesus promised peace for his disciples, it was always the kind that was backed up by his Father. The same is true of the *sending* mentioned in this place. The wording shows that Jesus was sending his apostles out with the same authority by which He had been sent by his Father. The verse is the same in thought as Matthew 28: 18, where Jesus declared that all power (or authority) in heaven and in earth had been given to him.

Verse 22. *Receive ye the Holy Ghost* was a promise, and not a gift bestowed at that moment. It was the same "promise" that is stated in Luke 24: 49, and the same that Luke meant

in Acts 1: 4 when he was preparing to appoint another apostle.

Verse 23. This verse is equivalent in thought and application to Matthew 16: 19. In order for the apostles to be correct in their remitting and retaining of sins, it was necessary for them to be inspired by the Holy Ghost or Spirit, hence the command for them to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the Spirit.

Verse 24. See the notes at chapter 11: 16 on the fact of Thomas' being a twin, also with regard to the popular phrase, "doubting Thomas," applied to him because of the present circumstance. He was not in the group when Jesus showed his hands and side.

Verse 25. The disciples told the story to Thomas, but he demanded to have even more positive evidence of the identity of Jesus than merely seeing the wounds. No severe criticism should be made of Thomas, for he seemed only to be more exacting or cautious than the others, and might not have realized how convincing the very sight of the wounds would be in establishing the identity of Jesus.

Verse 26. In a little more than a week, Thomas had the opportunity he said he would require before he would believe. The disciples were again assembled behind closed doors, and Thomas was present. Jesus came again as he did in verse 19, but his presence did not excite them this time for they understood the situation.

Verse 27. We are not told whether the disciples had reported the statement of Thomas to Jesus, or that it was a part of his general knowledge of all men (2: 24, 25). But he quoted the words of Thomas verbatim as to thrusting his hand in the side wound.

Verse 28. After all the demand that Thomas had made to the other disciples, there is no indication that he took the advantage that Jesus offered him. Instead, the response he made to the invitation was only to *answer* Jesus, and make the full confession of faith, *My Lord and my God.*

Verse 29. Here is the plain statement of Jesus that Thomas believed because he had seen the wounds, which proves the comment above that he did not thrust his hand in the side of his Lord. This passage has the two words *seen* and *believed* in about the same connection they are used in verse 8. That is, Thomas *saw* the wounds which



Jesus only could have exhibited at that time. This identified Him as the one who had been dead but now was alive, and that caused Thomas to believe that he was his Lord and God. Jesus did not condemn Thomas for arriving at his faith from the things he had seen. The point is that he had enjoyed an advantage that few others could have, for the world in general was to be left to believe on the strength of sound testimony. All such were to be *blessed* or be considered happy, because mankind could not all have the bodily presence of Christ for an evidence.

Verse 30. This verse corresponds with the thought in chapter 21: 25, as to the immensity of the things that went to make up the life of Christ.

Verse 31. John wrote these last two verses for the information of the readers, the pronoun *ye* referring to them. The immediate purpose of recording the signs or miracles was to make believers by them, as Jesus stated in verse 29. The ultimate purpose was to give the believers spiritual life and salvation through His name.

### JOHN 21

Verse 1. *After these things* means the events of the preceding chapter. *Tiberias* was another name for the Sea of Galilee. It was according to previous appointment that Jesus met his disciples at this place. (See Matthew 28: 7).

Verse 2. Among the men named as disciples was *Nathanael*, the same man who figured in the interesting conversation of chapter 1: 45-51. (See the notes at that place.) The other name for him was *Bartholomew*, which may be learned from the lists given by the Gospel records. Matthew 10, Mark 3 and Luke 6, name twelve apostles including *Bartholomew*, but never mention *Nathanael*, while John mentions *Nathanael* six times, but never refers to *Bartholomew* by name one time. The verse merely states that these disciples *were together*, but does not tell the exact spot where they were nor what they were doing; the next verse will give us that information.

Verse 3. The disciples named were together somewhere in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee, when Peter proposed going fishing, his original occupation. The others of the group said they would join him, and thus they returned to the secular business they

were in when Jesus first called them into his service (Matthew 4: 13-22). They did their fishing in a boat by using a net, but although they spent the whole night in their efforts, *they caught nothing*.

Verse 4. In the meantime Jesus had come to the sea and was standing on the shore when morning came, or at least as it was getting on towards daylight. But it was still somewhat dark, so that the disciples could not recognize Jesus.

Verse 5. *Children* is from *PAIDION*, and its literal meaning is "little ones." It is not used literally in this verse, but is spoken "in affectionate address" according to Thayer. The margin renders it "sirs," and Moffatt translates it "lads." *Have ye any meat* meant to ask if they had been successful in their fishing, which they had not.

Verse 6. The word *right* is used in the sense of right-hand, and has no reference to the distinction between right and wrong, or "right" as contrasted with "incorrect." A school of fish was coming along that side of the boat at that moment. Jesus had divine power as well as divine knowledge. He could have caused the school of fish to come to that spot at the appropriate time, or he could have known that it was occurring by ordinary causes. In either case it would have been a miraculous demonstration on the part of Jesus. *Not able to draw it* without help. (See verse 8.)

Verse 7. By this time it was light enough to recognize an acquaintance, especially by the help of hearing his voice. The disciple *whom Jesus loved* (John according to verses 20, 24), was the first to recognize Jesus, and he announced the fact to Peter. *Naked* is from *GUMNOS*, which Thayer defines at this place, "clad only in the undergarment." The cloak or outer garment had been laid aside for convenience in the activities of fishing. Peter did not feel "presentable" to come into the presence of Jesus, and threw his fisher's coat over the undergarment. He did not wait to come to land by boat, but plunged into the water and either swam or waded out as it was only 300 feet (verse 8).

Verse 8. The short distance from land is mentioned to explain why they came in a *little ship*. At that distance the water would be shallow, so that a larger boat would not navigate so well,

especially when it had to serve as a sort of a "tug" to draw the filled net toward shore.

Verse 9. By having fish on the fire, with bread to eat with them, Jesus taught the disciples that he did not need to depend upon them for the necessities of life.

Verse 10. But the Lord has always taught that man must contribute to his own needs as he is able, hence the disciples were commanded to bring some of the fish they had caught.

Verse 11. The disciples had reached the edge of the water when Jesus told Peter to bring some of his fish. The writer mentions the fact of the net being unbroken notwithstanding the number and size of the fishes, and such reference to it indicates that another miracle was worked to preserve the net.

Verse 12. *Dine* is from *ARISTAO*. Both Thayer and Robinson define it, "To breakfast," and the latter adds, "to lunch, i. e., to take an early meal before the chief meal." *Durst* is a form of "dare." The thought is that none of the disciples would dare or venture to ask Jesus to identify himself, for they all knew it was the Lord. Curiosity, as well as a desire to be doubly certain, would have prompted them to ask Jesus the question, but the evidences of his identity were so great they did not have the courage to ask him.

Verse 13. The fish having been cooked by the fire that Jesus had kindled before the arrival of the disciples, he served them with bread to them.

Verse 14. *Third time . . . to his disciples*, or apostles. The two other times are in chapter 20: 19 and 26. His first appearance was to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16: 9), but she was not an apostle.

Verses 15-17. I believe these verses should be studied as one paragraph for the best results. Some unnecessary labor has been done by some in the way of technical distinctions between certain words, which might cause us to overlook the main point Jesus had in mind. It is true that the Greek originals for *love*, *feed*, *sheep* and *lambs* has each some meanings different from the others. And yet, those distinctions are not great enough to affect the lesson Jesus was giving the apostles. Peter was engaged in the

fishing business when Jesus called him (Matthew 4: 13-20). He left his net and followed the call, and later insisted that nothing could separate him from his service to the Master (Mark 14: 31). Notwithstanding such a profession of loyalty, Peter denied his Lord three times (Matthew 26: 75), and in verse 3 of the present chapter he led the others in returning to their former occupation. Now it was the time and place to make him "take his stand" with reference to his service to the Lord. The masculine and neuter genders for the original of *these* are the same in form, hence the Greek grammar will not help us in determining to what the pronoun refers. Strong defines the word, "Of (from or concerning) these (persons or things)." From all the foregoing considerations, the question of Jesus means, "lovest thou me more than you do this fishing business?" Upon his three-fold assertion that he did, Jesus very logically directed him to prove it by devoting his efforts towards the spiritual business of teaching His people.

Verse 18. The Greek word for *young* has the comparative form, which makes it mean "younger." Jesus is speaking of the days when Peter was in his prime physically and able to care for himself, even to the extent of self-defense if necessary. But the time was coming when he would be subject to the will and strength of others. This prediction is so general that we only could have guessed at its meaning, had the writer not given us the key to it in the next verse.

Verse 19. *By what death* indicates not only that the death of Peter would be to glorify (do honor) God, but that the manner of that death was to be a significant item in the affair. I do not believe it requires me to pay any special attention to the tradition that Peter was crucified with his head downward, nor even that he was crucified at all, though that is probable. The point is that he was to die by violence because of his devotion to God. In that kind of experience he would be imitating the example of his Lord, which is what he was exhorted to do in the words, follow me.

Verse 20. This entire verse is given to identify the disciple of whom Peter was about to ask his question. That disciple was John according to verse 24.

Verse 21. In this verse Peter manifests a very natural curiosity, but which will be interpreted by Christ as an intrusion by Peter into matters that should not have concerned him. Jesus had exhorted Peter to follow Him by faithfulness even to the extent of a violent death. The question of the apostle means as if he had said, "And what do you expect John to do; will he have to die a violent death also?"

Verse 22. Jesus did not answer Peter's question directly. *Tarry till I come* means not only that he would not die a violent death, but would not die at all before Jesus returned to earth. But Jesus did not say that such a thing would happen, only that if it did, it would be no concern of Peter's; his duty was to follow Jesus.

Verse 23. This verse gives a clear example of the disposition of men to formulate rumors with no truth as a basis. Jesus only asked Peter a hypothetical question by way of rebuking him for his meddlesome attitude. Then the gossiping spirit of the disciples made an affirmation out of it, and made Jesus say that John was promised that he would live to see the second coming of Christ.

Verse 24. This verse, together with other passages, shows us that the disciple "whom Jesus loved" was John. (See chapter 13: 23.)

Verse 25. Jesus lived and worked with his disciples and among men for more than three years. It would have made a volume or volumes of immense size had all of His deeds been recorded. *World* means the people of the earth. *Contain* is from *CHOREO*, and as Thayer defines it, the meaning is, "To receive with the mind or understanding, to understand; to be ready to receive, keep in mind." The entire Bible is very brief, and the Lord has placed before mankind enough only to make the necessary preparation for usefulness in this life, and happiness in the next.

### ACTS 1

Verse 1. The Greek word for *treatise* is *LOGOS*. The definitions in the lexicon are very numerous, likewise the word is translated by a great variety of terms in the King James Version. I believe it will be well to state the different terms, and the number of times it is so rendered by each, so the reader may form a general idea of the scope

of the original. It has been translated by account, 8 times; cause, 1; communication, 3; doctrine, 1; game, 1; intent, 1; matter, 4; mouth, 1; rumor, 1; saying, 50; shew, 1; speech, 8; talk, 1; thing, 4; things to say, 1; tidings, 1; treatise, 1; utterance, 4; word, 208; Word, 7; words, 4; work, 2. In our present passage it means volume or document, since it refers to the Gospel of Luke. The salutation to *Theophilus* is the same as in Luke 1: 3, which proves that one man is the author of both books. All of the writers in the Nicene Library, a work composed by scholars in the church in the first four centuries of the Christian Era, agree that Luke is the author of the book we are now studying, as well as the Gospel bearing his name. Referring to his former work (his Gospel record), the author says it was a *treatise of all that Jesus began both to do and teach*.

Verse 2. The preceding verse states something of the subject matter of Luke's former book, and the present tells of the event at which it concluded its narrative. *Was taken up* refers to the ascension of Jesus, recorded in Luke 24: 51. These *commandments* pertain to the "Great Commission" given to the apostles, to go and preach the Gospel in all the world. (See Matthew 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16; Luke 24: 47, 48.)

Verse 3. *Whom* means the apostles referred to in the preceding verse, who were to be the witnesses for Jesus in the nations of the world. In order for them to be qualified as witnesses to the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead, it was necessary for him to show himself to them. *Passion* is from *PASCHO*, and Thayer's general definition is, "to feel, have a sensible experience, to undergo; to suffer sadly, be in bad plight." As Luke uses it, it refers to the sufferings and death of Jesus on the cross. *Showed himself alive* indicates how long after his death it was that he showed himself, namely, after his resurrection, since he was *alive*. *Infallible proofs* comes from one Greek word *TEKMERION*, and Thayer's definition is, "That from which something is surely and plainly known; an indubitable [unquestionable] evidence, a proof." A proof that was merely reasonably sure was not enough, but it must be so evident that it would be impossible to misunderstand it, and there were to be *many* of them. That would enable the apostles