

The Gospel of John

A study through the "I am" statements of Jesus

Who is this study guide for?

If you've ever asked questions such as "who is Jesus," "what does it mean to be a Christian," or "how can I go to Heaven," this study through the Gospel of John will provide answers from Jesus Himself.

If you're not a Christian, then this study guide is specifically for you. If you are a Christian, this guide can still help refine your understanding of who Jesus is.

How do I use this study guide?

Throughout nine sections, we'll study seven "I am" statements that Jesus makes about Himself along with other helpful passages. For each section, the Bible verses, study questions, and answers are all provided. For a more in-depth understanding, you may find it helpful to read the other passages in the Gospel of John that are not included in this study guide.

You can use this guide by yourself, but we recommend going through it with a friend who can help explain the verses further. To supplement your study, we've compiled a list of resources that complement each section. Go to www.graceoncampus.org/resources to find them.



A ministry of Grace Community Church

Getting Some Context

The first chapter of John serves as a prologue to the rest of the book by describing Jesus and His mission on Earth. The first 18 verses describe the deity of Christ and the salvation that He brought to the world. They show that Jesus is God. As God, Jesus has the ability to save us from the power of sin and death. Through Him, we can have eternal life.

The chapter also introduces John the Baptist. His unique mission was to prepare the way for the long awaited savior of Israel, also known as the Messiah, who is Jesus. John was a forerunner to Jesus by laying down the groundwork for Jesus's ministry. As we look at John's teaching, we will see that he taught that the only way to be saved from spiritual death is through Jesus Christ and not by doing good works.

Hearing God's Word

John 1:1-34

- 1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2** He was in the beginning with God.
- 3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4** In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- 5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- 6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7** He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.
- 8** He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
- 9** The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.
- 10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.
- 11** He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.
- 12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,
- 13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

v. 1 The Greek word *Logos*, translated Word, conveys wisdom, reason, and truth, all of which Jesus exemplifies.

v. 1-2 These verses show that 1) the Word was in the "beginning" meaning that Jesus existed before anything was created 2) Jesus was with God before Creation 3) Jesus Himself was God before Creation. The Bible declares that there is only one God who exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

v. 3 Since Jesus created everything in existence, He must be uncreated. In fact, Jesus is God.

v. 4-5 Without Jesus, the true light and life, we are blind to truth (2 Cor. 4:4) and we are dead in our sins (Rom. 6:23).

v. 6 This is John the Baptist, who is not the same John who wrote the Gospel of John.

v. 11 "Own people" refers to the Jews. Throughout the Old Testament, God promised Israel that He would provide them a Messiah, or deliverer, to bring them salvation from sin and to be their king (Jer. 23:5-6, Mic. 5:2). However, when Jesus arrived as their Messiah, they did not receive Him.

v. 12 Believing in His name means to have faith in Jesus, affirming that He is the Son of God and placing full trust in Him.

v. 13 Someone can't become a child of God by earning favor with Him. Instead, God is the one who saves them out of their life of sin through His grace and mercy.

v. 14 Jesus came to the Earth as truly man, not merely appearing as a man. He also came as truly God in fullness of deity. Jesus was not created by the Father.

15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”)

16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”

20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”

21 And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

22 So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

23 He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

24 (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.)

25 They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

26 John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know,

27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.”

28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

30 This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’

31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”

32 And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

v. 16-17 In the Old Testament, God gave the Jews the Law through Moses. The Law comprises God’s moral requirements. However, the Law can’t save us from our sin since it is impossible to keep it perfectly (Rom. 3:20). Jesus fulfilled the Law on our behalf, and by His grace, we are set free from the requirements of the Law if we put our faith in Him (Rom. 8:2).

v. 18 The life that Jesus lived on Earth manifested the nature and character of the Father.

v. 23 John’s mission was to be a forerunner for Jesus. He was merely a messenger proclaiming that the Christ (Messiah) had arrived to bring life and light; grace and truth .

v. 26 In anticipation of the Messiah, John’s baptism was meant to symbolize repentance, a recognition of sin in one’s life and a need to be cleansed by God.

v. 29 Lambs were used as sacrifices in Israel. John uses the term “Lamb of God” to indicate that Jesus’ death would be the ultimate sacrifice for sin that would extend to the whole world. This means that Jesus’ sacrifice can pay for anyone’s sin regardless of race, gender or any other distinction.

v. 32-34 John describes his witness to the baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:13-7). All three persons of the one God, Father, Son and Spirit, are manifest during the baptism.

v. 33 God affirmed that Jesus is the Messiah by having the Holy Spirit rest on Jesus. Jesus provides the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which has the power to change the heart and remove sin.

Digging Deeper

Questions about you

1. People have a lot of views on who Jesus is. Who do you think He is?
2. What do you think it means to be a Christian?

Questions about the text

1. What are some of the names ascribed to Jesus? What connotations come with these names?
2. What do we learn about Jesus in v. 1-2? How does this affect how we read the rest of John?
3. According to this passage, what did Jesus seek to accomplish on Earth?
4. What is required in v. 12 to become a child of God?
5. Are all people children of God?
6. In v. 13, who accomplishes our salvation? Can we earn our salvation?
7. What did Jesus do in v. 14? What implications does this verse have?
8. What is contrasted in v. 17 and what does this indicate about the ministry of Christ?
9. Who sent John to baptize in v.33?
10. If John is right in calling Jesus the "Son of God" in v34, what should our response to Jesus be?

Questions to think about

1. How do you think your life would change if Jesus is the Son of God?
2. How does the idea of being a child of God make you feel?
3. Do you find it hard to believe that Jesus, who is God, became a man? Why or why not?
4. How do you think people go to Heaven? How does that compare to how the Bible says people go to Heaven?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. What are some of the names ascribed to Jesus? What connotations come with these names?

Jesus is referred to as the Word, Light, Life, Lamb of God and Son of God. Word indicates Jesus' perfect wisdom and knowledge as He is the very essence of truth. Light speaks to Jesus' perfect holiness in contrast to the darkness of sin. Since Jesus is life, apart from Him there is only death.

2. What do we learn about Jesus in v. 1-2? How does this affect how we read the rest of John?

We learn that Jesus has existed eternally with God the Father as a distinct person and yet is also called God. There is one God who exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Son, the second person of the Trinity. Jesus who is uncreated, is the Creator of all things. As we look at Jesus' words and actions, we must always remember that He is not merely a man but is also truly God.

3. According to this passage, what did Jesus seek to accomplish on Earth?

Jesus came to bring life and light (v4) to all who believe on His name (v12). He came to bring grace and truth (v16) to a dying world. He is the Lamb of God who came to Earth to take away the sins of the world (v29).

4. What is required in v. 12 to become a child of God?

Verse 12 tells us that if we believe in Jesus Christ, we will be given the right to become a child of God. This is grace, which is when God shows favor because He chooses to, not because we earn His favor.

5. Are all people children of God?

No, we are by nature children of wrath, enemies of God (Eph. 2:1-3). Only those who receive Christ as savior and lord can be made His children (Eph 2:8-9).

6. In v. 13, who accomplishes our salvation? Can we earn our salvation?

God alone works out our salvation. No ritual, work or anything that we do can save us from the wrath of the Father against our sin.

7. What did Jesus do in v. 14? What implications does this verse have?

Verse 14 tells us that Jesus took on flesh and lived among the very people He had created. Being truly God and truly man, He manifested His glory by literally being "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). By becoming flesh, Jesus lived the perfect human life that we could not, and by being God, He was the only one who could take away the sins of the world.

8. What is contrasted in v. 17 and what does this indicate about the ministry of Christ?

Verse 17 contrasts the law given through Moses with grace and truth, which came through Jesus Christ. The law brings condemnation for sin since no one can uphold God's moral standard. Jesus did not bring condemnation since our sin already condemns us under the law. Jesus came to bring grace through the truth of the Gospel. If we put our faith in Jesus as Lord, trusting that His death paid the price of our sin, then we can become a child of God.

9. Who sent John to baptize in v.33?

In verse 33, John says that God is the one who sent him to baptize.

10. If John is right in calling Jesus the "Son of God" in v34, what should our response to Jesus be?

By referring to Jesus in this way, John is affirming the deity of Christ and that Jesus alone has the power to take away sins. If Jesus really is the Son of God, we must believe in Him and devote our lives to Him.

Getting Some Context

After His baptism, Jesus starts His formal ministry. He assembles a group of 12 disciples, performs miracles, and cleanses the Jewish temple of false religion. In doing so, He begins receiving more attention, especially from the Jewish leaders. In this passage, one of those leaders named Nicodemus seeks out Jesus to learn more about Him.

Jesus tells Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God, one must undergo a radical change by being spiritually reborn. This new life is created when the Spirit of God provides a new heart of faith in Jesus. All who put their faith in Jesus will not perish under condemnation, but will be given eternal life and salvation from the wrath of God.

Hearing God's Word

John 3:1-21

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?"

11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.

12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

v. 1 The Pharisees were a group of Jews that were zealously devoted to upholding the Mosaic Law and their own traditions. Nicodemus was also a ruler meaning that he would have been a Jew of high status.

v. 3 Jesus introduces the concept of being born again. He is using the phrase in a figurative sense, which Nicodemus recognizes.

v. 5 Water here refers to spiritual cleansing (Ez. 36:25-28). Only through spiritual cleansing and the work of the Holy Spirit can anyone enter the Kingdom of God.

v. 8 We can't see or control the wind, but we can see its effect. Similarly, all who are born again, who have put their faith in Jesus Christ, are born through the work of the Spirit. The effect of their new birth is a changed life that desires to serve Jesus.

v. 10 Since Nicodemus was well-versed in the Scriptures, he should have known that salvation requires a new life.

v. 11-12 The cause of the Pharisee's unbelief was not a lack of evidence, but rather a heart that rejected Jesus. Only God can change a heart of unbelief.

13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

v. 13 As the eternal Son of God, Jesus alone has been at the Father's side for all of eternity.

v. 14-15 This is a reference to Numbers 21:4-9. In that passage, God judged the Israelites for their sin by sending poisonous snakes into their camp. In an act of mercy, He had Moses raise a bronze serpent so that all who looked upon it would be miraculously healed. Similarly, God was merciful to us by raising His Son on a cross to bear the judgment for sin that we deserve. By looking to Jesus, we can be saved from the poison of sin and the judgment of God.

v. 17 Jesus' mission was to bring grace to us. Only faith in Jesus as the Son of God will save one from condemnation.

v. 18 This verse teaches that no one is neutral towards God. All are either condemned because of sin or not condemned because of faith in Christ.

v. 19 For the myriad of reasons people give for rejecting the gospel, Jesus says there is only one underlying reason: they love their sin.

v. 21 Those who are saved by God are given the ability to do good works through the power of Christ in them.

Digging Deeper

Questions about the text

1. Why does Nicodemus visit Jesus?
2. What must first happen before someone can see the Kingdom of God?
3. What comes to your mind when you hear the term "born again"? What was Jesus conveying by using this phrase to describe saving faith?
4. What distinction does Jesus draw between the flesh and the Spirit in verses 5-6?
5. What did God do in verse 16? Why did He do it?
6. How can someone have eternal life?
7. What do verses 17-18 tell us Jesus's purpose was?
8. What reason does verse 18 give for condemnation?
9. In verses 19-20 what are the reasons that people choose wickedness over righteousness?
10. If all of our works are evil, is there anything we can do to earn favor with God?
11. How then, can we do good works?

Questions to think about

1. Like Nicodemus, do you find the concept of being born again difficult to understand?
2. Does being saved from sin without having to earn God's favor seem too good to be true?
3. What do you think eternal life means?
4. What would you have to give up to live a new life in Christ?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. Why does Nicodemus visit Jesus?

According to Nicodemus, the religious leaders knew that Jesus must be from God. He says that the signs that Jesus did can only be ascribed to the power of God. We can infer that Nicodemus sought Jesus to find out what His purpose was.

2. What must first happen before someone can see the Kingdom of God?

One must be born again to see the Kingdom of God.

3. What comes to your mind when you hear the term "born again"? What was Jesus conveying by using this phrase to describe saving faith?

Jesus is emphasizing the drastic change in a believer's life when they put their faith in Him. The old life that is enslaved to sin is replaced by a life that turns to Christ and finds joy in Him. The fact that we need to be completely recreated shows us how utterly sinful we are in our natural state. Jesus doesn't say we need to be fixed, improved, or enhanced. He says we need to be completely reborn"

4. What distinction does Jesus draw between the flesh and the Spirit in verses 5-6?

Those who are born of the flesh will not enter Heaven, while those who are born of the Spirit will. In our natural human state we are of the flesh, which the Bible says is inherently evil (Rom. 8:6). However, the Holy Spirit can cleanse our sinful flesh by giving us new life in Jesus Christ.

5. What did God do in verse 16? Why did He do it?

The Father sent His only Son to die on a Cross as a sacrifice for our sins because of His love for us.

6. How can someone have eternal life?

Eternal life comes by believing in Jesus Christ and submitting your life to Him. It involves embracing Jesus as your treasure, your Savior, and your Lord.

7. What do verses 17-18 tell us Jesus's purpose was?

Jesus came to Earth to save us from our sins. Anyone who believes in the name of Jesus will be saved. Jesus brought grace to the world in His first coming, not judgment. In the future all people will be judged, but while we live on Earth, we have an opportunity to be saved from eternal death by believing in Jesus.

8. What reason does verse 18 give for condemnation?

People are condemned because they do not believe in Jesus Christ. The only way to be made right with God is to have faith in Jesus Christ. You can't work your way into a relationship with God, whether it be through good deeds, philanthropy, morality, or religiosity. It is only through faith in Christ. Otherwise we are condemned because of our life of unrepentant sin and ultimately our lack of belief.

9. In verses 19-20 what are the reasons that people choose wickedness over righteousness?

We, as sinful humans, love moral darkness. We love our sin for the momentary pleasure that it provides. We are also afraid of the truth because it will expose our evil deeds and clearly show us that we are following a path of destruction. Ultimately, we by nature hate God and hate the light of truth that He shines.

10. If all of our works are evil, is there anything we can do to earn favor with God?

No. None of our works are pleasing to God because all of them are stained with sin and are done with a heart of wickedness. (Romans 3:10-12)

11. How then, can we do good works?

Only by coming to the light, to Christ, can any of our works be good. They are good not because of anything inherent in us, but rather because they have been carried out in God through His power in us. Jesus Christ is the true light and in Him is no darkness. He is the only way that we can find favor with God, not because of anything that we have done, but because of the work He has done.

John 6:22-51

Getting Some Context

Earlier in John 6, Jesus performs a miracle by multiplying five loaves of bread and two fish into enough food to feed more than 5,000 people. These same people seek out Jesus the next day in hopes of seeing more miracles.

When the crowd finds Jesus, He tells them that he is the Bread of Life, signifying that only those who spiritually feed on the bread that Jesus provides will receive eternal life. In order to do so, one must believe and trust in Christ alone as their Lord, Savior, and God.

Hearing God's Word

John 6:22-51

22 On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.

23 Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.

24 So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?"

26 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

28 Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?"

29 Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

30 So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?"

31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

v. 26 Jesus ignores their question and goes straight for their hearts. He knows their motives, demonstrating His omniscience.

v. 27 God the Father has set His seal on Christ meaning that Jesus is the approved dignitary of God, with all the authority of God including the power to give eternal life.

v. 29 The primary work that God requires of us is to believe in Christ. There is no way to earn salvation through doing good things. Only by having faith in Jesus can you be saved from Hell.

v.30-31 When the Isrealites were wandering in the wilderness, God provided them food from Heaven called manna. Before they believed in Jesus, the people wanted Him to perform a miracle that outdid the provision of manna.

v. 32-33 The manna was merely physical nourishment for the Isrealites. Christ is spiritual nourishment for all peoples, not just Israel.

33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

34 They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.

37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

41 So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”

42 They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”

43 Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.

44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

45 It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—

46 not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.

47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

v. 34 The people are still focused on physical bread and are blind to Jesus's spiritual message.

v. 35 Jesus makes it crystal clear that the bread he has been talking about is Himself.

v. 37 God will preserve the faith of all His people, and He will never turn away His own regardless of the sin they have committed in the past.

v. 39 We can have assurance that we will be saved because Christ is the one who will hold us firm. We cannot out-sin the grace of God.

v. 40 Salvation is guaranteed to all who put their faith in Jesus. All believers will be resurrected and live for eternity in Heaven with God.

v. 41 In response to the Gospel message, the Jews' hearts remain hardened.

v. 44-45 God is sovereign over salvation, drawing all His elect to Jesus. Without God, we do not have the power to come to Christ. This does not contradict the responsibility that all people have to believe in Christ. Each of us is justly held accountable for the decisions we make.

v. 47 The only thing that can save us from eternal death is faith in Jesus.

v. 49-50 Physical food does not satisfy forever. Jesus does.

v. 51 Just as we need physical food to sustain our bodies, so we need spiritual food to sustain our souls. Jesus uses the metaphor of eating His flesh to explain that we must depend on Him for life. In particular, we must believe that through His death on the cross, He has made salvation available for all people who put their faith in Him.

Digging Deeper

Questions about the text

1. What are some of the reasons we eat food? How do you think these contribute to Jesus's metaphor that He is the bread of life?
2. Why are the people seeking Jesus in the beginning of the passage?
3. What do you think belief involves in v. 29?
4. What contrast is drawn between manna and the bread of life?
5. What kept the Jews from accepting Jesus as the Messiah?
6. In verse 44, what must first happen before someone can come to Christ?
7. What is guaranteed to all who come to Jesus?

Questions to think about

1. How does Jesus's way to eternal life differ from other religions?
2. To what do you look to satisfy your desires? What do you think will give you ultimate satisfaction in life?
3. In what ways does Jesus satisfy us?
4. What do you think a life totally dependent on Jesus as the bread of life looks like?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. What are some of the reasons we eat food? How do you think these contribute to Jesus's metaphor that **He is the bread of life?**

We eat to satisfy hunger, to enjoy the taste of food, and to live a healthy life. Jesus calls Himself the bread of life because He satisfies our ultimate desires and He sustains our lives. When we put our faith in Him, we live a life totally dependent on Jesus for life.

2. Why are the people seeking Jesus in the beginning of the passage?

They want Jesus to perform more miracles for them and to give them more free food.

3. What do you think belief involves in v. 29?

Belief involves trusting in Christ who paid the penalty for sin by His death on the cross. It involves completely depending on Him instead of sin and worldly desires.

4. What contrast is drawn between manna and the **bread of life?**

While manna provided physical sustenance to the Israelites, it could not stop them from dying. In contrast, Jesus has the power to save us from eternal death. When we depend on Him through faith, He sustains us and preserves our faith in Him.

5. What kept the Jews from accepting Jesus as the **Messiah?**

The Jew's hearts were hardened to the Gospel because all they wanted was Jesus to perform more miracles for them and fit their conception of a messiah. They wanted a conquering king that would bring about an earthly kingdom that would meet their physical needs. However, what they got was a suffering servant that brought about a spiritual kingdom to meet their spiritual needs..

6. In verse 44, what must first happen before **someone can come to Christ?**

Before anyone can come to Christ they must be drawn by the Father. This doesn't remove every person's responsibility to believe in Jesus, but it does mean that only God can overcome our desire for sin.

7. What is guaranteed to all who come to Jesus?

Everyone who puts their faith in Jesus will be given eternal life. They will be resurrected in an immortal body and enjoy God for eternity in Heaven. Verse 51 makes it clear that eternal life only comes to those who depend completely on Jesus through faith.

"I am the light of the world" 4

John 8:12-29

Getting Some Context

Between the bread of life discourse and this passage, the hostility toward Jesus has mounted. The Pharisees are becoming more antagonistic, seeking to show that Jesus is not the Messiah.

While speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus claims to be the light of the world. This is a title rich with meaning in the Old Testament. It is a messianic title that underscores the work that Jesus does to remove spiritual blindness and deliver us from the darkness of sin.

Hearing God's Word

John 8:12-29

12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

13 So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true."

14 Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going."

15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.

16 Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me.

17 In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true.

18 I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me."

19 They said to him therefore, "Where is your Father?"

Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

20 These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

21 So he said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."

22 So the Jews said, "Will he kill himself, since he says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come?'"

23 He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world."

v. 12 Light and darkness are symbols used throughout the Bible (Is. 9:2, John 1:5). They are used in two contexts: 1) Intellectually, light refers to spiritual truth and darkness refers to spiritual error or ignorance. 2) Morally, light refers to righteous living while darkness refers to sin.

v.13 The Pharisees demonstrate their hostility toward Jesus and his teaching by trying to trap Jesus in his own words. Jesus said, "If I alone bear witness about myself my testimony is not true" (John 5:31). Both refer to an OT law that required more than one witness to settle a matter (Deut 17:6).

v. 15-16 Jesus' judgements are true because they are in alignment with the judgements of God the Father. Jesus is using the illustration of bearing witness as in a courtroom to argue for the reliability of His claims.

v. 17-18 Indeed, there were many witnesses to Christ's identity as God and Savior in the Bible including Jesus' miracles, the OT, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the crowds who watched His miracles and heard His teaching.

v.20 "His hour had not come" reveals that the timing of Jesus' arrest and the entirety of the plan of salvation were in His complete control. (John 10:18)

v.21 Jesus reveals the consequence of rejecting Him: eternal death. For all their piety, the Jewish leaders would not be saved from their sins.

v. 22 The Jews are self-righteous. They mock Jesus, asking if He will kill Himself, which they believe would condemn Him to Hell.

24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.”

25 So they said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them, “Just what I have been telling you from the beginning.

26 I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him.”

27 They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father.

28 So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

29 And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.”

v. 24 The Jews refused to believe that Jesus was the Son of God and their Messiah. The consequence of this unbelief was death from sin.

v. 25 The Jews were willfully ignorant, still asking who Jesus was despite the many ways He authenticated His ministry.

v. 28 The Jews will realize their ignorance when they lift up the Son of Man to be crucified.

Digging Deeper

Questions about the text

1. In verse 12, how does Jesus expect us to respond to Him being the light of the world?
2. Read John 1:5, 1:9, and 3:19-21. What do these passages tell us about Jesus being the light of the world?
3. According to verse 18, how do we know that Jesus's claim to be the light of the world is valid?
4. What is the Pharisees' attitude when asking their questions?
5. How does the Pharisees' attitude prevent them from responding positively to the truth about Jesus?
6. What is conveyed by Jesus being in control of His own death?
7. Who is Jesus referring to when He says, "they will die in their sins"?
8. In verses 26-29, what is Jesus's purpose in declaring that all of His words and deeds are by the Father's authority?

Questions to think about

1. What seems to make Jesus different from other people?
2. What sources of truth do you rely on? How would they change if Jesus is the source of all truth?
3. Who is the ultimate authority in your life?
4. How did Jesus model a life in submission to the authority of the Father?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. In verse 12, how does Jesus expect us to respond to Him being the light of the world?

Jesus asks us to respond by following Him. This means to obey all that Jesus commanded, including believing in Him (John 14:1), potentially giving up everything for Him (Luke 14:26), and seeking to teach others about Him (Matt. 28:19-20). Half-hearted devotion to Christ will not please Him.

2. Read John 1:5, 1:9, and 3:19-21. What do these passages tell us about Jesus being the light of the world?

As the light of the world, Jesus has the power to vanquish the darkness of sin. He can remove our spiritual blindness, giving us the ability to see the truth of His words. We inherently love sin and abhor Jesus because His light exposes our works. However, believers come to Jesus so that His light can dwell in them, allowing them to live for God and please Him.

3. According to verse 18, how do we know that Jesus's claim to be the light of the world is valid?

Jesus supports his claim to be the light of the world by arguing that His testimony is confirmed by other witnesses including the Father (John 5:37-38), the works and miracles He performed (John 5:36), the Old Testament scriptures (John 5:39), and the Holy Spirit (John 15:26-27).

4. What is the Pharisees' attitude when asking their questions?

The Pharisees try to find fault with Jesus' words rather than understand them. They accuse Him of contradicting Himself because He taught earlier that a testimony is believed on the basis of two or three witnesses. Jesus describes them as "judging according to the flesh," meaning they only have an intellectual understanding of the scriptures that doesn't change their hearts.

5. How does the Pharisees' attitude prevent them from responding positively to the truth about Jesus?

The Pharisees' pride in their religious status causes them to view Jesus as a threat rather than recognize Jesus' truthful teaching. They are blind and deaf to spiritual truth.

6. What is conveyed by Jesus being in control of His own death?

It shows that Jesus is sovereign like the Father. Jesus, as the Son of God, decided by His own authority when He would give Himself over to death and judgment. After He had lain among the slain for three days, He alone had the authority to take back His life again.

7. Who is Jesus referring to when He says, "they will die in their sins"?

In the immediate context, Jesus is speaking about the Jewish leaders. However, this warning extends to all people. Everyone who sins will die unless they repent and believe in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior who takes away their sins.

8. In verses 26-29, what is Jesus's purpose in declaring that all of His words and deeds are by the Father's authority?

In His humanity, Jesus submitted His human will to the Father, seeking to say and do only that which the Father directed Him. This means that everything that Jesus did was perfect and unstained from sin. It also means that Jesus lived the righteous life we never could live by always "pleasing" the Father. Through His death, Jesus's righteous life is credited to those who put their faith in Him, and their sin is placed on His shoulders.

"I am the good shepherd"

John 10:1-21

Getting Some Context

In John 9, Jesus heals a blind man on the Sabbath. The Sabbath is meant to be a day of rest. The Pharisees, though, had added their own man-made laws that defined "rest" as not doing any work at all. When the Pharisees find out what Jesus had done, they question the man that was healed. Since he was healed on the Sabbath, the Pharisees doubt the man's account and the authority of Jesus, saying that Jesus is not from God. After a series of conversations, the once-blind man is thrown out of the synagogue for his account.

Jesus later finds this man after the Pharisees have cast him out. Jesus asks about his faith, and the man affirms his belief in Christ. The man ends up worshipping Jesus as the Son of God. The Pharisees witness this and ask about their own "blindness", that is, their spiritual blindness. This passage is Jesus' response to their question.

Hearing God's Word

John 10:1-21

- 1** Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.
- 2** But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
- 3** To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.
- 4** When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
- 5** A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."
- 6** This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.
- 7** So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.
- 8** All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.
- 9** I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.
- 10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.
- 11** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
- 12** He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters

v. 1 This statement connects chapter 10 to the behavior of the Pharisees in the preceding chapter. A healed man had been abused by the religious leaders and was cast out of the synagogue.

v. 2-3 Shepherding is a motif found throughout the Bible that points to Christ's deity. (see Psalm 23:1, Matthew 9:36)

v.4-5 The sheep follow Christ when they hear His voice. This illustrates how Christians are "called" to follow Christ. Believers are believers because they have accepted the Gospel and are therefore part of the flock of Christ.

v7-10 Jesus clarifies that He is the door for the sheep meaning that He is the only way to salvation. If anyone accepts the Gospel and believes in Christ's saving work, they will be saved.

v.11-13 Jesus makes His second "I am" claim in this passage: He is the good shepherd, which directly parallels the Father. Jesus will lay down His life for His people. Jesus is directly talking about His death on the cross and sacrifice for our sins. What characterizes Him as the good Shepherd is His sacrificial love for His flock.

13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,

15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.

18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

19 There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.

20 Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?”

21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

v.14 Jesus knows those who are His sheep. Those who are truly saved know His deity as the Son of God. Jesus knows His people intimately, and they know Him intimately.

v.15 Jesus foreshadows His death on the cross.

v.16 Jesus’ death on the cross is for the salvation of anyone who believes in the Gospel. All true believers are brothers and sisters in Christ, united in Him.

v.17-18 Jesus has power over His death and the authority to take back His life again (through His resurrection). His final statement in this verse is that He has received this charge to lay down His life from the Father.

v.19-21 Jesus declares Himself the door and the good shepherd and yet is called a “demon.” However, this can’t be true (see Matthew 12:24-30).

Digging Deeper

Questions about you

1. Do you believe that God is good and that He personally cares for you?

Questions about the text

1. Why do you think the Jews couldn't understand what Jesus was saying and instead accused Jesus of having a demon?
2. Why is it important to know that Jesus is the door? If what He says is true, then what implications might that have?
3. Why is it important to know that Jesus is the good shepherd? If what He says is true, then what implications might that have?
4. What does this passage tell you about Jesus' relationship with the Father?
5. How does someone know if they are of Jesus' sheep?
6. What does it mean that Jesus "knows" His sheep? What does it mean when Jesus says His sheep know Him?
7. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' death on the cross?
8. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' authority?

Questions to think about

1. Would your life improve knowing that God watches over you?
2. Do you think that there are many ways to enter Heaven? How does that compare to what Jesus says?
3. Who or what do you follow? What do you think it looks like to follow Jesus as one of His sheep?
4. What gives you comfort in life? What makes you feel secure?
5. How does Jesus comfort and protect His sheep?
6. How have you seen Jesus act as a tender shepherd in John so far?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. Why do you think the Jews couldn't understand what Jesus was saying and instead accused Jesus of having a demon?

The Jews misinterpreted the point of the Law, thinking that they could be saved by their own efforts to follow the Law. Instead, the Law was meant to point them to Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:21-24), the only one who could follow the Law perfectly.

2. Why is it important to know that Jesus is the door? If what He says is true, then what implications might that have?

If Jesus is the door, then that means He is the only way into Heaven. If we attempt to get into Heaven by any means other than Jesus, we will fail. It's not enough to study, know, talk about, and admire the door. We must walk through it.

3. Why is it important to know that Jesus is the good shepherd? If what He says is true, then what implications might that have?

If Jesus is the good shepherd, then that means we can approach Him like sheep who belong to Him. It means that He will protect and care for us in every situation. Jesus is not an abusive master that has no heart for His sheep.

4. What does this passage tell you about Jesus' relationship with the Father?

Jesus intimately knows the Father, just as He intimately knows us (v.15). And because Jesus intimately knows the Father, He also knows the will of the Father.

5. How does someone know if they are of Jesus' sheep?

You know you are of Jesus' sheep by your response to Jesus's call. If your heart aligns with Scripture and you put your faith in Jesus, you have a renewed heart and know the voice of Jesus.

6. What does it mean that Jesus "knows" His sheep? What does it mean when Jesus says His sheep know Him?

It means that Jesus knows us like He knows the Father. It is not a detached relationship, but it is intimate and deep. In the same way, we know Jesus and His will in an intimate way as well.

7. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' death on the cross?

It tells us that Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice for believers. It was so that they may have a right relationship with Him.

8. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' authority?

At the very end, Jesus explains that He has authority over life and death. He doesn't say that others will take His life. Instead, He will lay down His life of His own accord.

"I am the resurrection and the life" 6

John 11:17-44

Getting Some Context

Jesus was fond of a man named Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Jesus and the family shared a tight bond, which is seen when the disciples approach Jesus, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

Jesus hears that Lazarus is sick while He is nearby. But instead of going right away, Jesus instead waits two more days before leaving for Judea, the place where Lazarus resided (v. 6). Jesus knew that Lazarus had passed. It wasn't as if He arrived in Judea and then was surprised by his death. It was in His plan that Lazarus would die, because through the death of Lazarus, Jesus could display the glory of God through a miracle.

Hearing God's Word

John 11:17-44

17 Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

18 Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off,

19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.

20 So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.

21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, **26** and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

29 And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him.

30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.

v. 20 Martha goes out to see Jesus upon His arrival. She had just lost her brother, even though Jesus was close by and could have saved him.

v. 21-22 At first, it may seem like Martha is accusing Jesus. However, Martha is actually affirming what she knows is true. She may not understand why Jesus delayed, but she is choosing to trust Jesus anyways.

v. 23 The faith of Martha is affirmed by Jesus. Though she may have numerous questions that she wants answers for, she has put all of her trust in Jesus.

v. 24 Martha shows no doubt in Jesus. Even though she was not expecting Jesus to resurrect Lazarus immediately, she trusted that God would raise him one day.

v. 25-26 By declaring that He is the resurrection and the life, Jesus is saying that everyone who has faith in Him will have eternal life. Though they die physically, their spirit will never die.

v. 27 Martha's answer is clear. She believes. She believes even though she doesn't understand everything.

31 When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

35 Jesus wept.

36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me."

43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out."

44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

v. 28-32 Mary goes out to meet Jesus and responds similarly to Martha, wishing that Jesus was here in time in order to save Lazarus.

v. 33-37 Jesus notices the sadness of Mary, Martha, and some Jews who were nearby and is moved to tears. Jesus is moved because He sees the painful effects that sin and death have brought on this world, and He has compassion for His creation.

v. 38-44 Jesus, moved with compassion, justifies the faith of Martha and raises Lazarus from the dead, demonstrating that her faith in Him is not misplaced.

Digging Deeper

Questions about you

1. Do you believe that there is life after death?
2. Do you ever fear death?

Questions about the text

1. Why do you think Jesus delayed going to see Lazarus?
2. Why do you think Martha continues to place her faith and trust in Jesus?
3. What does Jesus mean when He says, "I am the resurrection and the life?"
4. Verse 25 claims that everyone who believes in His name will die yet live. Verse 26 says that anyone who believes shall never die. What do you think this means?
5. If Jesus truly is the resurrection and the life, how should this change how we live our lives today?
6. What do we learn about the humanity and deity of Christ from this story?

Questions to think about

1. How does the idea of resurrection make you feel?
2. What do you think it means to put your faith in something? What do you put your faith in?
3. What do you think having faith in Jesus for your eternal life means?
4. How does the fact that Jesus mourns for Lazarus affect your view of Him?
5. What are you certain of? Do you trust those things like Martha trusts Jesus?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. After reading all of this, why do you think Jesus delayed going to see Lazarus?

Jesus delays because he knows that delaying will bring the most glory to God, by giving Him the opportunity to show that He has power over life and death.

2. Why do you think Martha continues to place her faith and trust in Jesus?

Martha was convinced that Jesus is the Messiah. And that is why she continues to put her faith and trust in Jesus, despite not understanding the reason as to why Jesus delayed in the first place.

3. What does Jesus mean when He says, "I am the resurrection and the life?"

Jesus is claiming His deity and His sovereignty over life and death. Jesus is the only way that we may have eternal life after we die.

4. Verse 25 claims that everyone who believes in His name will die yet live. Verse 26 says that anyone who believes shall never die. What do you think this means?

Obviously, you can't both die and not die at the same time. So this must mean that there are two types of death being referred to here. The first death is physical death, and the second death is eternal spiritual death (Rev. 21:8). If you believe in Jesus, you will still die physically. However, you won't die spiritually. If we believe in Jesus, we will not be cast into Hell for eternity. Though we may die physically, our soul will be brought into Heaven and into the presence of God, and we shall live eternally in a new body (1 Cor 15:54-55).

5. If Jesus truly is the resurrection and the life, how should this change how we live our lives today?

If Jesus' claims are true, then He is the only way to eternal life. If we truly believe this, then we should devote our entire lives to the one who has given us eternal life.

6. What do we learn about the humanity and deity of Christ from this story?

We see that when Jesus came to Earth, He was a real man who felt real emotions. We also see that Jesus is sovereign over life and death. Not only does He claim to be the resurrection and the life, but He also proves it as well. This shows that while Jesus may be a man, He never relinquished His deity.

John 14:1-14

Getting Some Context

This passage is roughly three chapters after the previous "I Am" statement. In that period of time, the plot to kill Jesus arises. Jesus prophesies that one of the disciples will betray Him (John 13:21) and that Peter will deny Him before the rooster crows three times (John 13:38). In this passage, Jesus comforts His disciples who are growing worried. He talks about His relationship to the Father, and how we have access to the Father through prayer because of Him .

Hearing God's Word

John 14:1-14

1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

4 And you know the way to where I am going."

5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

v. 1 The disciples are evidently distraught by what Jesus said to them, and so Jesus comforts them emotionally and spiritually by reaffirming an invitation to believe in God and in Him.

v.2-3 Jesus' Father is God and within His house, Jesus is going to prepare a place for His disciples. One day He will return and bring them into that house.

v.6-7 Jesus declares that He is the way, the truth and the life. He is the exclusive means by which one can access the Father. Knowing Jesus equates to knowing the Father, and thus the disciples have both seen and known the Father through Jesus Christ.

v.10-11 Everything Jesus does and says is not of His own authority, but in full submission to the Father. Jesus commands belief from His disciples regarding His deity. He points out all of His miraculous works as a testament to His claim.

v.12 Whoever believes in Jesus will do the very works He does through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17). These works will not be greater in power, but in extent. God will use His children as His instruments to bring many more to the saving knowledge of the Gospel and into His heavenly kingdom (Matthew 28:19).

13 Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

v.13-14 Because Jesus is the only way to the Father, we may ask things in His name and have direct access to the Father. Praying in Jesus's name means to pray how Jesus would pray. It means to pray for the things that He would want.

Digging Deeper

Questions about you

1. If there is a Heaven, what do you think are the requirements to getting in?

Questions about the text

1. Why are the disciples troubled during this time?
2. How does Jesus choose to comfort His disciples?
3. What does Jesus imply about who He is by saying that He's the way, the truth, and the life?
4. Where is Jesus going to prepare rooms for His disciples?
5. Why does Jesus say that by knowing Him, you also know the Father in verse 7?
6. According to the passage, what kind of works will the believers do? What are the conditions for having a heart to such work?

Questions to think about

1. How does Jesus' words confront the belief that there is no absolute truth?
2. When Jesus says that "no one comes to the Father except through" Him, do you think a) He is lying b) He is a lunatic who falsely thought so c) He is truly Lord?
3. Do you believe that Jesus is the only way into Heaven?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. Why are the disciples troubled during this time?

The disciples are troubled because Jesus has told them that He will be leaving them.

2. How does Jesus choose to comfort His disciples?

Jesus comforts His disciples by inviting them to place their faith in God the Father and in Him. He reaffirms that He's preparing a place for His disciples and that they will one day be physically with Him again.

3. What does Jesus imply about who He is by saying that He's the way, the truth, and the life?

Jesus claims that He is the only way for salvation and the only way to access God the Father. He is the truth because everything He spoke was on behalf of the Father who sent Him (John 5:19, 17:17) and He alone has the words of eternal life (John 6:68). All other paths lead to death because the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and Jesus came into the world to bring eternal life to those who believe in Him and trust in Him as Lord and Saviour (John 3:16).

4. Where is Jesus going to prepare rooms for His disciples?

Jesus, upon accomplishing the work the Father sent Him to earth for, will prepare rooms for His followers in His Father's house, which is Heaven. We know this because Jesus says He will "come again and will take [them] to [Himself]", and Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father after His ascension (Ephesians 1:20).

5. Why does Jesus say that by knowing Him, you also know the Father in verse 7?

Here Jesus equates knowing Him with knowing the Father. What Jesus says and does is not under His own authority. He willingly submits to God the Father's will. Everything He is and does reveals God the Father.

6. According to the passage, what kind of works will the believers do? What are the conditions for having a heart to such work?

Believers are called to go and share the way to salvation found in Jesus. Only those who believe in Jesus will be able to accomplish this task because the conditions for doing such work is having faith in Jesus. Anyone who has faith in the Gospel will receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of those who believe and empowers them to accomplish great works, such as sharing the Gospel with others.

John 15:1-17

Getting Some Context

This passage continues a discourse Jesus has privately with his disciples before He is arrested. It is the seventh and final "I am" statement that Jesus makes.

Employing an agricultural metaphor, Jesus describes Himself as the "true vine" and people as branches on the vine. Using this metaphor, Jesus emphasizes the dependence that believers have in Christ, and the life of good works that marks someone who loves Jesus. The passage also draws a distinction between fruitful branches and fruitless branches, which represent true and false disciples. The fruitful branches are pruned so that they produce more fruit and the unfruitful branches are cut off and burned.

Hearing God's Word

John 15:1-17

- 1** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.
- 2** Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.
- 3** Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.
- 4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.
- 5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.
- 6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.
- 7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
- 8** By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.
- 9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.
- 10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.
- 11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

v. 1 Jesus uses the extended metaphor of the "true vine" to illustrate what a believer's life is like.

v. 2 Those who claim to be Christians but do not live a life that reflects their confession will perish, while true believers are increasingly conformed to the image of Christ. God prunes, or disciplines, His people that they may grow in holiness (Hebrews 12:11).

v. 3-5 When believers abide in Christ they live according to His words. As branches cannot produce fruit without receiving nutrients from the vine, believers apart from Christ can do nothing righteous (Isaiah 64:6).

v. 6 Verse 6 describes the judgement of those who do not have a saving relationship with Christ. All those who do not believe in Christ will be cast into the fires of Hell.

v. 7-8 Answered prayers result from our abiding because our prayers will naturally align with Jesus' will. While we are not saved by works, the life of a true believer will produce good works.

v. 9-11 A believer who loves Jesus will seek to live by His commandments. Even though this life won't be easy, it will be characterized by joy-filled service to God.

12 “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

14 You are my friends if you do what I command you.

15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

v. 12-15 A life that abides in Christ’s love will overflow with love for others. Jesus displayed this love by dying on a cross to bear the punishment that we deserve.

v.16-17 In context, Jesus is speaking about how He chose the disciples. However, this also extends to all who are saved by God’s irresistible grace.

Digging Deeper

Questions about you

1. Do you feel that your life right now is fruitful and meaningful?

Questions about the text

1. Who are the vine, vinedresser, and branches?
2. Who are the fruitful branches and the unfruitful branches?
3. What is Jesus emphasizing by calling Himself the "true vine"?
4. What does it mean to abide in Christ? Does the imagery of the vine give insight into how to do this?
5. Read Galatians 5:22-23 and identify the fruit of the Spirit. According to John 15, how does one bear them?
6. What happens if we do not abide? Is it still possible to be redeemed?
7. In v. 12, what does God command of us? How can we uphold this commandment?
8. Why does Jesus tell us to abide in Him?

Questions to think about

1. Would you find it comforting knowing that your worth and value is found in something other than yourself?

Coming to Answers

Questions about the text

1. Who are the vine, vinedresser, and branches?

The vine is Jesus. The vinedresser is the Father. The branches are people.

2. Who are the fruitful branches and the unfruitful branches?

The fruitful branches are true disciples of Christ and the unfruitful branches are false disciples.

3. What is Jesus emphasizing by calling Himself the "true vine"?

Jesus calls Himself the true vine in order to emphasize that He is the only way to bear real, lasting fruit. Apart from Jesus, there is no Spirit, and without the Spirit, there can be no fruit.

4. What does it mean to abide in Christ? Does the imagery of the vine give insight into how to do this?

Abiding in Christ, in the practical sense, is simply obeying His commands. However, at its very core, abiding in Christ is aligning your desires and heart with Christ's. This is only possible through the work of the Holy Spirit. The image of being branches connected to a vine illustrates this idea of being united with Christ.

5. Read Galatians 5:22-23 and identify the fruits of the Spirit. According to John 15, how does one bear them?

Believers bear the fruits of the Spirit by abiding in Christ and obeying His commands (John 15:5), Trusting in the Lord (Jeremiah 17:7-8), fostering a heart of repentance (Matthew 3:8), and hearing the Word and understanding it (Luke 8:15).

6. What happens if we do not abide? Is it still possible to be redeemed?

If we do not abide, we are apart from the joy of Christ. The ability to conquer sin and bear fruit is a sign of the Holy Spirit. If we sin, we lose our assurance because our sinful nature is fighting against the Spirit. We can still be redeemed. All sin of a believer is forgiven already through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. In an ultimate sense though, those who do not abide in Christ are not truly saved and will be cast into Hell after judgment.

7. In v. 12, what does God command of us? How can we uphold this commandment?

God commands us to love one another in the way that He has loved us. He is willing to lay down his life for us, who He considers His friends. We are to follow this example and to make known to our friends what we have heard from our Father.

8. Why does Jesus tell us to abide in Him?

We are instructed to abide in Christ so that Jesus' joy will be in us and our joy will be made full in obeying Him.

John 19:16-20:31

Getting Some Context

The following passages cover the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. After a ministry of about three years, Jesus had gained much notoriety among the Jewish leaders. They viewed Him as a threat to their power and to the legalistic system of religion they upheld. After many failed attempts to remove Jesus, they finally would have their chance to kill Him.

However, all of this was part of God's sovereign plan to redeem sinners. On the cross, Jesus would bear the sins of His people, paying the penalty for sin they deserved. In doing so, He made a way for everyone who puts their faith in Him to be saved. Three days after dying He would rise from the dead to affirm the efficacy of His sacrifice and provide the hope of resurrection to all who believe in Him.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

John 19:16-30

16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus,

17 and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.

19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek.

21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'"

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom,

24 so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

"They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."

So the soldiers did these things,

v.16-18 Crucifixion is a very painful process. Nails would have been driven into Jesus' wrists and ankles in order to hang His body on the cross. It was a slow and agonizing death.

v.19 Crucifixion was also humiliating. Those who were crucified served as a warning to anyone considering rebellion against Rome. Pilate writes, "the King of the Jews" as the crime Jesus is condemned for.

v.21 The Jews, who were the very people Jesus came to save, rejected their Savior. They had no faith in Jesus and rejected Him as the promised Messiah of the Old Testament.

25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"

27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst."

29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

v. 28 John makes it clear to us that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies that are found all over the Old Testament. His mind was set on fulfilling the promises of the Father.

v. 30 Notice how John mentions that it was Jesus who gave up His spirit. It does not say that Jesus was killed by the Romans. Jesus had full authority over His life and death in all circumstances, and would still have full authority over it, even in death.

Questions for John 19:28-30

1. What do you think Jesus meant by "it is finished" in v. 30?
2. Why do you think it is significant that Jesus "gave up his spirit"?

Answers for John 19:28-30

1. What do you think Jesus meant by “it is finished” in v. 30?

Jesus had accomplished redemption for all who would put their faith in Him. He bore our sins and completely paid the penalty for those sins by enduring the righteous wrath of the Father. There is no more work that we have to do to earn salvation. Jesus finished the work completely. We simply need to have faith to receive His gift of salvation.

2. Why do you think it is significant that Jesus “gave up his spirit”?

Ultimately, Jesus laid down His life of His own accord. In the end He chose to give up His spirit by His own volition to completely pay the penalty of death for sin.

Summary of John 19:31-42

After Jesus gives up His Spirit, the soldiers break the legs of the remaining prisoners to hasten their deaths. But when they reach Jesus, He appears to be already dead. To be sure, they pierce His side and blood and water flow out. This proves that Jesus is unquestionably dead, thus also fulfilling the prophecy that not one of His bones would be broken.

Once Jesus is confirmed dead, Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy disciple of Christ, buries Jesus in his tomb with the help of Nicodemus. From the other 3 Gospels we learn that the tomb is sealed by a large stone, and Roman soldiers guard it.

The Resurrection of Jesus

John 20:1-10

1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.”

3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb.

4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there,

7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.

8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed;

9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went back to their homes.

v. 2 Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb of Jesus and finds it empty. She does not know that Jesus has risen from the dead, but instead thinks that someone has stolen the body.

v. 5-9 The disciples also witness the empty tomb, but they too do not understand that Jesus has risen. They have not yet understood what was written in Scripture.

Questions for John 20:1-10

1. From v. 2, what causes Mary and the disciples to be so distraught over the empty tomb?

Answers for John 20:1-10

1. From v. 2, what causes Mary and the disciples to be so distraught over the empty tomb?

Instead of remembering Jesus's words about His resurrection, Mary and the disciples assume that someone, probably the Jews or Romans, had hidden the body away.

Summary of John 20:11-23

Though the disciples go back home, Mary Magdalene remains at the tomb and weeps bitterly. Then Jesus appears before her, asking her why she weeps. At first, she only believes Him to be a gardener, and she asks Jesus where they have taken the body. Then, in an instant, Jesus reveals Himself to Mary, and she realizes who it is that stands before her.

That evening, as the disciples gather together in a locked room for fear of the Jews, Jesus appears to them. He shows them the scars on His hands and side and encourages them. Later, he departs from them.

Jesus Appears to Thomas

John 20:24-29

24 Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

26 Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

v. 25 Thomas, one of Jesus' own disciples does not believe that the Lord has risen from the dead, even though his close friends tell him that it is so.

Questions for John 20:24-29

1. What does Thomas want before he will believe that Jesus has risen?
2. What is Thomas's response to seeing Jesus?
3. Are we at a loss because we can't physically see Jesus like Thomas could?

Answers for John 20:24-29

1. What does Thomas want before he will believe that Jesus has risen?

He wants to physically see evidence that Jesus has risen from the dead. He wants to actually see and feel Jesus's wounds before he will have faith.

2. What is Thomas's response to seeing Jesus?

Thomas puts his faith in Jesus Christ and proclaims, "My Lord and my God." In doing so, he affirms the deity of Jesus Christ and Jesus's authority over his life as Lord.

3. Are we at a loss because we can't physically see Jesus like Thomas could?

No. In fact, Jesus says that we are blessed if we put our faith in Jesus without seeing Him physically like Thomas was able to. Everything we need to know about Jesus and salvation is found in Scripture. We don't need a sign from God. We just need to trust His word and put our faith in Jesus as God and Lord.

The Purpose of the Gospel of John

John 20:30-31

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; **31** but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John wrote his Gospel so that we "may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing [we] may have life in his name." His purpose is so that we can have confidence in Jesus and put our faith in Him, so that we might have eternal life.

Throughout John, we have seen that all people have committed sin by breaking the law of God. God, being perfectly just, must condemn this sin. The condemnation is eternal death, which means suffering under the wrath of God in Hell for all of eternity.

In His love, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth as truly God and truly man. Jesus lived the perfectly righteous life none of us could before being crucified on a cross. On the cross, Jesus bore the sins of all who would believe in Him. The Father poured out His wrath on the Son, allowing Jesus to pay the penalty for sin that we deserve to pay.

Jesus died in our place, was buried, and then rose three days later to affirm that He is the Son of God and that the Father was pleased with His sacrifice. He ascended to Heaven where He is now seated with the Father, calling all people to follow Him.

If we put our faith in Jesus by believing that He is God and Lord and we turn away from our life of sin to follow Him, we will be saved. Our sins will be paid for by Jesus's sacrifice and we will be declared righteous by the merits of Jesus, not our own. After we die, we will spend eternity with Jesus in Heaven.

This is the Gospel. If you put your faith in Jesus Christ, you will be saved from your sins and have eternal life. How will you respond to the Gospel?

