

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 1
John 1

- I. Purpose of John 1:1-14 = to inform people who Jesus Christ is.
- II. Advantages – teaches NT principles of the Gospel
 - Leads non-believer into self-discovery
 - Gets non-believer in the habit of Bible study
 - Allows conviction before presenting Bridge illustration
 - Follow-up is already natural when the person becomes a believer
 - Acts 17:1-3
- III. Set up – Limit number of Christians including yourself
 - Good group size is 5-6 non-believers
 - Best to get into a clique where you are the uncomfortable one, not them
 - Best to all use the same translation
 - Do book of John as a possible discussion focus
 - Set up discussion for unlimited time, 30 min. per week
 - If in group, a Christian should not answer questions unless the others have exhausted their thinking and then only if called upon.
 - End study on time and at peak interest.
- IV. Questions – Ask specific questions.
 - Make them simple
 - Stick to the Bible as your authority for answers
 - Don't ask yes/no questions or one answer only ones
 - Don't answer questions yourself (spoils discovery)
 - Ask questions in light of what answers they give
 - Put your questions on a 3 x 5 card
 - Have everyone participate
 - Be enthusiastic (give illustration) when asking questions and when they answer
 - Try to keep on the subject and don't get off track.
- V. Leading first discussion
 - a. Make sure everybody knows each other (may ask to introduce selves/interesting fact about self)
 - b. Ask following or similar questions:
 - What is one thing you don't understand but always wanted to know about Christianity and the Bible?

 - What is one thing that really bothers you about Christianity?
 - What is one question you want to have discussed?

Investigative Bible Discussion Session #1 cont.

- III. Have everyone turn to John, Chapter 1
 1. Pick out someone to **read John 1:1**
 2. Ask "What do you think the Word means here?" (ask each person)
 3. Ask the same person to read John 1:2 and ask if this gives any more light on what the Word is (even if someone gets the right answer, keep asking until all get it – remember, self discovery)

4. Do the same with verses 3 and 4.
5. Then go to verse 14 and have another person read it and come to a final conclusion.
6. “Why do you think Jesus was called the Word?”
(expresses to us what God is like)

Then read verses 1-3 and put Jesus Christ in everywhere the word “Word” is (have someone read it that way)

7. I tell the ant illustration (if you were to communicate to an ant effectively, you must become an ant)
8. “Why do you think Jesus is described as the “Word”?”
9. Summarize (either you or a believer in the group) the main point is Jesus is God.

IV. Have someone **read verses 4-9.**

1. Ask if they have any questions.
2. Ask if they know who this John was in verse 6.
3. “What can you discover about the light?”
John 8:12 and John 3:19-21
4. Ask what they think the “light” is referring to?
5. “What are the functions of light?”

V. Have someone **read John 1:10-13.**

1. Ask if they have any questions.
2. “Why don’t you think the people received Jesus in verse 11?”
3. “How does one enter into God’s family in verses 12 and 13?”
4. “What does ‘believe’ mean and who does one believe in?”
5. “What does ‘receive’ mean and who does one receive?”
6. Give Niagara Falls Illustration (tight rope walker Blondin from Europe)
7. Summarize “light” and “child of God”.
8. Application: “Do you think your concept of who Jesus is has changed?”

Next week bring a question you would like to ask.

Note: If you go further, have someone read **John 1:14-18**. But try to stop at verse 13. Spend more time on another question or open it up for questions.

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 2 – John 1:15-30

I. Purpose – to inform people what Christ did.

II. Questions to ask:

A. First, conclude tight rope illustration and review “believe” and “receive”. How one knows if they are a child of God?

B. Have someone read **John 1:15-30**

1. Do you have any questions?
2. What claims does John make about Christ in verse 15?
3. What is Moses known for?
4. What is the Law?

5. What is grace?
6. What law did Moses give and why was it given?
 What is the purpose of the law?
 Romans 3:20
 Galatians 3:24
 (X-ray machine doesn't cure but it shows the problem)
7. Do you feel according to the Bible that you could become a child of God through the Law?

C. Read verses 29 and 30.

1. Why was Jesus called the Lamb of God?
 Isaiah 53:4-7
 Hebrews 10:12-14 (1-14)
2. What is sin? Why do you think we sin?

D. Read verses 35-51.

1. Who are the 4 men?
2. How did each man meet Christ and what led each to believe in Christ as God?

**Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 3 –
 John 2**

I. Read verses 1-11.

1. (Optional question: What is the funniest thing you've seen at a wedding?)
2. What do you think Jesus' attending a wedding tells us about Him? (Matthew 11:16-19)
3. Jesus is not yet known as a miracle worker, so why does Mary approach him in verse 3?
4. Do you find Jesus' solution to the problem of no wine at the wedding believable? Why or why not?

Note: What claim was made about Jesus in John 1:3? Creator! He continued to create.

What does Jesus' conversation with his mother tell us about him?

(He is approachable! Mary knew Jesus could do something about it, this word "woman" in Greek means "dear woman", a term of endearment)

5. What "time" do you think Jesus is referring to in verse 4? (John 12:23, 27)

Note: Jesus' death was not a futile and unforeseen tragedy. It was the reason for his coming.

6. In verse 11, John describes the event as a "miraculous sign". Why? What is the function of a sign? (a sign informs and helps one understand)

II. Read 2:12-22.

1. What do you think prompted Jesus to act the way He did when He cleared the temple? (13-17)

Note: The Passover was one of the principle religious feasts of the Jews. They came to Jerusalem for celebration and spiritual cleansing. However, the temple merchants were exploiting the situation by selling animals and exchanging foreign currencies for the temple currency – all for profit. Jesus accused them of

soiling God's name. He told them in so many words, "Don't use my Father's name to promote your dirty business!" (Romans 2:24)

2. What does Jesus' anger tell you about Him?
3. The Jews demanded He show His credentials for such actions. What do you learn about Jesus from His answer? (18-22)
4. Why do you think His resurrection would be the ultimate credentials? (1 Cor. 15:12-19)

III. Read John 2:23-25

1. Why do you think Jesus did not respond to the people in 2:23, even though it says they believed in Him?

(Real belief implies commitment. Their belief in Jesus did not go that far. They reserved the right to run their own lives.)

**Investigative Bible Discussion, Session 4 –
John 3**

I. Read verses 1-7

1. Does anyone have any questions on these verses?
2. Who was this Nicodemus and what is a Pharisee?
3. Why do you think Nicodemus went to Jesus at night? What question do you think Nicodemus asked Christ that is not recorded between vs. 2 and 3?
4. What does Jesus say about a new birth to Nicodemus?

Note: Often in John you will see two different "planes" of thought – people on a physical plane and Jesus answering on a spiritual plane.

5. What do you think was Nicodemus's description of Christ?
6. What do you think it means to be born again? What are some truths Christ includes in teaching about the Spiritual birth?
7. Talk about water and spirit (water might represent a physical birth and a spiritual birth)
8. How can you tell if a person is born again?
(wind illustration vs. 8, How are the wind and new birth alike? By their effects...seen (grass blows and new quality of life is seen))

II. Read verses 9-12

1. Why can't Nicodemus understand what Christ saying?
2. Do you feel Nicodemus felt he was OK spiritually speaking? Do you think people today think they are OK spiritually but aren't? Why is this?
3. If you could personally visit with Jesus right now in this room, what would you ask Him?
4. What do you think Jesus would say your greatest need is?

III. Read verses 13-21

1. What questions do you have on this section?
2. What do you feel was Jesus' purpose in coming to earth?

3. Why must the Son of God be lifted up and what do you think that means from verse 14? (Numbers 21:7-9; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 3:18)
4. What were some reasons for God's sending His son?
5. (Have person put his own name in John 3:16)
6. What must one do in order to obtain eternal life?
7. What do you feel were the sins Jesus died for? Do you feel your sins were there?
8. What do you feel is the relationship between being born again and believing and receiving from John 1:12?

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 5

John 4

I. Read John 4:1-18

1. What do you learn about Jesus from these verses?
Note: It was rare for a rabbi to condescend to talk to a woman, let alone a Samaritan woman. Discuss the politics of the day (Samaritan, Jewish – usually walked around Samaria; Jesus didn't have prejudices of the day)
2. What can you learn about the woman from these verses?
 - a. vs. 6 – she went for water “about the 6th hour”, which was 12:00 noon – the hottest time of day. Getting water was a social time. Why do you think she went when she did?
 - b. Why was she surprised that Jesus asked her for a drink of water?
3. What do you think Jesus meant by “living water” (4:10)?
(See Isaiah 44:3-4; John 7:37-39)
What claims did He make about the spiritual water?
4. What is the thirst Jesus talks about? (the innate dissatisfaction of a human being; each of us desires significance and security)
5. How had the woman tried to quench her thirst? (looking for love in the wrong places)

II. Read John 4:19-30

1. As soon as the Samaritan woman perceived that the conversation was getting personal, what did she do? (Tried to change topic to “religion” --the differences between what Jews and Samaritans believed)
2. How did Jesus handle her evasive tactic? (4:21-24)
(It's not the religious system, or the forms, etc. that are important but true worship – it's not what you do but what you believe...)
3. What do we learn about Jesus from His statement in John 4:26?
4. What decision did the woman face?
5. What happened to the water pot?

III. Read John 4:31-42

1. Why was Jesus no longer hungry? (4:31-34)
2. What is the harvest? (Matthew 9:36-38)
 - a. Who are the harvesters?
3. What conclusion did the townspeople come to about Jesus? What was the basis of their thinking?

IV. Read John 4:43-54

1. Any questions? Comments?

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 6

John 5

I. Read 5:1-18

1. When you were a child, what was the most serious illness or injury you ever had?
2. Can anyone explain what was going on in these verses?
3. Why do you think Jesus chose that particular lame man out of the multitude of diseased people? (5:7)
What can you see about Jesus from these verses?
4. Did the lame man demonstrate any faith? Why might this be significant?
5. Why do you suppose Jesus asked, “Do you want to get well?”
6. Imagine being paralyzed beggar waiting 38 years for an improbable cure. Yet Jesus spoke of “something worse” (5:14). What could it be? (see Matthew 16:26)
7. What was the Jews reaction to the healing of the beggar? (verse 10). Discuss this.
8. Why did Jesus deliberately violate this law?
9. What do you observe about Jesus from 5:17,18?

II. Read 5:19-30

1. What observations can you make about Jesus’ relationship with His Father? In what sense was He dependent on His Father?
2. What do you see Jesus promising in 5:24? How does one receive these promises?

III. Read 5:31-47.

1. Jesus presented 6 witnesses who attested to His being God. Who or what were they? (Jesus Himself, His works, John the Baptist, the Father, the Scriptures, Moses)

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 7

John 6

I. Read John 6:1-31

1. What is happening here?
2. What motivated the multitudes to follow Jesus? (vs.2, 14, 15, 26, 27). Note: Their physical needs, politics, material gain - free bread
3. Do you think these same things motivate people to be religious today?
4. How did Jesus react to these people? (vs. 26-29) – He rejected them.
5. What do you think it was that disqualified them from being real followers of Jesus?
Note: They refused to accept the significance of the signs. They were interested only in what Jesus could do for them.
6. What do you think Jesus was really trying to teach the crowd when He fed them? Vs. 27
7. Jesus attached a second meaning to both that bread and the manna Moses gave the Israelites. How would you explain that second meaning? (see Isaiah 55:1-2)

II. Read John 6:32-58

1. What do you think Jesus was implying when He referred to Himself as “the bread of life” (vs. 35, 51)
Note: He is from above – the supernatural world (vs. 38, 41, 42)
He gives life to the world (vs. 33)
He satisfies our hunger and thirst (vs. 35)
He is eternal (vs. 51, 54)
2. How can a person get some of this “bread” (51-58)?
3. What do you think Jesus means by “eat my flesh and drink my blood”?
Note: It is an individual act. A person must take Christ as the “staff of life” (Galatians 2:20). This is not referring to Communion. With whom did Jesus break bread at the Lord’s Supper? Why? (See Luke 22:14-23). The Lord’s Supper was intended to provide a permanent remembrance of the hour of His death. Jesus told the multitude in John 6 that they had to eat and drink of Him for a very different reason. What was it?
4. Why is it impossible for Jesus to be merely a teacher or a philosopher and say what He says in 6:35-38?

III. Read 6:59-71

1. Why didn’t Jesus try to smooth things over when He saw that His followers were offended by what He said (vs. 60-66)
Note: The people were only superficially accepting Jesus. He wanted all or nothing. He did those people a favor by sending them away. They had long been under the illusion that they were “followers of Christ”. But Jesus’ non-negotiable terms are, “Give me your whole self or forget it!

When Jesus asked His 12 disciples why they didn’t leave, what was the answer?

2. What do you think Peter meant by what he said?
3. Have you learned anything new about being a follower of Jesus Christ through this Gospel?

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 8

John 7

The theme of this chapter is the controversy that continually went on over the question “Who is He?”

I. Read 7:1-52

1. List the factors that contributed to the people’s bafflement on this question, as indicated in these verses:
 - a. John 7:14,15
 - b. John 7:19-20
 - c. John 7:25-27
 - d. John 7:31
 - e. John 7:40-44
 - f. John 7:46-49
 - g. John 7:52
2. To what extent did their confusion result from their preconceived notions about the Messiah? Where do you suppose these preconceptions originated?
Note: Ignorance of the Scriptures and/or failure to understand them (Luke 24:25-26).
Religious traditions – see Mark 7:6-9
3. Do you think people have similar misconceptions to deal with today before we can come to understand Jesus Christ? What are some of those misconceptions?
4. What clues do you find in this chapter that suggest Jesus was divine?
Note: John 7:15-16, 46 – His wisdom
John 7:28-29 – What He Himself claimed to be
John 7:31 – His signs
John 7:33-34 – His prediction of His resurrection
John 7:37-39 – His claims to give life to others
John 7:41-42 – the prophets
5. What impresses you about the offer Jesus makes in verses 37-39?
 - a. To whom did He make it?
 - b. What kind of thirst was He talking about? (See 4:12-13; 6:35; Isaiah 55:1-3)
 - c. Exactly what was He offering? (See John 14:25-26; Romans 8:9)
 - d. How does one respond to this offer? (Revelation 3:20)
6. The guards were impressed with Christ’s words. How did the authorities try to diminish this impression (John 7:48-49)
7. What point was raised by Nicodemus and how did the authorities react to it? (vs. 50-52)
8. What attitude would you say characterized the authorities? How does this attitude affect objective thinking? (see Psalm 10:4)
9. What do you think about Nicodemus?

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 9

John 8

I. Read John 8:1-11

1. Why do you think the Pharisees took this woman to Jesus?
2. What do you think was Jesus’ attitude toward the woman caught in adultery? (Did he approve of what she had done? Then why didn’t He condemn her?)
Note: Was it that He closed His eyes to her sin? (John 3:16-18, 1 Peter 3:18). Jesus paid dearly to be able to offer her the pardon she needed. He took the woman’s place.

3. What stands out to you about Jesus' attitude toward the Pharisees? Note: He tried to help them see that they were no different than the woman. But their case was more difficult. She knew she had a problem – they didn't know they had one.

II. Read 8:12-20

1. In 8:12 Jesus made another of His "I am" statements. How do you understand His claim to being the "Light of the World"? What could this imply for you?

III. Read 8:21-38

1. In John 8:24, 28, and 58 we see more "I am" statements. To what was Jesus referring? I am WHAT? He said that after His crucifixion people would know the answer to the question of His identity (8:28). What is it?
2. What was the reason for the conflict between Jesus and his enemies?
 - a. Why do you think this is so hard to accept?
Note: To admit that Jesus is God is to admit need for change.
3. Jesus talks about truth and freedom
 - a. What do you think He means by "truth"? What is a truth? Note: A truth is something tested and proven. Jesus said in John 14:6 "I am the truth." This was the ultimate expression of egotism or He was right!
 - b. How can we determine whether He was right or wrong?
Note: We must put Him to the test – on His terms.
 - c. Jesus offered a spiritual maxim on freedom: Committing sin results in slavery (vs. 34). What do you think this means? Note: the person who says, "I am free to do whatever my inner voice suggests" soon finds himself enslaved to what he sought to be free to do (Mark 7:14-23).
 - d. Why do you suppose the Jews couldn't perceive their spiritual slavery? (vs. 33)
 - e. What must happen before a person can be really free?
Note: Submitting to Christ requires an unconditional surrender (Luke 14:25-33). We must fully submit before He can do anything for us. Example: The sick must submit to the surgeon so that he can do whatever is necessary to produce the cure.

IV. Read 8:39-59

1. Why did Jesus say that the Jews who rejected Him weren't sons of God (vs.42)? How did He support that (verses 27-47)?
2. Do you think it is possible to believe in God and not believe in Christ? Why? What are the characteristics of one who knows God and of one who doesn't?
3. What were the Pharisees thinking at this point about Jesus?
4. What was the basis of this judgment?
5. How did Jesus answer them? (vs. 49-59)

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 10 John 9

The miracles that Jesus performed were "signs" that pointed to the spiritual truths He sought to teach. The story of this blind man is an example of this. By curing him Jesus revealed what true blindness is and who it is that is blind.

I. Read verses 1-12

1. What happens among the people of the town after the man was cured?
2. Did the ex-blind man's explanation satisfy them? Why not?

II. Read verses 13-34

1. The people of the town, not satisfied, took the case to the theologians. What conclusion did they arrive at after examining the case theologically?
2. Why did their arguments fail to shake the blind man? Who was in a better position to discuss the subject, the ex-blind man or the theologians?

Ex: Imagine trying to explain what color is to a world of blind people. You could not even prove it exists. The blind people would probably even offer theoretical proofs as to why it couldn't exist. A simple beggar with eyesight would know more about color in that world than the greatest intellectual could.

3. Who finally won the argument? On what grounds?
4. How can the attitude of the parents of the blind man be explained? (John 12:42-43)

III. Read verses 35-41

1. How did the blind man become a Christian?
2. Why couldn't the Pharisees do the same?
Why is there more hope for those who admit blindness than there is for those who don't? (Luke 5:30-32)
3. Christ came for what purpose? (Luke 4:16-22)

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session II John 10

I. Read verses 1-18

1. In verses 1-18 we have a parable and its explanation. What would you say is the main point of this parable?
(v. 10,11,18,27-29). Christ is the only one who takes a personal interest in man to the point of giving His life for him.
2. What are the characteristics of the mercenary leader? (v.12-13). whom would he represent? He is not interested in the well being of the individual. He's a professional and man is to him a means. For this reason, in a crisis he leaves man to his own plight.

Ezekiel 34:1-31. Observe what this passage says regarding:

- a. the faithful shepherds (v.1-10)
 - b. the mercenary (v.11-16)
 - c. the sheep (v.16-31)
3. In what way are sheep an apt analogy of man?
Isaiah 53:6 – without orientation
Jeremiah 10:23-24
Matthew 10:36

Afflicted – no way out

Exhausted – without strength to resist

4. What is the significance of Jesus' statement in verse 7 that He is the "door" of the sheep? (John 14:6)
5. What is the main characteristic of the person who is oriented by the faithful leader? (v. 3-5, 16)
He heeds the shepherd and lives according to the orientation he thereby receives.

II. Read verses 19-40

1. In the remainder of the chapter the perpetual question, "who is this man?" appears again. In how many ways did Jesus assert His deity in verses 19-40?
2. What does Christ offer to those who heed his Word?
I John 3:1-2; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 8:16-17, 28-30
He came the only begotten, to become the first begotten...
3. Have you arrived yet at a personal conclusion to the question raised by the Jews in verse 24?

If so, what is it based on?
What implications do you see in it for your life?

Investigative Bible Discussion – Session 12
John 11

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 13

John 12

I. Read verses 1-11.

1. Note who among the twelve kept the “kitty”. Why do you suppose Jesus gave that job to the only thief in the group?

Judas needed the opportunity to help him see what he really was...so that he could be cured.
Romans 7:7-8

II. Read verses 12-19

1. What motivated the multitude to put on this demonstration? (v. 17-18)

Note in John 6:14-18 that on that occasion Jesus rejected their attempts to involve Him politically. Why then, did He submit to this on this occasion?

He was forcing a showdown. See John 11:47-57. By this act He demanded that the Jews make up their minds about Him. “Either accept me as the Messiah or kill me!” It was the last sign (Zechariah 9:9)

III. Read verses 20-36

1. According to these verses what was Jesus’ central purpose in life?
2. Who is the prince of this world? (Luke 4:5-7)
What are the implications of this? (1 John 5:19)
2. What was Jesus getting at in His illustration of a grain of wheat in verse 24? How did His death bear much fruit? (1 Peter 2:24; Romans 5:15-19)
3. In the subsequent verses Jesus extends this principle of death before fruitfulness to us. How do you understand this?

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 14
John 13

I. Read the whole chapter.

1. In verses 1-16, Jesus performs a symbolic act in an effort to communicate a spiritual principle to His disciples. What is it that He is trying to teach them? (Luke 22:24-27; Mark 10:42-45)
2. What principle of business does this teaching invert? How do we reconcile ourselves to this?
3. In the middle of the story Peter disputes the rightness of Jesus' washing his feet. In verse 8 Jesus makes a statement that apparently has a double meaning, "If I do not wash you, you have no part of me." What other "washing" is He talking about? (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
4. What distinctive badge did Jesus give the apostles to identify them as His disciples, verses 34-35? (1 John 3:11-18; 1 John 4:7-12, 19-21)

What is the nature of this love?

Why is it distinctive?

5. Do you suppose Peter was sincere in his avowal that he would lay down his life for Christ in verse 37? If he was, why did he fall? (Romans 7:18-25; John 15:5)

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 15
John 14:1-14

I. Read verses 1-14

1. As you have no doubt noticed, one of the most prevalent themes in Christ's teachings is eternal life. In the first four verses of this chapter Jesus elaborates on the nature of this life. What can we learn about it from this passage? (See also 1 Corinthians 15:35-50)
2. In verse 6 Jesus makes three assertions concerning Himself. What did He mean by, "I am the Way"? (Ephesians 2:1-10)

What did He mean by, "I am the Truth"? (John 8:32)

What did He mean by, "I am the Life"? (1 John 5:11-12)

3. In verse 7 Jesus tells the disciples that they had actually seen God. Phillip took exception to this in verse 8, saying, "Show Him to us once and we'll be satisfied." Jesus replied that they had indeed seen the Father. In what sense was this true? Verses 9-10. (John 1:18 and John 3:13)
4. How did Jesus go about revealing God to His disciples? (John 5:30 and John 8:28-29 and John 12:49-50)
5. In what way does this open up the possibility of our actually coming to know God as well?

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 16

John 14:15-31

I. Read John 14:15-31

1. In this passage Jesus begins to make it clear to His disciples that He is soon to leave them. He promises however, to send them a replacement. Who is it? What will His functions be? (note verses 16, 17, and 26 also see 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; Romans 8:14)

2. In the midst of this promise to send the Holy Spirit, Jesus seems to confuse the issue by saying that He Himself will return (verses 18-20) and in verse 23 He goes even farther and claims that the Father too will dwell in us. How do you reconcile this apparent paradox?
3. What promise does He make to those who out of love obey Him in verses 21-23? Why is obedience a prerequisite for the fulfillment of this promise? (1 John 5:14, 15 and Amos 3:3)
4. How do you understand the concept of Christ “dwelling” in the individual? (Romans 8:9-10, 1 John 5:11-12)
5. What possibilities does this open up to us? (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)
6. How does one establish this relationship with Christ?

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 17 John 15

I. Read John 15.

1. In the first part of this chapter Jesus compares His relationship with the Christian to that of a vine and its branches. What are the implications of this comparison?
2. The word “abide” repeatedly appears in these verses. What does He say about it? What does it mean? (Romans 6:13; Galatians 2:20)
3. By what means does He “prune” the branches? (Hebrews 4:12 and James 1:22-25)
4. What does Jesus mean in verse 5 when He says “without Me you can do nothing”? (See John 5:30; John 8:28-29; John 14:9-10)

5. "Fruit" is another word that repeatedly appears in this passage. See verses 2, 4, 5, 8, and 16. What is this fruit? (Colossians 1:5-6; Galatians 5:22-23)

Why does He put such emphasis on this? (Matthew 7:15-20)

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 18 John 16

I. Read John 16.

1. This chapter is the last of a series of four chapters in which Christ gives his disciples some final instructions before He leaves them. We can be sure He devoted these remaining hours to reminding them of the most essential principles in their Christian walk. By way of review, what attitudes did Jesus seek to remind the twelve of in chapter 13?

What provision did Jesus make for His replacement in chapter 14?

What is the key word in chapter 15? What does it mean?

2. Now, in chapter 16, Jesus continues on the same theme, talking about the provisions that He has made for continuing to assist His followers after he departs. In verse 7, Jesus states that they will, in fact, be better off after he leaves than they were when He was with them in the flesh. How could this be? In what way would it be better? (Romans 8:14-16)
3. What three things will the Holy Spirit do for the non-Christian? (v. 8-11)

4. What three things will the Holy Spirit do for the Christian as indicated in verses 12-15?
5. What does Christ teach us about prayer in verses 23-27?

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 19
John 17

I. Read John 17

1. In verse 4, Jesus declared to His Father that He had finished the “work” that He had been given to do. What work was this? (v.6)
2. What did Jesus do to prepare these men for the job He had in mind for them? (v. 6-19)
3. What was their relationship with the world to be like? (v. 15) Why?
4. In verses 20-26, Jesus talks a lot about unity. What does He say about it? How is it produced? (Ephesians 2:13-17)
5. In this chapter, Jesus has revealed His strategy for getting the message to the world. What was it? Would you say you are a part of this plan? How would you go about fulfilling it?

Investigative Bible Discussion - Session 20
John 18

I. Read Chapter 18

1. In this chapter, which gives the account of the arrest and indictment of Jesus, the actions of Peter are predominant. The first time he appears (v.10) he, armed with one of the two swords the twelve had in their possession, attacks a band of soldiers. A few minutes later he is defeated when a young girl merely asks him a question. One minute an act of courage, the next, cowardice!
2. What do you make of this? Did the encounter with the girl demand something of him that the encounter with the soldier did not? (Luke 22:31-34; Ephesians 6:12)
3. What was Peter's weak spot? (John 13:36-38; 1 Corinthians 10:12-13)
4. What personal application can we draw from this experience Peter had?
5. What were the charges against Jesus that led to his execution? (v. 29-40; Mark 14:55-64; John 19:7)
6. Notice the dialogue between Jesus and Pilate regarding truth in verses 37-38. What did Jesus say about truth?
7. How does He define truth? (John 1:17; John 8:32-36; John 14:6; John 16:13; John 17:17-19 compare with John 12:49-50)

John 19

I. Read John 19

1. This chapter brings us to the climax of Jesus' life. His death was not a disastrous reversal of events as most of his followers and enemies believed. On the contrary, prophets had been speaking of it in detail for centuries and Jesus himself, from the beginning of his ministry spoke of "this hour" as being the very purpose for his appearance among us – making it apparent that the crucifixion of Jesus is basic to God's eternal plan for mankind. Compare the details of this chapter with some of the prophecies written concerning the event.

II. Read Psalm 22.

1. What details are prophesied in this chapter that are fulfilled in John 19?
2. What does this chapter reveal about Jesus' sufferings that John 19 does not?

III. Read Isaiah 53

1. What details are foreseen in this chapter that are later fulfilled at Christ's death?
2. What significance does Isaiah give to Christ's death?
3. What would you say is the significance of Christ's death? (Romans 5:6-11)
4. How can his death make a significant difference in one's life?

TWENTY FOUR HOURS WITH JOHN

This is a crude first draft of a series of Bible studies that has evolved through use over the past few years. Upon encountering a world of people who "don't believe anything" and who resent their religious upbringing we realized we had to restudy our evangelism process.

According to John 4:36-38, sowing, watering, cultivating, and reaping doesn't all take place in one twenty minute presentation of the gospel. Often it takes weeks or months for a seed to germinate, take root, grow, and bear fruit.

Our job is to see that the seed gets into the ground and stays there (Mark 4:15) until it springs into life. We have found that this is exactly what happens when we consistently meet with a non-Christian to open the Scriptures together.

Fortunately our job is not to defend religion – not even Christianity. In fact we don't have to defend the Bible, the creation story, nor God's existence.

Since the Christian life can be summarized in two questions we stick to trying to answer those. They are: "Who was that man?" and "What does He want of me?". When the first question is settled he answers the second question...and all subsequent questions as well.

Everyone has an opinion on the first one (but not a clue on the second question). But where did that opinion come from? It is a product of hearsay, wishful thinking, secondary sources (like books and clergymen), or it is based on an examination of the one existing primary source? Since Jesus put every man in check with His claim to divinity the honest man must either prove Him wrong or admit that it's "mate". These studies go through the book of John chapter by chapter. You will notice how much they leave untouched. There are two reasons for that.

First, the objective of these studies is limited. We are concerned only with answering the above questions – so we examine mainly those parts that are directly related to this.

Secondly, it is important to maintain a sense of progress. If you ever want to get rid of someone just take a month to plod through a chapter with him. We try to get through a chapter at every meeting.

We would appreciate your putting these studies to the test and your contributing to their revision. Just don't do any revising in a tower. Which of your acquaintances do you think is the farthest from the kingdom? Ask him to be your test case. And when you study with him don't bother to defend the Scriptures. Don't even ask him to agree with you. Just try to get him to understand what's written.

At our first meeting we usually present the Bridge – as a preview of the message of the book. Then we refer back to it to summarize after each of the subsequent studies.

One more suggestion. When we meet to study with a non-Christian we don't have these questions with us. It's better just to have them in mind or in the margin of the Bible...

Submitted by Jim Peterson
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