

WHEN YOUR LESSON IS COMPLETED PLEASE RETURN TO:

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CORRESPONDENCE COURSE ON JOHN'S GOSPEL

ADVANCED LESSON 1

The Gospel of John can become a valuable treasure to you if you read it carefully. Each time you read, pray to God, asking Him to help you understand what you read.

INTRODUCTION Prayerfully read and ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as you read each chapter.

COMPARE The references in other books of the Bible where possible, as these help to throw light on the text being studied.

TITLE of BOOK "The Gospel" means "The Good News". "According to John" refers to the disciple John who is mentioned in the other Gospels as the brother of James (Matthew 4:21). Probably this Gospel (the gospel of John) is the last of the four written. John also wrote three short letters (Epistles) found towards the end of the New Testament. John does not record all the parables of Jesus found in the other books, but sets out the Way of Life through FAITH in JESUS CHRIST, who is the expressed image of God and the "Word of God", ie God revealing Himself to man (Chapter 14:9-11).

THEME Most of the miracles recorded (sometimes referred to as 'signs'), have some bearing on this general theme of believing in Christ, and the reader is challenged to choose between "Life" and "Death, eg see Chapter 3:16, 17 & 36 and Chapter 10:10. John desires that everyone should see Jesus Christ as the Son of God and believe in Him. See Chapter 20:31. A more meditative person than the other writers, John frequently embodies deep teachings as a result of the incidents recorded (Chapter 3, 4 & 5) or uses Jesus' teachings about well-known objects to do so, eg Chapters 10 & 15.

FIRST NAME ONLY: _____

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Read Chapter 1:1-14

Where Matthew and Luke begin with reference to the family background, birth and early life on earth of our Lord, and Mark presents Him as a young adult commencing His work, John goes right back before time began to state the eternal existence and Sonship of Jesus Christ. See Ch 1:1-5 and Ch 8:58, where the expression "I AM" is one which signified eternal existence. See also Hebrews 1:3, which refers to the "glory of God expressed in Jesus Christ".

WORD OF GOD Ch 1:1-3 - compare Hebrews 1:1-3 – Jesus is God’s last word to the world! He “reflects the very nature of God”. As we use words to express our thoughts & feelings, so God sent Jesus to reveal His mind to us! He came from before Creation, to bring re-creation and transformation to people suffering from the re-formation caused by sin. Compare 2 Cor 5:17 with these early verses.

LIFE Through Him, verse 4. Compare Ch 10:10 & 1John 5:11-12. The Creator of all life, is Himself life and His presence brings life.

LIGHT Verse 4 & 5 – The true light breaks up (dispels) darkness of sin and unbelief. Many did not accept Him, but for those who do, God has a promise.

Key verses to memorise: JOHN Chapter 1:11 & 12

QUESTIONS

1. What do we learn about the existence of Jesus Christ from V1-5? _____

2. What does Jesus do for all people? _____

14. When Christians pray, why should we “expect” God to answer? What part does faith play? Read James 1:6-8.

POINTS TO PONDER: How may I today, witness to those of other cultures?
Am I as observant of their needs as was the Lord Jesus?

Read Chapter 2

THE FIRST "SIGN" V1-11: Joining with His mother, family and disciples in a happy occasion, Jesus began to show the glory of God in transformation. Water kept for ceremonial washing or to use when travellers were received and entertained, is changed into "wine", the common drink of the day, thought to have been a diluted form of wine – see Ch 13:1-17, compare v6-8 of this chapter. Mary knew she had no power to help, but gave some good advice v5.

"MY TIME" V5: Jesus was always conscious of God's planning for Him. Compare Ch 4:21, 5:25, &:30, 8:20, 12:23 & 27 and 13:1. Jesus never rushed ahead of God, but bided His time. Jesus, by using everyday things, turned sorrow into rejoicing, shame into approval and always does the "best" v10.

THE SECOND "ACTION" V12-25: Again Jesus shows AUTHORITY. He cleanses the Temple by casting out those more intent on making money than on true worship. Right hearts are of more value than many offerings. Compare Isaiah 61:8, Mark 12:33 and Hebrews 10:6.

NOTE THE REACTIONS OF THE PEOPLE V17, 18 & 23: The "other Temple" - noting their complete disregard for God's ways, Jesus' thoughts leap ahead to the time when they will also reject Him! Unbelieving people still look for "signs" and will not believe. Even His followers did not really believe that He would rise again. See v22, also Ch 20:24-29. Compare Luke 24:11-40. Jesus was not deceived by those who made a show of "believing" v25.

Key verse to memorise: JOHN Chapter 2:22

QUESTIONS

6. What advice did Mary give the servants in V5?

(a) Are you willing to follow the same advice? (of doing what Jesus tells us) _____

(b) Why? _____

7. In what way did Christ show His love for His Father? Do His actions surprise you? Why? V16 & 17.

8. Will God accept us if our hearts are not sincere? Why? _____

Read Chapter 3

NICODEMUS V1-2: A religious leader, came stealthily not wishing to "commit" himself openly at first. He was timid.

V3: Jesus avoids discussion and comes to the point. Jesus points to his need v3, his failure to understand v4 & 9 and brings out the truth that this birth is a spiritual one. (Not in any sense the idea contained in the "reincarnation" theory).

V6-8: This new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit of God. It would seem that Nicodemus may have come to a deeper spiritual experience later - see Ch 7:50-51 where he rebukes his own ruling party, and Ch 19:39, where he performed a most necessary task after the other disciples had all fled. The timid is now courageous!

SERPENTS & SALVATION V14: Refers to the story recorded in Numbers 21, with which all the Jewish people were familiar. The Cross of Christ v14 is now the means of drawing all men to Him. Love is the basis of God's salvation v16. **So** great love – for the world: **So** great a gift – His only begotten Son: for **So** many – everyone who believes: for **So** great a purpose – eternal Life! Again the choice of life and death verses 14, 15, 16, 18 & 19.

V23: John the Baptist continues his work and rejoices as a "friend of the bridegroom" to see Jesus now becoming more prominent. The Church – true believers – referred to as the "bride of Christ" in 2 Cor11:2, awaits His coming, as John had done. Jesus later sent John reassurance that He had indeed come from God.

Key verses to memorise: JOHN Chapter 3:14-19 & 36

QUESTIONS

9. Nicodemus failed to understand the need of the spiritual "new birth". What importance does Christ put on the "new birth"?

10. What is the "new birth"? _____
