

READ The BIBLE Together



**Gospel of John
Chapter 13-21**

**SHALOM CHURCH, SINGAPORE
(Upholding the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith)**

GOSPEL OF JOHN

Introduction

John 13 marks a turning point in the Gospel of John. From John 2-12, we are given various presentations of Jesus in public ministry – we see Him performing various miracles (signs) and engaging the Jews in various discourses. From John 13 onwards, till His betrayal and arrest in John 18, we shall see Jesus spending time mainly with His disciples.

This section (John 13-17) begins with an account of Jesus washing the disciples' feet and predicting Judas' act of betrayal. Then there is His farewell discourse, followed by His highly priestly prayer.

We note in passing that John 13-17 record events that took place during those few hours between the Passover meal Jesus had with His disciples in the Upper Room and His arrest in Gethsemane.

Week 1

[26th February – 3rd March 2012]

Memory Verse: *John 13:34, 35 ~ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

Day 1 Read John 13:1-17

1. This is the account of Jesus washing the feet of His 12 disciples.

(a) When did Jesus wash the feet of the 12 disciples?

(b) Why did Jesus wash the feet of the 12 disciples?

2. (a) Who protested and why?

(b) Why then did he later ask for his hands and head to be washed as well?
(Verse 9)

- (c) In verse 10, Jesus said, “*He who is bathed needs only wash his feet, but is completely clean.*”

What do you think “*completely clean*” mean? If he is “*completely clean*”, then why must he wash his feet?

3. What is this act of Jesus meant to teach us?

Day 2 Read John 13:18-30

1. Jesus quoted an Old Testament Scripture in verse 18. Where is it from?
2. What does ‘*He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me*’ mean?
3. (a) Who is the betrayer?
(b) Were the rest of the disciples suspicious of him?
4. Before he carried out his plan to betray Jesus, what did Jesus do to/for him?

Verse 5:

Verse 26-27:

What does this tell you about his act of betrayal?

Day 3 Read John 13:31-35

1. Why did Jesus say that the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in Him, when Judas went out? (Hint: Recall John 12:23-24)

- [A] Jesus gives an example (V1-17)
- [B] Jesus gives a prediction (V18-30)
- [C] Jesus gives a new commandment (V31-35)
- [D] Jesus gives another prediction (V36-38)

We have spent the past 4 days studying each of them in some details. For today and the next 2 days, we shall take some time to review these 38 verses and use them to renew our worship of our Lord!

Jesus Gives An Example (V1-17)

1. Re-read these 17 verses.

(a) What do these verses teach you about who Jesus is, and what His character is like?

(b) What do they teach you about the love of Jesus for His people?

(c) Take your answers in (a) and (b) above and turn them into a prayer of worship unto Jesus:

O Lord Jesus, I adore You! You are the One in whose hands God has given all things...

2. We worship Jesus, not only by praising Him but also by practicing what He says. Verse 15 says: *For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.*

Unlike baptism and the Lord's Supper, we are not commanded by Jesus to literally perform the washing of feet as a memorial act. However, it is an example of how we are to treat fellow believers – *when we see they have a need (dirty feet), we will humble ourselves to serve them, even if they are most undeserving (Judas who will betray, Peter who will deny, the rest of the disciples who are so dull in understanding, who will dispute about greatness and who will flee!).*

Whose feet have you washed?

Whose feet are you NOT WILLING to wash?

Whose feet need to be washed today? How can those feet be washed?

Worship Jesus by following His example!

Day 6 Summary & Review of John 13 (II)

Jesus Gives A Prediction (V18-30)

Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night (v30). In that Passover meal, Jesus was the host. It is a very special favor shown when the host dips a piece of bread in the soup and gives it to you! Hence, Jesus is here showing a very special favor to Judas. He is saying to Judas that He has no ill will towards him, and that he does not need to go and do his horrible deed.

Judas however hardened his heart and proceeded with his evil plan after receiving such a special favor from Jesus! The word '*immediately*' underlined his hard heart. The phrase '*and it was night*' also conveys more than just the hour at that time. For Judas to walk out on Jesus – the light of the world, it is indeed to walk out into the night – into total spiritual darkness!

Jesus Gives Another Prediction (V36-38)

Most assuredly I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times (v38). From hero to zero? While Peter predicted that he would die for Jesus, Jesus predicted that Peter would deny Him. And Jesus' prediction came to pass! This incident shows us Peter's lack of knowledge of his own heart – *the depths he can fall to, the evil he is capable of!* What about us? Do we know?

Ponder . . .

1. Is there any difference between Judas' betrayal of Jesus and Peter's denial of Jesus?
2. Do you think it is ever possible for you to be a Judas – *to betray Jesus*?
3. Do you think it is ever possible for you to deny Jesus like Peter?

The apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:22 ~ *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.* These two sections from John 13 are sobering. Take time to confess your utter weakness to Jesus and to rest in His strength to keep you, using this hymn by Annie S. Hawk:

I need Thee every hour, most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine can peace afford.

I need Thee every hour; teach me Thy will;
And Thy rich promises in me fulfill.

I need Thee every hour, stay Thou nearby;
Temptations lose their pow'r when Thou art
nigh.

I need Thee every hour, most Holy One;
Oh, make me Thine indeed, Thou blessed
Son.

I need Thee every hour, in joy or pain;
Come quickly and abide, or life is vain.

Chorus

*I need Thee, oh, I need Thee; Every hour I
need Thee;*

Oh, bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

Day 7 Summary & Review of John 13 (III)

Jesus Gives A New Commandment (V31-35)

Jesus gives this new commandment (v34-35) after Judas has left (v31a). Hence this new commandment is for His true disciples, and only them.

Jesus gives this new commandment (v34-35) after talking about His departure from them (vv31b-33). In other words, while He is physically away from His disciples, He expects them to be busy carrying out this new commandment.

We are commanded to love one another as Christ has loved us. We have just been given an example of how Jesus loved His disciples – *having loved His own to the end, He arose during supper to wash their feet!*

1. Do you think a person who does not believe in Jesus is able to love others like how Jesus has loved His disciples? Why or why not?"
2. If you are a Christian, what specific steps may you take to love others *as Christ has loved you?*

3. If you are not a Christian, what must you do so that you may learn to truly love others?

Week 2

[4th March – 10th March 2012]

Memory Verse: *John 14:6 ~ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

Day 1 Read John 14:1-4

1. In verse 1, Jesus told His disciples not to be troubled in their hearts. What could be the possible cause(s) for their "heart-trouble"? (Hint: Re-read John 13:31-38)
2. What did Jesus command His disciples to do in order to deal with their "heart-trouble"?

Verse 1b:

Verse 1c:

3. (a) What does 'My Father's house' (**verse 2**) refer to?

(b) What did Jesus promise to do?

Day 2 Read John 14:5-7

1. (a) Who was speaking in verse 5?

(b) What was his concern?

2. (a) Jesus said, "I am the way." What does it mean?
 - (b) Jesus said, "I am the truth." What does it mean?
 - (c) Jesus said, "I am the life." What does it mean?
 - (d) Jesus said, "No one can come to the Father except through Me." What does it mean?
3. Jesus said, "*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*" (John 14:6).

Now that you have heard these words of Jesus, what must you do?

Day 3 Read John 14:8-11

1. (a) Who is the disciple who spoke in verse 8?
 - (b) He says, "*Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.*" What is he asking for?
2. The reply of Jesus is found in verse 9-11.
 - (a) Using 1 sentence with no more than 15 words, summarize Jesus' reply to the disciple's request to be shown the Father:

(b) What does the reply of Jesus tell you about Himself?

Day 4 Read John 14:12-14

1. Verse 12 is a promise made by Jesus.

(a) To whom is the promise made?

(b) What is the promise?

Note that this promise is unconditional (i.e. no conditions need to be met in order for the promise to be fulfilled)

2. Verse 13-14 is another promise made by Jesus.

(a) To whom is the promise made?

(b) What is the promise?

Note that this promise is conditional (i.e. a condition need to be met in order for the promise to be fulfilled)

3. What does it mean to “*ask in the name of Jesus*”? (Read John 15:10; 1 John 5:14-15; Matthew 6:9-13 to help you get the answer)

Day 5 Read John 14:15-24

1. If we love Jesus, what will we do?

Verse 15:

Verse 23:

2. If we love Jesus, what will Jesus do?

Verse 16:

Verse 21:

Verse 23:

3. (a) Who is the '*another Helper*'?

(b) Write down everything you can know about Him from this passage:

Day 6 Read John 14:25-31

1. This passage is the second time Jesus mentioned the 'another Helper' in His *Farewell Discourse*. Where did Jesus *first* mention this 'another Helper' in the discourse?

2. (a) According to verse 26, what is the task of this 'another Helper'?

(b) Who is the 'you' in verse 26?

3. (a) What did Jesus leave with His disciples? (V27)

(b) Why did He give this to them?

(c) What is so special about this 'thing' that He is giving to them?

In verses 12-21, Jesus returns to the theme of verses 1-4 -- addressing the fears of the disciples. One particular fear of these 11 men is prominent here: *Since Jesus is going to leave us, what is going to happen to us?* Hence Jesus gave these men a number of promises:

- You will do what I have done, and even greater works (v12)
- If you ask Me in My name, then I will do it (v13-14)
- I will pray the Father and He will send you the Spirit who will dwell in you (v16-17)
- I will come to you and manifest Myself to you (v18-21)

At this point, there is yet another interruption – by a disciple named Judas (not Iscariot)! Again, how wonderful to see our Lord not ignoring him or dismissing him. Instead, our Lord used his very question to elaborate the last promise given in verses 18-21 – *Not only Jesus, but both He and the Father will come and make Their home with him.* Who is the ‘him’? *He who loves Jesus and keeps His word.*

From verse 25, Jesus continues the conversation by giving further assurance about the Spirit, promises His peace to His fearful disciples and explaining to them why they should rejoice that He is leaving.

He ends the conversation by telling them what is going to take place soon – *His death.* His death has something to do with Satan (*the ruler of this world*); His death has nothing to do with Him being a sinner (*he has nothing in me*); His death is Him obeying the Father (*as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do*). Then, as our Great Shepherd, He gets up and walks courageously to face the cross – *Arise, let us go from here.*

1. Take time to ponder the picture of Jesus our Shepherd given in John 14, and then bow in worship of Him. Use this hymn by Dorothy Trupp in your worship, if you wish:

*Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use Thy folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.*

*We are Thine, Thou dost befriend us, be the guardian of our way;
Keep thy flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.*

2. Amidst the many comforts and promises and assurances in John 14, there is one commandment (only one) in this passage. It is found in verse 15b ~ *Keep My commandments.*

- Currently, is this the pattern of your life?
- Today, is there any commandment of Jesus that you have persistently refused to obey?

Note that we keep Christ's commandment, not to earn His love, but because we love Him! And we love Him because He first loved us (John 15:16; 1 John 4:10).

Day 2 Read John 15:1-8

The imagery here is known as an allegory, where an abstract or spiritual meaning is represented through concrete or material forms. All the details of an allegory have significance. The main point of the imagery is clear: *The intimate union of the branches with the vine, whereby the life of the branch is dependent on its union with vine. Whether the branch will bear no fruit and be cut off, or it will bear fruit and be pruned, it all comes down to whether it is in union with the vine!*

Let's take some time to study this allegory now:

1. (a) Who is the vine?

 (b) The word 'true' means 'real and genuine'. It is the opposite of 'counterfeit or imaginary'. Why did Jesus call Himself 'the true vine'?

2. (a) Who is the vinedresser?

 (b) What will the vinedresser do? (Verse 2)
 - To branches that doesn't bear fruit:
 - To branches that bears fruit:

3. (a) Who are the branches?

- (b) The branch must abide in the vine. What does it mean?
 - (c) What's the result of not abiding in the vine?
 - (d) What's the result of abiding in the vine?
3. What have you learnt from this allegory? How has that changed your life?

Day 3 Read John 15:9-17

1. How do these verses describe the relationship between the Father and Jesus?
2. In verse 9, Jesus says to His disciples "*I have loved you.*"
 - (a) To what does Jesus liken His love for His disciples? (Verse 9)
 - (b) How does Jesus express His love for His disciples practically? (V13)
3. In response to His love for them, His disciples must abide in His love.
 - (a) What does 'abide' mean?
 - (b) How are they to abide in His love?
 - (c) Are you currently abiding in His love?

(d) When we abide in Christ's love, what will be present in us? (V11)

Day 4 Re-read John 15:9-17

1. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love." (V10). What commandment did Jesus give us? (V12)

2. Verses 13-15 tell us some things about the 'friends of Jesus'. What are they?
 - V13:
 - V14:
 - V15:

Are you a friend of Jesus? How do you know?

3. Jesus chose and appointed the disciples to go and bear fruit (V16).
 - (a) What is the fruit the disciples are suppose to bear?

 - (b) How can they/we bear this fruit?

Day 5 Read John 15:18-25

While John 15:9-17 talks about *love*, John 15:18-25 talks about *hate*.

1. Who hates?

2. There are three targets of hate mentioned:
 - (a) _____ (V18a, 19e)

 - (b) _____ (V18b, 23a)

(c) _____ (V23b, 24c)

3. How is this hatred expressed? (V20)
4. Is this hatred reasonable?
5. Where do you belong? Those mentioned in Q1 or Q2(a) above?

Day 6 Read John 15:26-27

1. This passage is the third time Jesus mentioned the 'another Helper' in His *Farewell Discourse*.

The first time is found in John 14: _____

The second time is found in John 14: _____

2. (a) What is the other name for the Helper?

(b) What is the relationship between the Father and the Helper?

(c) What is the relationship between Jesus and the Helper?

(d) When the Helper comes, what will He do?
3. (a) Who is the 'you' in verse 27?

(b) What will the 'you' be doing?

Day 7 Summary and Review of John 15 (I)

After they left the Upper Room, Jesus led the 11 disciples through the streets of Jerusalem to Gethsemane. Along the way, Jesus continues to speak to them:

- [A] He emphasized the importance of them abiding in Him.
- [B] He assures them of His love for them and repeats His command that they love one another.
- [C] He warns them of the deep, unreasonable hatred from the world.
- [D] He points them to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

These things were said to prepare the disciples for the time when Jesus will be physically absent from them. While there are certain things Jesus said that are peculiar to those 11 men, the gist of what Jesus said is applicable to all disciples in all ages. Remember that like them, we live in a period of time whereby Jesus is physically absent from us.

We have spent the past 5 days studying [A]-[D] in some details. For today and tomorrow, we shall take some time to review these 27 verses and use them to renew our consecration to our Lord!

Abide In Christ (15:1-8)

1. Recall: *What is 'abide'? How do we abide in Christ? Why must we abide in Christ?*

Using your answers, write out a prayer to the Lord concerning 'abiding in Christ':

2. Have you experienced the vinedresser's pruning?

Is this pruning a once-off event or is it meant to be a regular experience?

How should you view this experience?

Christ Loves Us . . . Love One Another (15:9-17)

1. Take time to bask in the love of Jesus for you – *When did He start to love you? How did He love you? What kind of love is it?*

Use this hymn by Philip Bliss in your worship, if you wish:

I am so glad that our Father in heav'n,
Tells of His love in the Book He has giv'n
Wonderful things in the Bible I see,
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.

Chorus

*I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me!
I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me!*

Oh, if there's only one song I can sing,
When in His beauty I see the great King,
T'is shall my song through eternity be,
"Oh, what a wonder that Jesus loves me!"

2. A fitting response to the love of Jesus is to keep His commandment --- *love one another*. What is hindering me from doing this? Do I want to remove the hindrances? How can I remove them?

Week 4

[18th March – 24th March 2012]

Memory Verse: John 16:24 ~ *Until now you have asked nothing in My Name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*

Day 1 Summary and Review of John 15 (II)

The World Hates Us (15:18-25)

The world hates Christ's disciples because the world hates Christ. Have you experienced this hatred of the world? If yes, could you please share your latest experience of such hatred from the world:

While we are not called to go and seek/provoke such hatred from the world, it is inevitable that as Christ's disciples, we will experience it. While experiencing such hatred from the world is not pleasant, yet it can be re-assuring. How?

- It re-assures us that we belong to Christ and are His servants (v19-20)
- It re-assures us that we stand on the side of God (v23)
 {The world hates Christ and therefore hates Christ's disciples. If the world hates Christ, then the world also hates God!}

The Holy Spirit in us (15:26-27)

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. He is God. Take this opportunity to list down (once again) what you have learnt about the Holy Spirit from John 14 & 15:

How conscious are you of the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?

Day 2 Read John 16:1-4

1. Why did Jesus say these things to the disciples?
2. (a) How will the world express its hatred of the disciples?

(b) What will be their motives in doing this? (V2)

(c) What is the real reason behind their action? (V3)

Day 3 Read John 16:5-15

1. Jesus says that it is to the disciples' advantage that He goes away. Why?
2. When the Holy Spirit comes, what will He do to the world?
3. When the Holy Spirit comes, what will He do for the disciples?

Day 4 Read John 16:16-24

1. *"A little while, and you will not see Me"* -- this is a reference to the coming death of Jesus. How will the death of Jesus affect (a) the disciples and (b) the world? (V20)

2. *"Again a little while, and you will see Me"* -- this is a reference to the resurrection of Jesus. How will this event affect the disciples? (V20, 22)

3. In verses 23b-24, Jesus calls His disciples to ask the Father in His name.
 - (a) What does it mean to ask in Jesus' name?

 - (b) What will the Father do in response to our asking?

 - (c) What will be the impact on the disciples?

 - (d) Is this asking a regular feature of your life?

Day 5 Read John 16:25-33

1. Verse 28 speaks of the pre-existence, incarnation, death and ascension of Christ. Attempt to connect the various parts of the verse to the right box:

I came forth from the Father

Incarnation

I have come into the world

Ascension

I leave the world

Death

I go to the Father

Pre-existence

2. (a) In this world, what will the disciples experience?

(b) In Christ, what will the disciples have?

Day 6 Summary and Review of John 16

16:1-4

15:18-25 has already mentioned the world's hatred towards Christ's disciples. These 4 verses is a further elaboration of this theme. The depth of the hatred can be seen in the desire to remove Christians from society (*put you out of the synagogue*) and from this world (*kills you*). The depravity of the hatred can be seen in that the persecutors would see their persecution of Christians as part of their service to God!

16:5-15

Though the world hates Christians so much, yet the world is not able to totally eradicate the Gospel and Christians. Instead, the Gospel will triumph and some from the world will join the Christians! How is this possible? Through the work of the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. His testimony will be so powerful that those He worked on will come to see their sins (*that they have not believed in the Savior*), their unrighteousness (*all the time, they believe they are righteous but the Spirit will show them their unrighteousness because they have rejected the only Righteous One*) and their exposure to judgment (*the way they have followed is doomed, because they follow the devil who has already been defeated*). There will be some who will have their eyes opened so that they will leave the world and join the Christians instead!

In addition, the Holy Spirit will ensure that Christ's truth will remain in this world. He does this by guiding the apostles into all truth and by speaking to them of things to come. He does this so that the apostles will be able to write Scripture for the future generations. What the Holy Spirit says will have only one aim: To glorify the Lord Jesus Christ!

16:16-24

Jesus tells His disciples that when He is gone (dead), they will be deeply sorrowful while the world will be rejoicing. The contrast in response cannot be any sharper! However, when the disciples see the resurrected Savior, their sorrow will be turned into joy!

By then, they will have a clearer understanding of things compared to now. Hence, they will not be asking Jesus questions after questions like what they are now doing. At the same time, they will be praying to God in Christ's name and their prayers will be answered.

16:25-33

Still on the topic of the disciples having a clearer understanding after the resurrection of Jesus, the Lord tells them that by then they will be convinced of who He is and where is He from (v28).

The disciples proudly proclaimed that they already understand – *Now we are sure that You know all things and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God* (v30). In reply, Jesus hinted that they haven't really grasped His message. This will be seen in the fact that within a few hours, they will be forsaking Jesus and fleeing for their dear lives!

The love of Jesus is seen once more in verse 33. After having predicted their forsaking of Him, He moves to talk to them about having peace in Him while experiencing tribulations in the world, and assuring them that He has overcome the world.

1. Write down 1 thing you've learnt about Jesus from John 16:

2. Write down 1 lesson you've learnt about the Christian Life from John 16:

Week 5

[25th – 31st March 2012]

Memory Verse: John 17:3 ~ *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

Day 1 Topic: Prayer

1. More than 300 years ago, a group of Christians asked the question "*What is prayer?*" and then gave the answer as such: *Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.*
 - (a) Do you pray?
 - (b) What do you pray for?
 - (c) What are the elements of prayer, according to the answer given by those Christians more than 300 years ago?
2. According to the Bible, where can we pray?

Matthew 6:6 ~

Psalms 63:1 ~

Jonah 2:1 ~

In simple words, we can pray _____!

3. According to the Bible, when can we pray?

Psalms 55:17 ~

Psalms 50:15 ~

Luke 18:1 ~

In simple words, we can pray _____!

Day 2 Read John 17:1-5

John 17 is the prayer of Jesus. We should feel a deep sense of awe and privilege to hear God the Son praying to God the Father! In this prayer, we find Jesus praying for Himself (v1-5), for His immediate disciples (v6-19) and for all who would come to believe in Him through their word (v20-26).

For today and the next two days, we shall first focus on Jesus praying for Himself (v1-5).

1. Here we see Jesus praying. Who is Jesus, according to these 5 verses?

Verse 1:

Verse 2:

Verse 3:

Verse 4:

Verse 5:

2. Jesus begins with these words in His prayer: *Father, the hour has come*. What does 'the hour' refer to?

3. Since the hour has come, Jesus now asks the Father for one thing. What is it?

Verse 1:

Verse 5:

To 'glorify' means to honor, to praise, to be seen as glorious and worthy, to be clothed with splendor. So in one sentence, what is Jesus praying for?

4. (a) What has God given to Jesus? (V2a)

(b) For what purpose? (V2b)

Day 3 Re-read John 17:1-5

1. According to verse 3, what is eternal life?

2. According to verse 4, how has Jesus glorified God while He was on earth?

Day 4 Notes on John 17:1-5

In verse 1, Jesus prays that He be glorified – be honored, be praised, be seen as glorious and worthy, be clothed with splendor. He prays that He be glorified so that the Father may be glorified.

In verse 2, Jesus states that the Father has given Him authority over all flesh. The purpose is so that He should give eternal life to the elect. This is stated as the argument why the Father should glorify Him as He has asked in verse 1. In other words, the elect receiving eternal life is in harmony with the Son being glorified.

In verse 3, Jesus elaborates on what is eternal life. Eternal life is not merely everlasting life but personal knowledge of the Everlasting God. How can one know the Everlasting God personally? Only by knowing the Son whom He has sent. Therefore, no one will have eternal life without knowing God and no one will know God without knowing Jesus!

In verse 4, Jesus states that while on earth, He has glorified the Father by finishing all the work that the Father has given Him to do. Since the Son has finished all His work, He is now going back to the Father in heaven. Hence in verse 5 He asked the Father to

restore Him to the splendor that He has shared with the Father before the world began. At this point, we are back to the petition in verse 1 – Glorify Your Son.

Before Jesus actually asked the Father to glorify Him (v1c), He said that the hour has come (v1b). The hour refers to the appointed time for His death, burial, resurrection and ascension. The death-burial-resurrection-ascension of Jesus is sometimes referred to as the time/hour for His glorification (cf. John 12:23-24, 13:31)!

Jesus knows that the hour of His glorification has come. What did He do? He prays that His glorification will take place. The fact that God has ordained something is precisely the reason why He will pray for that something to come to pass. What a lesson here for us on prayer and God's sovereignty!

We also see from His prayer how He is willing to obey the Father and die on the cross! To ask God to glorify Him is to pray for the time of His death-burial-resurrection-ascension to come to pass. What a Savior!!

As we review and reflect on this petition of Jesus in verses 1-5, overall we see that our Lord has a Number One Concern, namely *the glory of God in the salvation of His elect*. Do you share this concern of your Lord?

How has the Notes helped you in your understanding of John 17:1-5? What have you learnt?

Go and share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name of the person)

Day 5 Read John 17:6-19

John 17 is the prayer of Jesus. We should feel a deep sense of awe and privilege to hear God the Son praying to God the Father! In this prayer, we find Jesus praying for Himself (v1-5), for His immediate disciples (v6-19) and for all who would come to believe in Him through their word (v20-26).

The last 3 days were spent looking at Jesus' prayer for Himself (v1-5). For today and the next two days, we shall proceed to look at Jesus praying for His immediate disciples (v6-19).

1. Jesus says, "*I pray for them.*" (V9). Who is the '*them*'?

V6 ~

V8 ~

V9 ~

V14 ~

V16 ~

V18 ~

2. Jesus prays that God will keep them from the evil one (v15).

(a) What does this mean?

(b) Why does Jesus pray that they be kept? (V11)

(c) In praying that they be kept, what goal does Jesus have in mind? (V11)

Day 6 Re-read John 17:6-19

1. Jesus also prays to God to sanctify them (v17).

(a) What is 'sanctify'?

(b) How can this 'sanctify' be achieved?

2. Jesus says in verse 19 that He sanctifies Himself.

(a) What does this mean?

(b) What is the purpose of Jesus sanctifying Himself?

Day 7 Notes on John 17:6-19

The immediate disciples of Jesus (11 apostles, Judas Iscariot excluded) are the ones whom Jesus prayed for here. They are described as those whom God has taken out of the world and given to Jesus, people who belong to God and who have kept the word of God. To keep God's word here means to accept God's revelation of Himself as given through Jesus Christ. In other words, these men have received the teaching of Jesus and believed in Him, in contrast to the world, which has rejected Jesus and His message.

Two things Jesus prayed to the Father for them: (i) Keep them and (ii) Sanctify them.

Keep them

In verse 15, Jesus prays that God will keep the disciples from the evil one. The disciples have an enemy. He is Satan. He is who is far more powerful than them. He will do all He can to attack them. Hence the need for God to keep them! But how will Satan attack the disciples?

Verses 12-14 talks about the hatred of the world towards the disciples. It is clear that Satan will attack the disciples mainly through the hatred of the world. Why would the world hate the disciples? Because the disciples do not belong to the world! Because the disciples have received God's word (the revelation of God through Jesus Christ)! In contrast, the world does not receive God's word. From John 14-16, we have already learnt that the world often expressed its hatred of the disciples via physical assault. But what is the aim of such physical assaults?

In verse 11, we hear Jesus praying that the disciples be kept through God's Name while in verse 12 we hear Jesus saying that while He was with them in the world, He has kept them in God's name. Earlier in verse 6, Jesus describes these disciples as those to whom He has manifested God's name.

God's name stands for God's character. In other words, Jesus has revealed God to the disciples and they have accepted this revelation. During the 3½ years when Jesus was with the disciples, He has enabled them to remain faithful to the revelation they have received, though the world has tried to move them away from this loyalty.

Now Jesus will be leaving them. The world has not changed its goal. The hating world, acting under the direction of the evil one, still wants to get the disciples to be disloyal to God, to doubt God's word, to be unfaithful to the revelation they have received from Jesus. Hence, Jesus prays to the Father that they be kept – kept faithful to God and His truth, despite the hatred of the world; kept from the evil one!

It is only when they are kept (in the sense explained above) that they can be one. The unity that Jesus wants for His disciples is a unity that is based on revealed truth and a unity that is modeled after the unity of the Father and the Son!

Sanctify them

The word 'sanctify' means 'be holy'. At its most basic level of meaning, 'holy' is almost an adjective for God – He is transcendent, 'other', distinct, separate from His creation. To say that God is holy means God is so distinct and different from all others. At the next level, 'holy' is used on things or people reserved for God. For example, a basin reserved for God's use in the Temple is called 'holy' while Aaron and his sons are termed 'sanctified ones', conveying the idea that they are set apart for sacred duty, reserved for God. The moral overtones in our English words 'holy' and 'sanctify' emerge at this point – ideally if someone is set apart for God and God's purpose alone, that person will do only what God wants and hate all that God hates. This is what it means to be holy, as God is holy.

God has set Jesus apart for a specific mission – to save His people. Accordingly, when Jesus came into this world, He has set Himself apart from the world so that He can accomplish His mission. Now Jesus will send His disciples into the world to continue the mission --- proclaim the Good News of salvation. In the same way, the disciples must be holy (set apart, distinct from the world). They will not be able to carry out their mission unless they are holy!

The means whereby they will be holy is God's truth. Hence Jesus prays that God will sanctify them by His truth, with the aim that they will then be fitted to carry out the mission that will be entrusted to them.

How has the Notes helped you in your understanding of John 17:6-19? What have you learnt?

Go and share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name of the person)

Week 6

[1st – 7th April 2012]

Memory Verse: *John 18:36 ~ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."*

Day 1 Read John 17:20-26

This is the last section of the prayer of Jesus in John 17. In these 7 verses, we hear Jesus praying for all who would come to believe in Him through the word of the disciples (v20-26). In other words, Jesus is here praying for us! What a privilege!!

1. How are these future disciples described?

Verse 20:

Verse 22:

Verse 23:

Verse 24:

Verse 25: *They are people who know that God has sent Jesus*

Verse 26:

2. (a) What does He pray for?

Verse 21:

Verse 23:

- (b) What is His goal in praying this for all His disciples?

Verse 21:

Verse 23:

3. (a) According to verse 24, what does Jesus desire?

- (b) Do you think this desire of Jesus will be fulfilled?

Day 2 Notes on John 17:20-26

Here Jesus prays for all His disciples. You are included, if you are His disciple! The two things He prayed for us are: (a) *That we may be one* and (b) *That we may with Him in heaven*.

That we may be one

The unity of believers that Jesus prayed for here is an extension of what He has already prayed for earlier (verse 11) for the immediate disciples. Hence the basis for that unity is the basis for this unity – *revealed truth*. It is as we remain loyal to the revelation of God that comes to us through Jesus Christ that we will be united.

Concerning our unity, the goal our Lord has in mind is so that the world may believe in Him. We recall from John 13:35 that the world will know that we are Christ's disciples, if we love one another. Hence, putting John 13:35 together with this prayer, we can say

that this unity is to be expressed by the sacrificial love disciples have for one another. In simple words, the unity Jesus prays for is one that is based on truth and expressed in love.

That we may be with Him in heaven

What a comfort it is to the immediate disciples and to all of us that Jesus would pray that we would reach heaven finally! The world we live in is never friendly to us. Our enemy never stops to plot our destruction. What assurance do we have that we will make it to heaven safely? Not in our perceived strength or steadfastness, but in the prayers of Jesus for us!

It is most amazing to hear how Jesus puts it: *I desire . . .* It can mean 'I am determined' or 'I take delight'. Jesus is determined that we be with Him in heaven! Can anyone thwart the determination of Jesus? Jesus takes delight in having us with Him in heaven! Who are we that He should be delighted to have us in His home? Oh, take time to worship your Savior and your Lord!

*Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation -- One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses with every grace endued.
Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion, with those whose rest is won:
O happy one and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with Thee*

Samuel John Stone

How has the Notes helped you in your understanding of John 17:20-26? What have you learnt?

Go and share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name of the person)

Day 3 Read John 18:1-12

John 18-20 record the arrest, trial, crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus. The hour has arrived! Today, we shall focus on His arrest.

1. How did Judas know where to find Jesus?
2. Who went with Judas to arrest Jesus?

3. Why do you think Peter drew his sword and cut off Malchus' ear?
4. What do these verses tell you about Jesus?

Verse 4:

Verse 8:

Verse 11:

As you look over your answers, take time to worship Jesus!

Day 4 Read John 18:13-14, 19-24

John 18:12-27 records the trial of Jesus as well as the 'trial' of Peter during the same time nearby. The structure of this passage is as follows:

V13-14	Jesus on trial
V15-18	Peter on 'trial'
V19-24	Jesus on trial (continued)
V25-27	Peter on 'trial' (concluded)

Today we shall look at the trial of Jesus while reserving the 'trial' of Peter for tomorrow.

1. (a) Who arrested Jesus and bound him?

(b) Where did they bring Jesus?
2. Who is Annas? Who is Caiaphas? What is their relationship?
3. What does Annas want to know from Jesus? (V19)
4. (a) Why did the officer slap Jesus?

(b) What can we learn from the response of Jesus?

Day 5 Read John 18:15-18, 25-27

While Annas was questioning Jesus inside the house, Peter was having a rough time outside. Jesus has already predicted this 'trial' of Peter (John 13:38).

1. Where was Peter at this time? Why was he there?
2. Peter denied Christ three times that night. To whom did he make his denial?

Verse 17:

Verse 25:

Verse 26:

What do you think is the reason(s) for Peter's denial of Christ?

3. Verse 27 mentions the crowing of a rooster. What is the significance of this?

Day 6 Read John 18:28-32

Verse 24 informs us that Jesus was taken from Annas and brought to Caiaphas. John did not tell us what happened during Jesus' trial(s) before Caiaphas. Instead, he skipped over those few hours and then informed us in verse 28 that Jesus was then led from Caiaphas to Pilate.

1. Why did the Jews refuse to enter the Praetorium? What's the irony in their action here?
2. Verses 29-32 record the verbal sparring between Pilate and the Jewish religious leaders. Copy out their words in the space below:

Pilate (verse29):

Jewish leaders (verse30):

Pilate (verse 31a):

Jewish leader (verse 31b):

What did the Jewish leaders want Pilate to do to Jesus?

It appeared that the Jewish leaders have had prior agreement with Pilate on how to handle Jesus – *to find Him guilty and put Him to death*. This agreement was reached even before the trial started! Hence the trials were a mockery of justice!!

Day 7 Read John 18:33-40

1. Pilate asked Jesus if He was a king. What is the reply of Jesus? (V36, 37)
2. What is Pilate's first verdict concerning Jesus? (V38)
3. Instead of releasing Jesus, what did Pilate do?
4. (a) Who is Barabbas?

(b) The people choose to release guilty Barabbas instead of innocent Jesus. What is the significance of this?

Week 7

[8th – 14th April 2012]

Memory Verse: John 19:30 ~ *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

Day 1 Read John 19:1-6

1. Since Pilate has declared that Jesus is innocent (18:38), why then did Pilate have Jesus scourged (19:1)?
2. 19:1-3 describes some of the physical suffering that Jesus endured. Itemize them below:
 -
 -
 -
 -

*O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded, with thorns, Thine only crown:
How pale thou art with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish, which once was bright as morn!*

Do you think the words of the hymn above fairly captured the message of John 19:1-3?

Pause and worship your Savior who was wounded for you!

3. Note what Pilate said in the second part of verse 6. What is the significance of this?

Day 2 Read John 19:7-16

1. Let's take some time to focus on the words of Jesus in verse 11.

"You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above." What does this mean?

"Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." What does this mean?

2. (a) Why was Pilate afraid (v8)?
(b) Why was Pilate seeking to release Jesus (v12)?
(c) Why did Pilate finally deliver Jesus to be crucified (v16)?
(d) From your answers in (a) – (c), what can you learn about Pilate's character?

Day 3 Read John 19:17-24

1. (a) Where was Jesus crucified?

- (b) Who was crucified together with Jesus?
- (c) What was the title put on the cross of Jesus?
- (d) What did the soldiers do? (V23-24)

2. Pause and take time to worship your Savior using this hymn:

*Wounded for me, wounded for me,
There on the cross He was wounded for me;
Gone my transgressions, and now I am free,
All because Jesus was wounded for me.*

*Dying for me, dying for me,
There on the cross He was dying for me;
Now in His death my redemption I see,
All because Jesus was dying for me.*

Day 4 Read John 19:25-37

1. Look at what Jesus did in verses 26-27. Write down your thoughts on this deed of our Lord:

How is this an example for you?

2. Jesus said in verse 30 – It is finished. What is finished?

3. (a) Why must the legs of those who were nailed to the cross be broken?

(b) Why were the legs of Jesus not broken? What is the significance of this?

Day 5 Read John 19:38-42

1. Two men were involved in the burial of Jesus.

(a) Who are they?

(b) Have we met them before in the Gospel of John? If yes, where?

2. These 5 verses describe in some details the burial of Jesus. Why is it important that the Bible should talk about His burial?

Day 6 Summary and Review of John 18:1-27

Arrest of Jesus (John 18:1-12)

In John 10:17-18a, Jesus says, “*Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. . .*” Here in the arrest of Jesus, we see glimpses of this:

- *Verses 1-2: During the Passover Meal, He already knew that Judas has gone out to make preparations to betray Him. After leaving the Upper Room, He could have left Jerusalem to evade their arrest. Instead, He went to Gethsemane, a place where Judas can guess fairly accurately that He will be there, since they have frequented that place.*
- *Verse 4: He knew they were coming to arrest Him. He went forward to meet them!*
- *Verse 4-6: He asked them whom they are seeking and then positively identified Himself to them!*

In light of the above, it was totally unnecessary for the arrest party to be made up of so many men – a detachment of troops (Roman soldiers) as well as officers from the chief priests (Jewish Temple guards). And it was absolutely unnecessary for them to bind Him (v12) as if He will try to escape! Why, He voluntarily gave Himself up to them!!

His voluntary surrender to His captors is a manifestation of His determination to please His Father and accomplish His mission of redemption. This determination is also the reason why He stopped the rash zeal of Peter (v10) saying, “*Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?*”

Trial of Jesus & Denial of Peter (John 18:13-27)

Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas and an ex-High Priest. The term ‘ex-High Priest’ is a strange one because the High Priest will serve in his office till death, and then one of his sons will replace him. But by this time, corruption has set in and the office of the High Priest is rotated, given to the highest bidder! While we cannot untangle all the intrigues happening then, it appeared that Annas was the power behind the curtain at this time. He was a very powerful man, and he had quite a say on who would be the next High Priest. At that time, his son-in-law Caiaphas occupied that position. Annas’ power and influence can be seen in the fact that Jesus was first brought to him, before He was brought before Caiaphas the High Priest.

Annas questioned Jesus on two matters: His disciples and His teaching. The former question may have dealt with the size of His following and the potential for any

possible conspiracy. The latter question suggests that the fundamental concern of the Jewish authorities was theological. However we note that when they finally presented the case before Pilate the Roman governor, the charge was primarily political (19:7, 12). *Why?*

While Jesus was undergoing this interrogation by Annas, Peter was outside, in the courtyard of Annas' residence, and he too was being 'interrogated'. Three times he denied that he knew Jesus, as predicted by Jesus Himself (John 13:38). Was Peter in danger of losing his life at this time? Perhaps, though the danger is probably more perceived than real. It is strange to see the man who 'bravely' tried to protect Jesus in Gethsemane before the Roman soldiers about an hour ago, now cowardly denied he has anything to do with Jesus before servants and maids!

Do you find the same strange contradictions in yourself?

How has the Notes helped you in your understanding of John 18:1-27? What have you learnt?

Go and share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name of the person)

Day 7 Summary and Review of John 18:28 – 19:42

Jesus before Pilate (John 18:28-19:16)

The Jewish religious leaders did not want to go into the Praetorium because that is the place of the Gentiles. Coming into contact with a Gentile place will render them unclean ceremonially and hence disqualify them from partaking in the Passover meal. Yet they were, at that very moment, delivering up the true Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7) to the Romans and defiling themselves morally by demanding the death of an innocent man!

Pilate was persuaded that Jesus is innocent. He tried to free Jesus by appealing to a festive custom (John 18:39-40). However it failed when the people choose a known robber, Barabbas, instead of Jesus. Jesus should be freed while Barabbas should be killed. But now, as it turns out, Jesus will take the place of Barabbas. Does this not underline the truth that in the death of Jesus, it was a guiltless One who died in the place of the guilty ones?

Pilate then tried to evoke the sympathy of the Jews by flogging Jesus. Again, it failed to achieve his desired goal as the people, incited by the religious leaders, demanded that Jesus be crucified. For his own selfish reasons, Pilate caved in and delivered Jesus to be crucified.

Jesus crucified (John 19:17-37)

John records two sayings of Jesus while He was nailed to the cross. The first was His loving arrangement for Mary his mother. Right till the moment of His death, Jesus honored his mother and showed concern for her, while He Himself was undergoing tremendous sufferings. What an example for us to follow!

The second saying of Jesus on the cross is His cry that it is finished! This refers to His mission – He came to make atonement for the sins of His people. He has now accomplished it. We do not need to pay for our sins anymore because Christ has paid it in full for us – His people. What a comfort for us!

Crucifixion is one of the cruelest forms of punishment. For the person nailed to the cross, the two nails nailed to his hands held up his own body. To breathe, he has to lift his body up, take a breath and then let his body droop. This action needs the co-operation of his two feet. If his legs are broken, then he cannot do this action and this will accelerate his death! Since Jesus was already dead by then, the soldiers did not have to break His feet.

Jesus buried (John 19:38-42)

Two men – Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus – came to bury the body of Jesus. Joseph was called a secret disciple of Jesus but after his brave act of his, he can no longer be a secret disciple.

It is important that the Bible records clearly the burial of Jesus. This is to confirm that Jesus is really dead. It also tells us that Jesus was not thrown into some common grave but placed in a very specific tomb. The empty tomb on Sunday morning thus demands an explanation! For two thousand years, the church has but one answer: *He is risen!*

How has the Notes helped you in your understanding of John 18:28 – 19:42? What have you learnt?

Go and share what you have learnt with someone: _____

(Name of the person)

Take time to worship the Lord Jesus Christ. Use this hymn by Philip Bliss, if you wish:

*Man of Sorrows! what a name
For the Son of God, who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

*Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

*Guilty, vile, and helpless we;
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
"Full atonement!" can it be?
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

*Lifted up was He to die;
"It is finished!" was His cry;
Now in Heav'n exalted high.
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

*When He comes, our glorious king,
All His ransomed home to bring,
Then anew His song we'll sing:
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

Week 8

[15th - 21st April 2012]

Memory Verse: John 20:31 ~ *but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

Day 1 Read John 20:1-10

1. Mary Magdalene went to the tomb very early on the first day of the week.
 - (a) What did she find?
 - (b) What did she conclude?
 - (c) What did she do next?
2.
 - (a) Two are persons came to the tomb that morning after Mary Magdalene. Who are they?
 - (b) What did each of them do and see?
 - (c) How did what they see impact them?

Day 2 Read John 20:3-7

1. How can we explain the empty tomb of Jesus?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. Who has seen the risen Christ, according to these 11 verses?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19. According to these 8 verses, how important is the resurrection of Jesus to our Christian Faith?

Day 3 Read John 20:11-18

1. After the two disciples left, Mary Magdalene remained at the tomb.
 - (a) Why did she not leave?
 - (b) What/who did she see/meet?
2. Mary Magdalene is the first person to see the resurrected Jesus. Why, do you think, the Lord appear to her first and not to those two disciples?

Day 4 Read John 20:19-23

Here in these few verses, we read of Jesus appearing to the group of disciples in the place what is generally accepted to be the upper room.

1.
 - (a) When did Jesus appear to them?
 - (b) How could Jesus come into their midst since the door is shut?
2.
 - (a) What did Jesus say to the disciples in verse 19? Why?
 - (b) What did Jesus do in verse 20? Why?
3. The disciples had two different emotions then:
Verse 19:
Verse 20:
What accounts for the change in emotion?

4. Pause and review your answers above. What have you learnt?

Day 5 Re-read John 20:21-23

1. Jesus said FOUR things to the disciples. What are they?

Verse 21b:

Verse 21c:

Verse 22c:

Verse 23:

2. Re-read verse 23. Who is the 'you'? What do you think is the meaning of this statement?

Day 6 Read John 20:24-29

These verses mention yet another appearance of Jesus to the disciples.

1. Verse 26 says, "After eight days . . ." Which day of the week would it be?
2. Note what Thomas said eight days ago (v25). Note what Jesus is now saying to Thomas (v27). How did Jesus know what Thomas said eight days ago in His absence?
3. Ponder the exclamation of Thomas in verse 28. What does it mean?
4. Who is declared blessed by Jesus in verse 29? Who would these people be?

Day 7 Read John 20:30-31

1. According to verse 30, Jesus did many signs. According to verse 31, only some of the signs were selected and recorded in this Gospel. Who made the choice as to what to record and which ones to leave out?

2. Why is the Gospel of John written?

3. Has this purpose been fulfilled in you?

Week 9

[22nd – 28th April 2012]

Memory Verse: John 21:22 ~ *Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."*

Day 1 Summary and Review of John 20

Mary, Peter and John at the tomb (20:1-18)

Mary Magdalene came to the tomb very early on Sunday morning. She saw the stone at the tomb's entrance removed and concluded that someone has broken into the tomb and taken the body of Jesus. It is a fair conclusion because grave robbery was rather common in those days. However, in this case, Mary's conclusion was wrong.

Upon Mary's shock announcement, both Peter and John rushed to the tomb. Both of them find themselves (finally) inside the tomb. They both can testify that the tomb was empty – the body of Jesus was missing, while the grave clothes remained. Verse 8 says that John saw and believed. What did he believe? He believed that Jesus has indeed risen from the dead. What about Peter? The Gospel of John is silent on his response though from Luke 24:12, we learnt that *'he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.'* In other words, Peter wasn't yet persuaded that Jesus has risen from the dead.

So we have Peter still unconvinced about the fact of Jesus' resurrection while John is convinced. Yet both are still in the dark concerning the need for Jesus' resurrection, as verse 9 puts it. There is still some way to go, before they would preach to the world Christ has risen from the dead and why He must rise!

It is amazing that Mary should be the first person to see the resurrected Lord. In those days, the testimony of a woman is inadmissible in the courts. But that is not the concern of our Lord here. Rather, this appearance has the look of 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 written all over it:

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Jesus appeared to the apostles (20:19-29)

It is Sunday evening and the apostle met (probably) in the Upper Room. The door was shut for fear of the Jews. Yet the risen Jesus who could pass through the grave clothes now pass through the walls and stood in their midst! When the apostles saw their Lord now risen, they were filled with joy. This immediately fulfils the words of Jesus in John 16:20-22.

In verse 21, Jesus pronounced peace to the apostles. This reminds us of John 16:33 where Jesus promised them His peace. He next sends them out on a mission – *As the Father has sent Me, I also send you*. To carry out this mission to the hostile world, the apostles will most definitely need the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Hence our Lord says to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” This is said in anticipation of Acts 2 where the Holy Spirit will come upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost and empower them for the work. What would be the nature of this mission? It is the preaching of the Gospel. If the people believe, their sins will be forgiven. If they reject, then their sins will remain. This explains the statement of verse 23.

A week later (it’s Sunday evening again!), Jesus once more appeared to the apostles. This time Thomas was present. We note that the door was shut again, implying that the fear of the Jews hasn’t subsided! Jesus confronted Thomas over his unbelief and the result was the wonderful confession of verse 28.

Why these (20:30-31)

In these two verses, we understand the aim of John in writing. He didn’t just write this gospel as a memoir or did so in a haphazard manner. Instead, he looked over all the materials he had and only choose some of the events/signs to include in this gospel. He tells us that his choice is governed by his aim, which is that his readers may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and thus have life.

When we re-read John 14-16, we will have to say that God the Holy Spirit was guiding John as he makes his selection of the materials to be included. Hence, as John selects, the Spirit is making the choice. The aim of John is ultimately the aim of the Spirit – *that we believe in Jesus!*

Write down one lesson you have learnt from the Notes above, and then go look for one person to share this lesson with:

Take time to worship the risen Savior. Use this hymn, if you wish:

Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior!
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

*Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph over His foes;
He arose a Victor from the dark domain, And He lives forever with His saints
to reign!
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!*

Vainly they watch His bed, Jesus my Savior!
Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

Death cannot keep his prey, Jesus my Savior!
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!

Day 2 Read John 21:1-14

John 21 is the epilogue where John will tie up some loose ends for us. It mainly talks about Jesus' third appearance to His disciples (v1, 14) and the restoration of Peter to service. The location is the Sea of Tiberias (also known as the Sea of Galilee – John 6:1). This means that the disciples have left Jerusalem/Judea and are back in Galilee.

1. (a) Who were present?

(b) What did they decide to do?

(c) How successful was their endeavor?
2. Verse 4 says that Jesus stood on the shore but the disciples did not recognize Him. Yet in verse 7, we have the disciple whom Jesus loved recognizing Him and exclaiming to Peter, "*It is the Lord.*"

(a) How did that disciple manage to recognize Jesus?

(b) What did Peter do in response? Why?
3. When the disciples came on shore ...

(a) What did they see? (V9)

(b) What did Jesus invite them to do? (V12)

(c) Read verse 13. What event does this remind you of?

4. Ponder over this event here (V1-14). What lessons can you learn from it?

Day 3 Read John 21:15-19

1. How many times did Jesus ask Peter if he loved Him? Why, do you think, did Jesus ask Peter this question so many times?
2. In verse 15, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him more than these. What do you think the 'these' refer to?
3. Each time in his answer, Peter appeals to the knowledge of Jesus – *Lord, You know*. Why did Peter do that?
4. If you were Peter, how will you answer the question of Jesus? Why?

Day 4 Re-read John 21:15-19

1. Verse 18 contains a prophecy of Jesus concerning Peter. What is it about?
2. How would the death of Peter glorify God?
3. What did Jesus call Peter to do in verse 19? Why?

Day 5 Read John 21:20-25

1. What does Peter want to know? What is the reply of Jesus?

2. What is the relevance of this to us today?

Day 6 Summary and Review of John 21

Breakfast by the sea (21:1-14)

This event – termed by John as the third appearance of Jesus to the disciples – brings to mind two other incidents:

- (a) Luke 5:1-11 whereby the disciples caught nothing despite fishing all night. However, at Christ's command, they let down their nets into the sea again and as a result, caught a great number of fish. It is probably the remembrance of this incident that caused John to recognize Jesus standing on the shore.
- (b) John 6:1-14 whereby Jesus fed 5000 people with fish and bread by the Sea of Galilee. In that incident, Jesus foresaw the needs of the multitude and acted to provide for them. In the same way, we see Jesus acting ahead of the apostles – He knew their physical hunger and proceeded to make breakfast for them!

Together, they present to us a divine and compassionate Savior.

Jesus restores Peter and predicts his death (21:15-19)

Peter is clearly humbled by what happened on that night in the high priest's courtyard. He must have remembered how he boasted a few hours earlier about his love for Jesus and his certainty that he will die with Jesus. Now duly chastened, he dares not repeat those words. Instead, to the probing question of Jesus, he would only appeal to Christ's knowledge. He feels it within him that he does love Jesus, but he would rest in Christ's knowledge of him rather than his own knowledge of his heart! A healthy self-suspicion is a good sign.

It is very likely that Jesus asked Peter the same question thrice because Peter had denied him thrice. In other words, what we have here is Jesus taking the initiative to restore Peter to service. Having elicited from Peter a confession of his love for Him, our Lord proceeded to command Peter to care for the sheep. And he must devote himself to this task until the prophecy in verse 18 comes to pass!

We do not know how many more years did Peter lived on after this event; maybe another 30 years? But for the rest of his life, he knows and remembers that a day will come where he will be put to death in a certain way! And he knows that even in his death, he will be bringing glory to God! How?

By refusing to keep quiet about Jesus and the cross, but to continue to proclaim it, even at the pain of a painful death. He will also submit to God's arrangement to die in that way (it is believed that Peter was crucified as well), and in this submission, he shows his faith in God, thus glorifying God as well.

Jesus, Peter and John (21:20-25)

Both Peter and John, as Christ's disciples, are to serve Him. However, as their sovereign Lord, He will decide how long they will serve Him and where. In the case of Peter, as we have seen above, he will give the next 30 years of his life in active service and then die in a certain way. By both his life and death, he is to glorify God.

As for John, it is decided that he will not experience martyrdom. Instead, he will live a long life, longer than Peter's! Whether martyrdom or otherwise, as Christ's people, they are to glorify God in everything they do, and that every day!!

Hence there is a need to bow to God's sovereign arrangement in our lives. Peter's curiosity is put in its right place. There is no need for us to know what will happen to others. All we need to do is to follow and continue to follow Jesus, from today till we see Him face-face!!

Has the Notes been helpful? What have you learnt?

Day 7 Review of the Gospel of John

We have spent 21 weeks on the Gospel of John.

1. Can you name one belief/doctrine that has been changed/clarified as a result of reading/studying John?
2. How has your life changed as a result of these 21 weeks of reading through John?

Now go and share what you have learnt with someone: _____
(Name of the person)

Acknowledgement

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[Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another! (Proverbs 27:17, ESV)]