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TWENTY LESSONS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN
By William M. Smith

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS DIGITAL PUBLICATION

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND LESSONS -- At the time these lessons were written, William M. Smith was serving as Superintendent of Union Bible Seminary, Westfield, Indiana. HDM now has in possession the following sets of 20 Lessons for Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Revelation. As we received them, these lessons were on loose-leaf sheets, printed on one side, and bound in folders. They could be used as either Sunday School or Bible Study lessons.

ABOUT THE DIVIDER BETWEEN THE CHAPTER NUMBER AND VERSE -- The divider between the chapter and verse is not consistent, sometimes being a period and at other times being a colon. I have left them as they were. Also, there was **NO PERIOD AFTER THE NUMBERED ASSIGNMENTS** at the end of the lessons, and I have also left that as it was. --
DVM

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01 -- THE SAVIOUR INTRODUCED -- John 1:1-51

INTRODUCTION to the Gospel of John -- The Gospel of John is placed after the other three Gospels by Divine order. Each Gospel has a distinct purpose. Matthew with its genealogy and frequent reference to Old Testament prophecies, makes a logical introduction to the New Testament. It is eminently adapted to convince the Jew that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. Mark is quite different, though relating much of the same history as Matthew. Its human writer John Mark, with his Roman surname, evidently has presented Jesus to the Roman as the great Conqueror, greater than all Rome's great ones. Luke, written by the Greek physician to a Greek friend, is evidently designed to lead the Greek to find Jesus the perfect man for whom he was looking. Each of these first three Gospels leads its reader up to the same point. John begins where they leave off and leads each reader on from where the first three converge. In simple language, as some one has said: Matthew was written to convert the Jew, Mark to convert the Roman, Luke to convert the Greek; but John was written to lead these converts on to sanctification.

I. The Word before the World -- vs. 1-5. John is the only Bible writer that uses the term "Word" to designate the Saviour. He uses it in his Gospel, in his Epistles, and in the Revelation. It is the most ancient designation of the second Person of the Trinity. In the first two verses four statements are made about the Word, each supplementing the others: "In the beginning was the Word," asserts the eternity of the Word. "The Word was with God," asserts that the Word had a personality separate from the Father. But, lest the reader might misunderstand and be led to think of the Father and the Word being two Gods, the third statement says, "the Word was God." Finally, in order to show that the Father and Son are equally eternal, the last of the four statements says, "The same was in the beginning with God."

The next three verses tell of the doings of the Word. While it is proper to tell of God creating all things, yet from this statement we see that the Word is the creative member of the

Godhead: "All things were made by Him." Furthermore, all life has its source in Him. While others have life imparted to them, He has life inherent in Himself. Life of all forms comes from Him, but in man this life is light, giving moral consciousness and responsibility. Through all the moral darkness that has shrouded the world as a result of the fall, this light has shone on, and darkness has never been able to "apprehend" it, as the R. V. translates it; that is, darkness cannot arrest this light nor cause it to cease to shine.

II. The Word Coming into the World -- vs. 6-14. This section teaches that this Light, shining so long in the darkness, now is coming into the world in a new way. It is as though the Word, which had before sent the rays of light into the pit of this world's darkness, now leaps into the pit of darkness to shine in the midst of it. In interpreting verse 9, notice that the phrase "cometh into the world" does not refer to "every man," but to the Light, That is to say, this Light, Which all along has lighted every man, is now coming into the world. He had cast His beams of light into the world all along, but now He comes right into the world personally. The fall of man had separated the world of man from God. By the taking of human nature upon Himself, this Word and Light has been enabled to enter this world: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." But, so dark was the world of man, that the people to whom God had sent messengers ahead to tell of the coming of the Light, rejected Him: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." But some received Him, and to these He gave the right to become the sons of God.

III. The First Two Witnesses -- vs. 15-34. In this section two witnesses bear testimony to the Light, The first of these is John the Baptist; the other is John the Apostle, the writer of this Gospel. The first John is the last witness of the old order. His testimony is given in vs. 15. As the last of the forerunners of Christ, he declares that this is the One of Whom he, as well as all the prophets of the Old Testament order, had said would come. John the Baptist, after giving his testimony, retires from the public view shortly, giving place to the Light. In vs. 16 John the Apostle testifies, "Of His fulness have all we received." John the Apostle is the first of a new order. We conclude these are his words, for John the Baptist could hardly have given the testimony of having received His fulness, for that was not given until Pentecost. John the Baptist further testifies to the committee of priests and Levites that were sent from Jerusalem to interview him (vs. 19-34). And he testifies to his disciples that Jesus is the One he would direct them to as the Lamb of God.

IV. The First Six Disciples -- vs. 35-51. We make out that six disciples are referred to in this passage by the following calculation. One of the two disciples whom John the Baptist directed to Jesus is plainly said to have been Andrew, We infer the other was John the writer of this Gospel, who evades mentioning himself by name all through the Gospel. Further it says that Andrew first found his own brother, Simon Peter. Again we infer that the mention of Andrew finding his brother first implies that John found his brother James later, thus making four. Then Philip and Nathanael make the six.

Though the work Jesus came to do was so great, involving eventually the creation of a new heaven and new earth, yet see how tiny were its beginnings. Two atoms of humanity, Andrew and John, met Him. These communicated their discovery to others, and thus the Light was spread. The twelve who eventually followed Him seemed a very small following of so great a Leader. The 120 in the upper room, the 3,000 of Pentecost, and the 5,000 later seem to give promise of greater things. And yet today, after almost two thousand years, the progress seems often times most

discouraging. But this is not the age of wholesale changes. Only willing ones who voluntarily follow the Lord are being gathered now. An age is coming when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

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02 -- THE BEGINNING OF SIGNS -- John 2:1-25

THE Miracle Recorded in John are not as numerous as those recorded in the other Gospels. It is to be noted that the original word for "miracle" In John differs from that ordinarily used by the other Gospel writers. They generally use the Greek word *dunamis*, the word from which we get our words dynamite and dynamo, meaning a work of power. But John uses the Greek word *semeion*, which means a sign, and is translated "sign" In some cases. The object of the other Gospels in recording the miracles of Jesus seems to have been to set forth the power of Jesus. The object of the miracles recorded in John is to symbolize something of which they are a sign. It is not the miracle as a work of power that attention is called to, but the thing of which the miracle is a sign. Attention is called to miracles as signs in three different ways in the beginning chapter of signs.

I. The sign of Water and Wine -- vs. 1-11. In order to get this "beginning of signs" clearly before us, we must picture the scene in our minds. In the course of the wedding feast to which Jesus and his disciples were invited, as well as His mother, the supply of wine ran out, a distressing household circumstance. Incidentally it is encouraging to housewives and those who have charge of a family to know that Jesus stooped in His first miracle to relieve a case of household embarrassment. It should be noted, also, that, before Jesus proceeded to do this first act of His public service, He deliberately sets His mother aside. While He had been to her thus far a dutiful son, the time had come when He must rise to His office untrammelled by human direction. Had he proceeded to perform His miracles under the direction of Mary He would have sanctioned the worship of Mary, at least it would have appeared so to Roman Catholics. But He set her aside, an act in which she acquiesced, saying to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

But look now at the sign and the circumstances under which it was performed. Six waterpots of stone sat near, an essential part of a Jewish household equipment. They were used for purifying, or ceremonial, purposes. They were what we might call wash dishes. Use had depleted their contents to some extent, Jesus' first act was to command that these waterpots be filled with water, and the servants filled them to the brim. The supply of water was evidently drawn from some well. The waterpots being replenished and completely filled, Jesus then says to draw and bear to the governor of the feast. The common idea that the servants drew this water out of the filled waterpots we believe to be erroneous. We believe, after careful study of the different versions and original words, that the waterpots were filled as a symbolic act of fulfilling of the imperfect requirements of the Old Testament ceremonial law; and that then Jesus gave command to draw water and bear to the feast, which water was turned to wine by the word of the Lord. The word "out" is not in the original Greek we have examined, and "it" at the end of verse 8 is in italics showing it was supplied by the translators to complete what they thought was the meaning. One does not draw water out of a jar, but dips or pours it out. Later it is stated that it was water when drawn (vs. 9). The meaning of this sign, therefore, is that the old dispensation with its

outward ordinances was fulfilled by Jesus, and that now He gives to His people the true wine of the kingdom. The 'water in the jars could only reach the outside, typical of the old order, while the wine reaches man's interior life.

II. The Sign of the Old Temple and the New -- vs. 12-22, The same symbolism obtains in this sign as in the previous one. As the depleted condition of the jars typified an imperfect doing of the requirements of the Old Testament on the part of the Jews, so the cluttered temple showed an imperfect apprehension of the purpose of the temple on the part of the Jews. Jesus proceeds to cleanse the old temple symbolically before the true temple is set up.

The Jews demand a sign, or miracle, to prove His right to do as He did. He responds, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," a statement He did not explain, and which His disciples did not understand until after His resurrection, This greatest sign, though He did at this time no miracle, pointed forward to the erection of the true temple not made with hands in which are offered spiritual sacrifices, That old temple was passing away, as Stephen later declared at the cost of his life. But the true temple stands forever.

While Jesus did not explain what He meant by His statement about destroying "this temple," and the Jews appear to have wholly materialized what He said, there is reason to believe that eventually the Jews did understand what He meant, They told Pilate (Matt, 27:63) "We remember that this deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." This was why they requested Pilate to seal the stone at the door of the sepulchre. In due time, after Jesus was resurrected, the old temple was destroyed, Jesus having fulfilled all that for which it stood.

III. The Signs at the Passover -- vs. 23-25. The last three verses mention the performing of many sign miracles at the celebration of the feast of the Passover, but the nature of them in particular is not given. The Passover was the greatest feast of the seven the Jews celebrated each year, and tied them firmly to their past history. But Christ our "Passover" supersedes the Passover of the Jews, and is that to which the feast pointed, Now that our Passover is sacrificed for us, there is no more need of the celebration of the deliverance from Egypt, for a greater Lamb has been slain and has delivered us from that of which Egypt was a symbol.

Thus each of the three sections of this chapter teaches the same lesson, The partly empty waterpots, the defiled temple, the imperfectly kept Passover, all pointed to the decay of that system that was ordained to point forward to Jesus as the One to fulfill all. Over against each of these Jesus places a sign or signs for the instruction of the willing observer. "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

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03 -- SALVATION SYMBOLIZED BY BIRTH -- John 3:1-36

CHAPTER Three is an elaboration of some statements given in chapter one, verses 12-16. The statement is there made that those who receive the Word are given power to become the sons of God, and the manner of their birth is negatively given, telling how they are not born. Following this there is a testimony of John the Baptist, and then a testimony of John the Apostle. The first part

of chapter three deals positively with the new birth, telling how it is produced, thus supplementing the brief statement of chapter one. The last part of the chapter gives, first a testimony of John the Baptist, and then a testimony of John the Apostle.

I. The New Birth -- vs. 1-21. The interview with Nicodemus brought out the statements of Jesus about the new birth. Jesus describes this new birth by symbols, illustrates it from an Old Testament incident, shows its source in the love of God, and tells of its effects.

The Need for the New Birth -- vs. 1-4. The last verses of chapter two tell of many believing on Jesus, but Nicodemus appears to have been the only real seeker. He came to Jesus by night to have an interview, He was of the upper class of Jews. He was convinced that Jesus was a teacher from God and that God was with Him, but appears ignorant of the fact that Jesus was the Son of God and that He was God. Jesus tells him that the only way in which he can know the things he desires is by a new birth. Nicodemus' question, "How can a man be born when he is old," may not be as materialistic as it appears on the surface. The difficulty of making an old man over is a real one. His prejudices, his education, his settled opinions, his clinging habits: what can change all these? Thank God, the Gospel can do even this by the new birth, making a man a new creature in Christ.

The New Birth Symbolized -- vs. 5-13. The new birth cannot be described in exact terms to our human minds. Spiritual things have to be symbolized by natural things of which we know. We know something of birth. There is only one manner of birth for each kind of life. Every man receives the natural birth in the same manner, even though the circumstances of birth may be different. So the spiritual birth is produced in each life by the same process. The forces that produce the new life are called in the original "water" and "wind." Our translators have helped us understand the meaning of "wind" by translating it Spirit, but they have left "water" uninterpreted. It is evident that "water" here is no more water than "wind" is wind. Natural things cannot produce a supernatural birth. The supernatural Spirit must have the cooperation of another supernatural element in order to produce the new birth. We believe "water" refers to the Scriptures, which are supernaturally given. See Psalm 119. 9; Eph. 5.26; I John 5.8.

Experience shows that this interpretation is correct. When, and under what circumstances, are most souls born again? Is it not when there has been diligent teaching and preaching of the Scriptures, accompanied by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon hearts? No other method can produce the new birth. What encouragement there is here for evangelists and Christian workers!

The New Birth illustrated -- vs. 14, 15. Failing by a symbolism from nature in getting the truth to the heart of Nicodemus, Jesus next teaches the same truth from the symbolism of an Old Testament incident familiar to Nicodemus. Moses lifted up the serpent of brass on a pole, the looking at which delivered the bitten Israelite from the poison of the serpent, As that serpent was lifted up in the natural world, and had effect on the natural world, even so Jesus must be lifted up, and when so lifted up, would have effect in the supernatural world, As the Israelite looked with his natural eyes, the sin-smitten must look with the eye of faith -- he must believe on Jesus.

The Source of the New Birth -- vs. 16, 17. In what is called the "golden text of the Bible" Jesus traces the inception of the new birth back to the heart of God. The cross is the device of God's love for saving lost men.

The Responsibility Located -- vs. 18-21. Having made all this costly provision for the salvation of man, God leaves the responsibility with him, He is condemned already; by faith in the cross he can be saved. They who come to the light will have their sins put away; but those who shrink back into the darkness to hide their sins, will remain in the darkness.

II. The Two Witnesses Testify -- vs. 22-36. A discussion of the relative greatness of John the Baptist and Jesus on the part of some Jews and John's disciples, brought out John the Baptist's testimony. The testimony of John the Apostle follows.

John the Baptist's Testimony -- vs. 22-30. When John's disciples tell him of the discussion they have had, John gives a testimony to the effect that he had already told them that he himself was not the Christ, but only was sent to point out the Messiah, Now that he has succeeded in doing this he is happy to retire and leave the bride with the bridegroom, using another symbolism from oriental life, the friend of the bridegroom being the one who arranged the marriage, but was happy only in seeing the man for whom he was courting happy in his selection. Then he retired and left the happy couple together.

John the Apostle's Testimony -- vs. 31-36. While this seems connected with the foregoing, careful study confirms the idea that this is the inspired testimony of John, the writer of this Gospel, following the recorded testimony of John the Baptist. "He that cometh from above," refers to Jesus, reverting back to the very beginning of the Gospel; "he that is of the earth" here seems to refer to John the Baptist. While he was not a worldling, yet he was of God's earthly people, the Jews, while Jesus was from above. See also verse 13.

John's disciples had testified in verse 26 that all men were coming to Jesus, but John the Apostle, looking at the real attitude of men's hearts says, "no man receiveth His testimony." Yet this "no man" is not absolutely universal, for he goes on to say something of those who do receive His testimony. The same kind of expression is seen in chapter 1.11-12.

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04 -- SALVATION SYMBOLIZED BY WATER -- John 4:1-42

CHAPTER Four Begins with the record of an act of courtesy on the part of Jesus toward John the Baptist. Hearing that he was considered a rival of the one who had inducted Him into office, Jesus quietly withdrew from the scene and started for Galilee, taking the short route through Samaria, rather than the usual one followed by the Jews through Perea.

I. The conversation with the Woman -- vs. 1-26. The account of Jesus' conversation with the woman of Samaria is an excellent lesson in personal work. A more difficult case to reach and win can scarcely be imagined. There was a barrier of race prejudice, the delicate sex situation, a preoccupied mind, a disposition to prevaricate, and withal a religion that pretended to rival that of

the Jews themselves. But Jesus took this woman and in an exchange of a few sentences so won her that she returned to her city an evangel of the truth she had heard from Him -- that He was the Messiah.

Opening the Conversation -- 7- 8. The woman very likely resented the presence of the strange man at the well. and was disposed to ignore Him, But in the common interest of water, Jesus found an opening at which to begin the conversation. The responses of the woman consist of one evasion after another as she seeks to divert Him from His purpose, but she is led on by an awakened curiosity.

The First Evasion -- 9-10. The woman appeared astonished, if not even offended, that this Jew, a man, should speak to her a Samaritan, and a woman. But Jesus succeeds in continuing the conversation by making a statement that awakens her curiosity. He intimates that if she knew who He was, she would have been the one to have made request for a drink.

The Second Evasion -- 11-14. The woman seems dense in understanding His meaning, but is curious to know His identity, and so continues the conversation. Where can He get this water? Is He greater than Jacob? Jesus makes a self evident statement in saying that the drinking of this water of Jacob's well gave no lasting satisfaction. From the natural He projects the conversation into the spiritual: He can give water that will give lasting satisfaction.

The Third Evasion -- 15-16. The woman meets this deeply spiritual statement with either dense ignorance, or a show of pretended ignorance of any hint of His meaning. Jesus therefore changes the line of conversation, but not the subject, From the living water, He calls her attention to her need of it, though His aim is not at once perceived by the woman. "Go, call thy husband." This was a very proper request for a man engaged in conversation with a woman alone. But how it pierced her secret life and probed at her sin!

The Fourth Evasion -- 17-18. The woman now resorts to what she had not yet employed: she makes a statement calculated to deliberately deceive: "I have no husband." But Jesus, with His Divine perception, deliberately drew the curtain from her back life showing that, while the statement in itself was true, it was calculated to deceive, for she had had five husbands, and was now living with a man who was not her husband.

The Fifth Evasion -- 19-24. The opinion of the woman was on the ascendancy regarding Jesus, but she would keep Him out of her personal affairs, if possible, so she introduces one of those academic questions that would lead to endless discussion if Jesus stooped to discuss it with her. Thus she hoped to evade the searching of her own inner life further. Where is the place to worship? Jesus' response sets forth the very heart of the New Testament worship, with which place and ceremonies had nothing to do. The temple at Jerusalem, though ordained of God, because salvation was of the Jews, would cease to be useful because of Him Who fulfilled all it symbolized. The rent veil and the eventually destroyed temple were the sequel of this statement of Jesus.

The Sixth Evasion -- 25, 26. The woman now comes to the last resort of the soul determined not to be forced to a decision -- procrastination. "I know that Messias cometh," to her a

vague future event. It will be time to settle all these questions when He comes. Step by step as the conversation has proceeded the interest of the woman in the identity of the stranger before her was increasing. Jesus now reveals Himself fully to her: "I that speak unto thee am He."

II. The Exhortation to the Disciples -- vs. 27, 31-38. The return of the disciples with food bought in the city brought the conversation with the woman to an abrupt close. When urged by them to eat, He declares that He has food to eat of which they do not know, But the harvest field from which such bread could be obtained was all before them like a whitened harvest. Wages were awaiting the worker in that harvest field, and fruit to eternal life. Others had sowed; they had only to reap. The Messianic hope planted in that woman's mind, no one knows just how, had sprung up now into life in her.

III. The Revival among the Samaritans -- vs. 28-30, 39-42. The woman of Samaria, who had left the city, perhaps a half an hour before, with no greater interest than a desire to get a jar of water, returned without the water, but as the messenger of the water of life. Her testimony to the men of the city of a Man Who had told her all things that ever she did, and the inference based thereon that He must be the Messiah they had heard their priests tell about, convinced many of the Samaritans and they became believers in Jesus as their Messias.

Her testimony had the further effect of drawing many from the city to the well to see Him for themselves. Many of those who had not been convinced by the testimony of the woman alone, were convinced by His own words. His remaining two days resulted in a great revival in that city.

The Spirituality of Worship. Jesus went further into the spiritual essence of worship with the woman of Samaria than He had with the man of the Pharisees at Jerusalem. He, perhaps, was not quite ready to be told that the temple would one day be set aside from being any longer a place of worship. How much people have brought into the church in these latter days that is not only a help to worship but a positive hindrance.

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05 -- THE SIGNS OF HEALING -- John 4:43-5:47

TWO Healing Signs are given in this lesson. Observe that Jesus did not heal these persons in order to institute a new way of dealing with disease, but He wrought these miracles as signs of the fact that He was able to do in the spiritual realm what these were the signs of in physical realm. To miss the idea is to materialize the Gospel.

I. Healing the Nobleman's Son -- Ch. 4:43-54. Back in the neighborhood of Cana, where the first sign was wrought, this nobleman heard of Him. Jesus was more desirous of securing this man's faith than of healing his son. Hence this statement, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The nobleman wanted his son healed by any means possible. Jesus wanted to obtain the faith of the father and the family. Instead of yielding to the invitation to go with the father to the sick one, He gave him a word to believe. The father's faith rose to the occasion, as a result of which the child was healed, and the whole family believed on Jesus.

By this sign we should learn that the word of Jesus Christ makes things as He says they are. Regardless of feeling, distance, difficulties, and the like, the word of Jesus is positive. This father found it so as he acted in accordance with faith in what Jesus had said. From the word the servants brought it is evident the faith of the father was so settled in what Jesus had said that he stopped to take a night's rest on the way home. If he had not believed he would have hurried home to help care for the sick one. They said, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

II. Healing the Impotent Man -- 5.1-47. That was a strange healing institution at Jerusalem. The one who needed healing the least was the one most likely to be able to reach the pool first after the troubling of the water. Serious cases had little hope. Perhaps it was a picture of the fading dispensation, originally ordained by angels, but now fading in glory and weak in power. In radical contrast with the pool method of healing, Jesus selected the worst case in the porches, doubtless, afflicted thirty-eight years, and, with no attention to the pool, healed him with His word instantly.

The Jews' Objections -- 10-18. The Jews had two objections to the method and work of Jesus. First, they persecuted Him for telling the man to carry his bed on the Sabbath day, contrary to their interpretation of the law. Second, on His answer justifying His healing of the man on the basis of His relation to the Father, they sought to kill Him for making Himself equal with God, the beginning of a conflict that eventually resulted in Jesus being crucified.

The Claims of Jesus -- vs. 19-30. If we seek the meaning of this sign of healing the impotent man, we find it in Jesus claims for Himself. The marvelous case of healing was not for the purpose of revealing a new way of treating disease. Had it been, Jesus may have been expected to have emptied all the porches about the pool. The evident purpose was to precipitate this conflict with the Jews and thus bring out His claims.

Equality with God was the essence of His claim. This equality is shown in various ways. God is omnipotent. Jesus had shown His omnipotent power by healing this impotent man, a claim stated more fully in vs. 21: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." God is omniscient. Jesus makes claim to like knowledge in verse 20 where he says that the Father shows the Son all things, so the Son knows all that the Father does. The Father has all honour. Jesus declares that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. The Father has all authority. Jesus claims that God has given Him authority to execute judgment.

Notice the operation of His power in increasing manifestation. He had raised up the impotent man to health and strength. He goes on to say, vs. 25-27, that the hour is coming and now is that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and as a result of hearing shall live. It is evident that He means here that the spiritually dead will hear and as a result of hearing will be brought to spiritual life. Here is a great Gospel truth. The fact that Jesus could heal so stubborn a case of many years' standing, is a sign that he can raise the spiritually dead. But He goes a step further and declares that eventually an hour will come when those who are in the graves will hear his voice and come forth in resurrection.

The Witnesses to His Claim -- vs. 31-47. Like one pleading his case in court, Jesus now produces the witnesses to prove His claims. He mentions His own witness, but does not rest his

case there. He mentions also the testimony of John the Baptist, but declares, though for their sake He mentions it, that He does not receive the testimony of men, But His works both in deed and word, are a standing testimony to His claims. A greater witness than that of John is seen in His works. Still another witness is the Father, but they are so dull of hearing that they neither see nor hear Him. Another witness is the Scriptures, These they search diligently for they believe them to reveal the way of eternal life, and they do, for they lead directly to Him, testifying of Him throughout. Finally, Moses, though included in the Scriptures, is mentioned particularly, and he wrote of Him.

The object of both of these signs is suggested in this last verse. Jesus had healed the nobleman's son in the way He had in order to secure faith in His words, and had succeeded in his case. His healing of the impotent man was to produce belief in His words. The man had believed the word of command spoken to him, and by that belief had been healed. The argument with the Jews was to convince them of the truth of His words.

This is the high plane God desires man to reach. One by one God designs to take away all props from His people until they stand alone on His word. This was the faith that Jesus had in the Father, so that though He slew Him yet would He trust Him. Though He forsook Him on the cross, yet He so believed His word that He committed His Spirit to Him, confident that it was safe because of His word.

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06 -- SIGNS OF POWER OVER NATURE -- John 6:1-21

TWO Miracles constitute the portion assigned to this lesson, The first of these is the more important in the purpose of John's Gospel, as shown by the events that hinged on it, as we will see from the next lesson. The first of these miracles is called a sign in the text. The last one is not so called, though plainly a miracle, and evidently a private sign to His disciples.

1. The Sign of Multiplied Bread -- vs. 1-14. Near the beginning of the first chapter of John we are told that Jesus is the true Light, and that this Light is the Life of men. Life needs sustenance. The life that Jesus came to give to men is spiritual life, but men can apprehend this only by signs in the realm where they already live. Hence, when Jesus would teach men that He not only can give life but also can sustain it. He demonstrates how easy it is for Him to provide sustenance in the realm of physical life. The multiplied loaves and fishes whereby Jesus fed five thousand men, "besides women and children"- -- Matt. 14.21, is a great sign that He can give and sustain the life He came on purpose to give.

The Circumstances -- 1-4. The place of this miracle was near the shore of the Sea of Tiberias (Galilee), evidently not far from the main road, which accounts for the large multitude gathering so quickly after they found the place of Jesus' retirement. The time of the Passover was near, which may account for the presence of many more than common, being pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

The Disciples Tested -- 5-9, It is no small task to provide sustenance for the natural life of a multitude, to say nothing of the sustenance of spiritual life. Jesus would emphasize this fact to His disciples. He asks Philip whence they will buy bread for all this multitude, and Philip's mathematics breaks down under the load of giving each one "a little." Andrew consents to bring to Jesus the lad who volunteers his lunch as an initial contribution, but apologetically adds, "but what are they among so many?"

Man's Measure and God's -- 7, 11. Man figures problems on a minimum basis: estimating just the least on which he can get along. Philip's estimate was that each should have a little -- just enough to keep from starving until they came to some better place to eat than the wilderness shore of Galilee. Jesus figures on the maximum basis. When He got through with feeding the multitude, they had eaten as much "as they would," and there were baskets full left over.

The Natural and Spiritual -- 7, 9,12, 13. While the work of Jesus in this miracle exceeds the natural, He does not ignore the natural. The bread, though supernaturally provided, was natural and sustained natural life. It is evident if Jesus can perform the miracle of bringing natural bread across from the realm of the supernatural and thus sustain natural life, He is able to provide bread in the supernatural realm for the sustaining of supernatural life.

II. The Sign of Walking on the Sea -- vs. 15-21. It is a little difficult to trace the connection of this miracle with the last one. But John's purpose in his Gospel is systematic, so we need to seek to find the connection, as it is evident some connection is intended.

The Demand that Jesus be King -- 15. It is plain the multitude was ready to accept Jesus as their King on the plane of the natural. It is very likely their view was shared, in a measure at least, by the disciples of Jesus. It may have been a disappointment to them that He did not accept the position offered Him by the people. Instead He sent the multitude away, and directed the disciples, without Him, to start across the lake when night was coming on, while He retired into the mountain to pray. Their faith was manifest in their obedience to His command. He Who could feed the multitude surely knew that it was best to send them away, and to send the disciples thus to the sea.

The Refusal of the Kingdom. The offer of the kingdom to Jesus on the plane of the natural was no new temptation to Him. He had met and conquered that temptation in the wilderness when Satan, the prince of this world, had offered it to Him. Jesus recognized in this the same temptation in disguise. The world would have made Jesus king with acclaim had He consented to have accepted it on the plane of the natural. His persistent refusal to receive it in this way eventually led to the cross, and past the cross to the true Kingdom. They who would inherit the Kingdom must resist the same temptation and be misunderstood and rejected by the present world.

Difficult Path of Duty -- 16-18. The disciples found the path of duty one of difficulty, but that was no proof that they were mistaken. The winds of this world are contrary to the church and its mission. Jesus put the little boat of His church out on the sea of time, the spirit (wind) of this age is contrary to it. They are looking momentarily for Jesus to come back from the mountain, and when He comes they are affrighted. But the frightful specter that they think they see in Jesus vanishes with His "Be. of good cheer." The venture of Peter is not recorded by John, as it is not necessary for his purpose in this Gospel.

Jesus' All Power -- 19-21. The final command of Jesus to His disciples was to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, With it was His assurance that He would be with them to the end of the age, and the declaration that all the power was given unto Him in heaven and in earth, On the occasion we have before us it is plain that Jesus had all power when on earth, using it only for the furtherance of His purpose. What could kingly appointment at the hands of men add to One Who could multiply bread at will and walk on the sea? Thus He demonstrated to His disciples, that, though He had refused to be made a king, He was a King already.

We may be disappointed that He Who declared that all power is given to Him in heaven and earth appears to be doing so little in our day. We preach the Gospel, lay our plans for world betterment, undertake our foreign missionary work, and of all the work in the world it seems to be the least progressive of any. Where is this all power?

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07 -- BREAD A SYMBOL OF SALVATION -- John 6:22-71

THE Miracle of Bread becomes the subject of discussion in this lesson. The multitude, delighted with the ease with which Jesus had fed them on the day before, seek Him out with the evident desire to have Him repeat the miracle. But Jesus was not teaching a new way of earning one's daily bread. He had wrought that miracle as a sign in the natural world of something in the spiritual world, and, though it costs Him the favor of the multitude and reduces His followers, He refuses to remain on the plane of the natural and feed them again.

I. The Subject Discussed -- vs. 25-40. Jesus discusses with the multitude the object of the miracle and its significance. They insist that He continue to feed them as proof that He is the Messiah. He refuses to do so, trying to lead them into the higher realm of miracle, of which the miracle of multiplying bread was a sign.

The Manna and the True Bread -- They want more. bread of the kind with which He fed them on the previous day. He admonishes them not to labor for that bread, for it perishes; but to labor for the bread that sustains eternal life. Asked how they can work for that bread, He replies that they are to believe on Him. That is the first work of man who seeks to work for God, and brings them into touch with the living Bread that give's ability to do works pleasing to God. They demand a sign that God sent Him. They show that Moses proved to Israel that he was sent of God by the daily miracle of manna. Their demand, "evermore give us this bread," perhaps means that they want Him to give the bread, like He did yesterday, again today and every day. Moses, it is true, gave them bread from heaven, but the bread he gave was not that Bread from heaven of which Jesus is speaking. The bread that Moses gave was true bread in the realm of the physical, but it was only typical of that better Bread Jesus is now offering which He calls the true bread in the sense that it was the antitype of what the manna was a type.

The ground covered is similar to that gone over in the discourse with the woman at the well. She was extolling Jacob and the well he dug, but Jesus reminds her that whoever drinks of

Jacob's well thirsted again, but whoever drank of the water He gave would, never thirst. And now these Jews are extolling the manna given by Moses; but Jesus reminds them (vs. 49) "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." But he that eats the Bread He gives, will live for ever.

II. The Subject Disputed -- 41-59. The dullness of the multitude in grasping the meaning of His words made it look as though it were impossible for men on the material plane to ever grasp the true bread, for how can he who is not born again understand that which is in the realm of the new birth? But Jesus is not deterred by the slowness of men to come to His side. He knows, and assures the multitude that, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." This sets forth the foreknowledge of God: His fore-ordination, if you insist. But, lest men should get distorted ideas of what that means, He immediately says, "him that cometh to Me will in no wise cast out." Four times does He say of those who receive Him that He will raise them up at the last day. This Bread from heaven gives eternal life.

Controversial Discussion -- The statement of Jesus in verse 51, about giving His flesh as that Bread, led to sharp controversy on the part of the Jews. How could He give His flesh to eat? The apparently materialistic view of this did not seem to be at all cleared up to their minds by Jesus' declaration, "My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." It should be remembered that the word "meat" as used in the Authorized Version does not mean flesh exclusively, but refers to food in general. This statement is used by some to support the doctrine of transubstantiation -- that the bread and wine of the so-called "Lord's supper" becomes actually the flesh and blood of Christ by the blessing of the officiating minister. This is evidently the same error as that made by the Jews. They could not get their minds away from the idea of eating being with the mouth; and so the transubstantiationist today fails to grasp the import of anything beyond his natural mouth and appetite. Even the eating of this body and blood by symbols of bread and wine cannot possibly be a real partaking of the body and blood of Christ. The natural mouth can eat a symbol, but it cannot eat the bread that cometh down from heaven. That must be spiritually apprehended to make it available and effective to the sustaining of spiritual life.

III. The Stumbling Disciples -- vs. 60-71. The controversy was finally narrowed down to the disciples of Jesus, and eventually all but twelve went no more with Him. The saying was too "hard" for them. They did not have the spiritual insight to grasp the meaning of such language.

The Leaving of the Many. The number of those disciples who went away is called "many." Evidently many more than the twelve, who had seemed up to this time to be true followers, left Him to walk no more with Him. To the inner circle of disciples, before the departure of some of them, He gave a further word of explanation: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." He did not mean that, cannibal-like, believers should eat His flesh and drink His blood. He did not mean that they should take bread and wine and by a mystical process change it into flesh and blood and eat and drink that. Neither did He mean that using bread and wine as symbols and eating them would be eating His flesh and drinking His blood, But He did mean that unless people did what He meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood they had no life in them. The Israelites slew their lambs, put the blood on the door, and ate the flesh. Thus they appropriated the flesh and blood to their needs. In like manner we are to appropriate the flesh and blood of the Son of Man. He lived a

substitutionary good life for us whereby by faith we are accounted righteous by the Father. He died a substitutionary death for us, whereby by faith we are accounted as having paid the penalty for our sins.

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08 -- CHRIST'S VINDICATION OF HIMSELF -- John 7:1-8:11

THE Section Studied in this lesson contains the record of no new miracle, though previous miracles are mentioned.

The Unbelief of Him Brethren -- 7.1-9. The brethren of Jesus, the natural children of Joseph and Mary, born after He was, did not believe in Him. They taunt Him to go up and demonstrate His Messiahship at Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, just at hand. In saying, "I go not up to this feast" (the "yet" has been added in an attempt to explain the apparent inconsistency of Jesus' conduct) Jesus did not mean He was not going to attend the feast, but that it was not at this feast that He was going up as the Messiah of the Jews, as He did later.

II. Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles -- 7.10-8.11. The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three great feasts of the Jews, there being seven in all. The Passover, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles were the three most important. The former came in the early part of the Jewish year, the latter in the seventh month, about October of our calendar. It lasted eight days, and was attended by multitudes of Jews.

Discussion of Jesus -- vs. 10-13. Though Jesus was not at the beginning of the feast, He was the most prominent subject of discussion by the visitors at the feast. But the discussion was carried on quietly, for fear of the official Jews. Two opinions are expressed: "He is a good man;" and "He deceiveth the people."

His Doctrine Vindicated -- vs. 14-18, Going up to the temple, the most prominent place in Jerusalem, at the midst of the feast, Jesus attracted much attention. His teaching brought forth expressions of surprise at His wisdom. He had not attended the schools of the rabbis, but showed learning superior to them. The question arose as to where He received this learning. Jesus announces the one principle on which divine truth can solidly rest; "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." A comparison of the different versions indicates that "willeth" is the better translation, rather than "will." These are great days to prove the truth of the Bible by argument, by logic, by archaeological discoveries, and such like. While these are not to be despised, yet there is no convincing proof of the truth of the doctrines of Christ but by venturing ourselves on the promises He made, When the venture is made results come to pass according to the teachings of Jesus.

His Conduct Vindicated -- vs. 19-24. The animosity of the official Jews had been roused by the healing of the impotent man at the pool on a former occasion when Jesus had been at Jerusalem. To this Jesus now refers and vindicates His work on the basis of the law of Moses, which they claim to obey. Contrary to the law of the Sabbath, if a male child's eighth day fell on the Sabbath, he was circumcised rather than break the law that said he must be circumcised the

eighth day. Jesus reasons that, if the circumcision of a man on the Sabbath does not profane the Sabbath how did His making a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day profane it? He admonishes them not to judge by mere surface appearances, but to judge by righteous principles.

His Messiahship Vindicated -- vs. 25-44. Though the Jews were planning to arrest Jesus on sight, yet He vindicated His power by going into the midst of the greatest concourse of Jews in the capital city of the Jews and speaking unhindered in spite of attempts to arrest Him. The people thought they knew all about Jesus and where He came from, but they did not. His statement "Him that sent Him" Is evidently understood as a claim to be sent of God, which angered the Jews who tried to take Him, but could not. Officers were sent to take Him, but they were unable to do so, though no guard was about Him.

The last day of the feast was different from the seven previous days. It was the custom every day, at the hour of morning sacrifice, to carry water from the pool of Siloam and pour it out in the temple as a commemoration of the water miraculously supplied in the wilderness. This was understood to be symbolic of the coming outpouring of the Spirit when the Messiah came. The eighth day of the feast this ceremony was omitted, thus indicating the fact that the type was not yet fulfilled. It was on this occasion that Jesus steps in the gap and announces: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." Not only does He speak of the personal effect of this drinking, but the communicative effect: "rivers of living water" will flow from him who drinks. John explains this parenthetically, that it refers to those who receive the Holy Ghost, Which would be given after Jesus was glorified. The Holy Ghost's work with Jesus was not done until He had accompanied Him to heaven and there glorified His humanity, When that was done Jesus "shed" the Spirit forth upon believers. (See Acts 2.33).

His Vindication by Facts -- vs. 41-8.1. In the discussion among the people and rulers the facts brought out vindicate the claims of Jesus. They admit that the Messiah should come out of Bethlehem, but mistakenly suppose He came out of Galilee. He fits their claims, though He does not remind them of it. In the council of the Jews one stands to champion His innocency. Nicodemus, the one who had first came to Jesus by night, calls the attention of his fellow-counselors to the fact that Jesus is as yet uncondemned by law.

His Vindication of Mercy -- 8.2-11, The first verse of this chapter is a part of the last verse of the previous chapter. Some printer or copyist broke the chapter in the wrong place. Chapter and verse divisions are not part of the Bible's inspiration, but were made by human hands long after the Bible was written.

The Jews to try Jesus bring Him a case where the law of Moses demands stoning. If Jesus says not to stone her, they will accuse Him of differing from Moses. If He says stone her, they will turn Him over to the Roman government. Jesus does neither, but proposes how they go about it, leaving it to their judgment. Self-judgment condemns each accuser and they slink away. In saying to the woman "neither do I condemn thee," He does not mean that He does not condemn the sin of which she was accused, but that He does not condemn her to stoning.

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THE statement of Jesus at the beginning of this section, "I am the Light of the world," is the key to what follows to the end of chapter nine. In the remainder of chapter eight He sets forth the argument concerning His being the Light; and in chapter nine He illustrates His doctrine by giving sight to the man born blind. The giving of sight to the blind man, in other words, is the sign that He is what He has claimed for Himself, "The Light of the World."

I. The Claim to be the Light -- 8.12-59. This claim of being the light of the world is not new in the Gospel of John. John has already declared (1.7-9) that John the Baptist was not "That Light," but was a witness to go before the Light. The eternal Word in heaven is the Light of men on earth.

The Light of Life -- vs. 12-20. Light has two aspects. what it is in itself, and what it is in its effects. Jesus is light; but He is also the "Light of Life," as set forth in vs. 12. The Light shines out from Jesus the center and enlightens the world of men, showing them the way of life, and giving Life to them that walk in the Light. The Pharisees object to His testimony on the ground that the witness of a single individual will not stand in law, which requires two witnesses. Jesus asserts that His witness is true, and meets the objection by declaring Himself one witness and His Father the other witness. This shows that there is a real distinction between the Persons of the Godhead, enough to constitute them different Personalities.

Light and Darkness Contrasted -- vs. 21-30. Light shines in the darkness and produces a great contrast. "My way," of which Jesus speaks, is very different from the Pharisees' way. "Ye are. from beneath," the regions of darkness; "I am from above," the regions of light. He had many things to say that they were not ready to receive or to believe, But when they had "lifted up the Son of man," they would understand better. The three thousand of Pentecost demonstrated this. Even now, with the cross in prospect, it is recorded, "many believed on Him."

The Light, and Fatherhood of Abraham -- 31-40. Endeavoring to lead on into the truth those who professed to believe on Him, Jesus sets forth the law of walking in the light. They are to continue in His word, and thus they will become His disciples indeed. As disciples they will come to know the truth, and that truth will make them free. They resent the inference that they are in bondage, and set up the claim of relationship to Abraham. Jesus disputes this claim and shows how inconsistent for the children of Abraham to oppose One Who was the Son of the God Abraham worshipped.

The Light, and Fatherhood of God -- vs. 41-59. Rising to a higher claim the Jews declare they are the children of God. This brings into contrast the Prince of Light and the Prince of darkness. The prince of darkness has so deceived the Jews that they think the one they are serving is God, while Jesus shows that they are serving the devil, for there are but two spiritual relationships, He is the Son of God, and, instead of receiving Him, they oppose Him and seek to kill Him. Therefore it is absurd to suppose that they are the children of the Father that sent His Son into the world. If they are not His children, then it is self-evident that they are the children of the devil.

Jesus claimed superiority to Abraham and equality with God: "Before Abraham was, I am," thus claiming to live in that timeless region where it is always now. This definite claim of Deity brought the discussion to a climax, and they picked up stones to stone Him.

II. The Illustration of the Light -- Ch. 9. The close connection of this chapter with the preceding should not be overlooked. Jesus "passed by" at the close of chapter eight. It is as He "passed by" that the events of the next chapter begin. Another connection is shown in verse 5, where He repeats the claim, now set forth as an established fact, "I am the Light of the world."

Light Dispels Darkness -- vs. 1-7. It should be noted that in healing the blind man Jesus did not inaugurate a new way of treating blindness, for good Christian men and women are still blind physically, and many others lived in Jesus' day that were not healed of blindness. But He seizes the opportunity offered by the blind man to demonstrate in the realm of the physical that He is light in the realm of the spiritual, As He opened the physically blind eyes of that man, so He opens the spiritually blind eyes of multitudes.

The Light Advertised -- vs. 8-12. The opening of the eyes of the blind man immediately attracted attention, first among the neighbors, They first determined his identity, and then wanted to know where they could find Jesus, But while the blind man had gone to wash, Jesus had passed on to some other place.

The Light Criticized -- vs. 13-34. The neighbors evidently took the man to the Pharisees. They could not deny the miracle, but tried to discount it because Jesus had wrought it on the Sabbath day. The parents refused to take any responsibility in the matter, excusing themselves on the ground that the man was of age and could answer for himself. They admitted he was their son, but denied any knowledge of the manner of his healing, lest they endanger their standing in the synagogue.

The man finally had to answer for himself as to what he thought of the miracle and the One Who performed it. His growing boldness as he testified is to be noted. First he had said to the neighbors that the One Who healed him was, "A man that is called Jesus." Pressed for an opinion by the Pharisees, he said, "He is a prophet." Pressed still closer he declared that He was of God, and the testimony cost him his standing in the synagogue, for the Pharisees excommunicated him, a terrible penalty for a Jew in those days.

The Light Caring for His Own -- vs. 35-41. Jesus knows the whereabouts of all His witnesses that suffer for their testimony. He needs to be led a step further, and Jesus leads the way so that the man voluntarily confesses Him to be the Son of God and worships Him.

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10 -- SALVATION SYMBOLIZED BY SHEEPFOLD -- John 10:1-42

IN the chapter now studied, Jesus makes the claim: "I am the Good Shepherd." Associated with this is also the claim, "I am the Door of the sheep." First we have the parable itself; then we

have its explanation and enlargement; and, finally, a controversy with the Jews about the implications of the parable.

I. The Parable of the Sheepfold -- vs. 1-6. There are a variety of symbols in this parable, all of which need to be understood. There are mentioned the sheepfold, the door, the thief, the stranger, the shepherd, the porter, and the sheep. The sheepfold, as first mentioned, appears to refer to the Israelitish economy, under which the people of God found protection in the former dispensation. The Shepherd is Jesus, Who is leading those who are His sheep out of the fold into a new fold made necessary by the coming of a new dispensation. All who came before Him, claiming to be the initiator of a new order, were thieves and robbers. The porter may refer to Moses, or the law of Moses, which pointed forward to the coming of the Shepherd. Jesus may be said to be the door out of the old fold and the door into the new. The stranger is not a thief, but, though his intentions might be good, the sheep will not follow him.

In eastern lands the same fold was often used by several shepherds. They placed their various flocks in this fold at night, and set a porter to watch. When the shepherd came who had sheep in there, the porter knew him and opened to him. He called his own sheep and they separated themselves from the rest of the sheep and came out to their own shepherd to go out to pasture for that day.

II. The Parable Elucidated -- vs. 7-15. The parable as concisely given in the first six verses was not understood. Jesus therefore elucidates it to some extent in the following verses. He begins His explanation with the statement, " I am the door of the sheep." Those who were shut up under the school-master of the law of the former dispensation, had no way out but by the Lord Jesus, Who was the fulfillment of every type and shadow of the law, and therefore the key that opened the door of the new dispensation, that those who heard His 'voice might go out into the pasture fields of grace.

There are three contrasted persons in this explanation: the Good Shepherd, the thief, and the hireling. There is also the wolf, typifying the death penalty for sin. The object of the thief is to make gain by stealing the sheep. The object of the hireling is the earning of his wages only; he is a shepherd only for n living, like a man might be a minister or an evangelist only for the living he gets out of it. But the Good Shepherd is interested in the sheep and their welfare, He is not desirous of stealing them, nor of making a gain by them, but He wants to make them happy. In order that they might have life. He is willing to give His own life for their salvation.

The "Father" is often mentioned in this section. The Father loves the Good Shepherd because He gives His life for the sheep. This explanation leads right to the heart of the Gospel, the substitutionary death of Jesus for the sheep of His fold. For them He encounters the wolf and dies for them. Other shepherds may give their lives for their sheep, but a dead shepherd is of little use to the sheep. This Good Shepherd is superior to the parable in that He can give His life for the sheep, thus saving them from death, and then resume His life and care for them. This remarkable power He says He has received from His Father, to lay down His life, and take it again. This shows why Jesus died on the cross, not from physical suffering, His death being sooner than even His executioners expected, but from the fact that, though still able to cry with a loud voice, He voluntarily gave up His human spirit and died.

It is to be noticed that all the Good Shepherd's sheep are not of this "fold," that is to say, they will not all come from the Jewish fold. He has "other sheep" and these He must seek. Out of the old fold He will take those who hear his voice, put with them those who are His sheep from other places, and He will eventually make them one flock in one fold.

The setting of this parable ought not to be overlooked. It is just after the blind man who was healed has been excommunicated from the Jewish fold and Jesus has taken him in that this parable is given. It will help our picturing of the setting if we can suppose him present on this occasion. How delightful to his lonesome soul, cast out from what he had been taught to hold dear all his life, would be these teachings about the Good Shepherd!

III. The Controversy about the Parable -- vs. 19-42. That some sheep in the old fold heard the voice of the Good Shepherd and some did not is immediately manifest: "There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings." The occasion was at the feast of dedication, about late December by our calendar. It was therefore cold, and Jesus was in the sheltered porch of Solomon that was built along one side of the outer temple court. The Jews insist that He leave parables and tell them plainly if He is the promised Messiah. He shows them that He has already shown them and they believe not. Reverting to the parable, He tells them that the reason they cannot believe is because they are not His sheep and therefore do not hear His voice. There appears to be no effort on His part to try to make those believe who did not do so. He merely gives forth His voice, and the sheep in the old fold who are truly the children of God come to Him. The security of these sheep is stated. There may be robbers and thieves, hirelings and wolves, but none of them can get these sheep out of His hands.

Finally comes the supreme claim, "I and My Father are one." He has descended from the parable statement and told the plain truth, But the unbelieving Jews demonstrate the fact that they are not His sheep by at once picking up stones to stone Him as a blasphemer. In His reply Jesus gives that foundation text of truth, "the Scriptures cannot be broken." Jesus pleads for belief in Him only on the ground that His works demonstrate that the Father has sent Him. The triumph of the voice of Jesus is noted in the last verse: "Many believed on Him there."

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11 -- THE SIGN OF RAISING THE DEAD -- John 11:1-44

IN this lesson we have the last of the sign miracles John records as performed by the Lord, it is a fitting climax to those that have gone before, and is the most startling and conclusive in its significance,

I. Sickness and Death of Lazarus -- vs. 1-14. The scene of this miracle was in connection with the family most intimately associated with Jesus in the days of His ministry. No mother is seen in the family, and the father is obscure, though the place is called "the house of Simon the leper" (Matt. 26.6), it is easy to surmise mother was dead and quite likely the father. Two maiden sisters and their bachelor brother seem to make up the household as constituted in the day when Jesus was entertained there.

Two Kinds of Love -- When Lazarus fell sick the sisters sent word to Jesus, "he whom Thou lovest is sick." To them His unaccountable delay must have been very trying to their love. But John explains His delay by saying, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." Here are contrasted two different kinds of love, and different Greek words are used in the original. The sister's word was *phileo*, but John's word describing Jesus' love is *agapao*. The former means the affection of sentiment, or brotherly love. This kind of love would have hurried Jesus to the scene at the greatest possible speed. The latter means the love that is the result of reason and deliberation, the love that is controlled by the will instead of by the sentiments. Jesus so loved this family that He would perform within its circle the greatest of His miracles; but to do so, He must deny Himself and them what mere affection would have prompted. Perhaps no other family could have been trusted to endure the ordeal of His seeming indifference. Let us remember, when the Lord is not as quick in responding to our cry as we think He ought to be, perhaps He is venturing to trust us to wait on Him for something better than we have asked. *Phileo* would have made the Beth. any home only one of hundreds blessed by a healing; but *Agapao* has made it a monumental home in the annals of Christ.

II. The Meeting with Martha -- vs. 15-27. After telling His disciples that Lazarus is dead, they not being able to comprehend His meaning when He said he was sleeping, Jesus said He was glad He was not there. So close to hard-heartedness does the love prompted by the will seem to approach. Even so the parent that punishes seems to the child hard-hearted; but love that is prompted by the will and based on the good of the loved one must needs sometimes use the rod.

In this conversation Jesus made one of those positive claims that mark this Gospel: "I am the resurrection and the life." He Who is such can move up the distant day into the present. While it was not then, and is not now the purpose of Jesus to empty all the graveyards, just because He has power to do so, He saw fit to demonstrate His claim. to being the resurrection and the life by raising from the dead one. who had been dead four days. The lesson to us is, not that we may have our dead raised, but that those dead in trespasses and sins may be made alive in Christ, The great "I am" stands by the spiritual tomb of every sinner to speak the living word that gives a life better than that to Lazarus.

III. The Meeting with Mary -- vs. 28-33. The words of Mary were quite similar to those of Martha, but her manner was different. She sat still in the house, waiting for Him to come or to call, When He called she came and fell at His feet, while Martha it seems had stood erect before Him. Her trust in Him had been sorely shaken, but she knew no other feet at which she could fall. Martha had needed instruction, but Mary needed sympathy. Each received what she needed. His tears showed that He could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

IV. Raising the Dead to Life -- vs. 34-44. "Where have ye laid Him?" is the question Jesus asks. Jesus must be brought to the tomb if they would see what He could do. So must he be brought to the tomb of your buried hopes and dead aspirations, reader, if you would have them quickened into life. In other years you walked with Jesus, you thought you had a call to preach, to go to the mission field, or something, but things have come in and these things sickened and died and perhaps you have too. Bring Him to the place, show Him the tomb where these things lie buried, roll away the stone and see what He will do.

Faith was slow in rising to the situation. The visitors who were along discussed whether "this Man," Who opened the eyes of the blind, might not have kept Lazarus from dying, not knowing that dying was just what was necessary for the Son of God to be glorified. His miracle of healing the blind man was still vividly remembered, They came to the grave. A stone lay upon the entrance. "Take ye away the stone" What human hands can do, Divine power is not needed to do. Furthermore, there is no faith where there are not works corresponding thereto. If human hands have rolled stones on the graves of your buried hopes, reader, human hands can take them away. But only the power of the Son of God can bring buried bodies to life. Martha pleaded propriety, but Jesus reasoned, teaching a step at a time as faith was able to follow. Jesus could raise Lazarus without the faith of Martha, but the stimulating of Martha's wavering faith is as important as the raising of Lazarus' dead body. "If thou wouldest believe," is made the condition of the miracle. When faith was perfected, Martha gave the word to roll away the stone. If she doubted Jesus' power she could think only of the embarrassment of the open sepulchre; but when she believed He could do what He was suggesting, embarrassment gave place to action, for the results would erase the delicacy of the situation. The loud voice was more that the people might associate the raising of Lazarus with the words of Jesus than to make Lazarus hear, even as the prayer was for the people's sake rather than for His own. Human hands had placed the bandages; human hands still had work to do in removing them.

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12 -- FRIENDS AND FOES ALIGNED -- John 11:45-12:50

THIS section brings us to the close of Jesus' public ministry. After the end of chapter twelve His ministry is confined to the circle of the twelve, As he draws toward the goal of His life friends grow fonder and foes more fierce. His own, the Jews, to whom He came, received Him not; but distant Greeks seek Him.

I. The Plot of the Jews -- vs. 47-57. The miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead in the very suburbs of Jerusalem aroused the opposition of the official Jews to the highest pitch. Pharisees and Sadducees though the former believed in the resurrection, and the latter did not, made common cause against Him Who worked this great sign to prove He was the resurrection and the life. The high priest perverted the prophetic gift that belonged to his office and made it the excuse for the plot against the life of Jesus. In the face of the gathering opposition Jesus retired to a wilderness city, Ephraim, possibly not far from where John the Baptist had begun his ministry.

II. The Supper at Bethany -- Ch. 12.1-8. The Passover feast was approaching and Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem for the last time, the time having come when He should "go up" (Cf. Ch. 7.8). He stops at the hospitable home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. Martha in her characteristic way "served." Lazarus "sat" at the table. But Mary "anointed." All filled useful places, but Mary drew a little nearer than her brother and sister, and, we may also say, than any of the twelve disciples. With reckless, holy extravagance she poured her expensive offering on the feet of Jesus, wiping His feet with the long tresses of her own hair, From a comparison of the other Gospels it is evident there was not one of the disciples who appreciated this act, but were disposed to join in with Judas in condemning it as waste of what could have been better used.

Contrasts accentuate each other. The glow of that fervent love of Mary for her Lord threw into deep shadow the miserly, grasping spirit of Judas, and, like a den of serpents into which the light is cast, he could not keep still, it was from this scene, other Gospels tell us, that Judas went out to seek the chief priests to make his preliminary contract about betraying Jesus into their hands. Thus while love grew warmer, hate grew fiercer. Crisis times cause people to get off the fence and align themselves with their true element. While the odor of Mary's ointment perfumes the world wherever the Gospel is preached, the perfidy of Judas has made his name a synonym for treason. And both were at the feast in Bethany.

III. Entering Jerusalem -- vs. 9-19. On account of the feast of the Passover a great concourse of people were gathering at Jerusalem. Many of these had come up from the provinces where Jesus had done some of His mighty works. They seem to have believed that now He would manifest Himself as King, and, had they received it, He might have been, even as John the Baptist might have been Elijah had they received it. But the foreknowledge of God discerned the cross before the crown, and even the disciples did not recognize the significance of the moment until it was past. Soon hosannas gave place to "Crucify Him," and the kingdom still waits for the repentance of the Jews.

IV. The interview with the Greeks -- vs. 20-36. Among those who came up to the feast of the Passover were certain Greeks, possibly proselytes, who, having heard of Jesus, desired to see Him. What question they asked Him is not given. Perhaps Jesus read their minds before they uttered it, To the human the attention of these Greeks would have been diverting. Rejected by His own people, why not go out to a nation ready to receive Him, and thus escape the plot of the Jews? But that was not God's way to bring Jesus to the Gentiles. Only as He died could His seed be multiplied. Through death and resurrection He would go forth to the Gentile world. At this time came one of the demonstrations of the favor of God, when God spoke audibly from heaven. This, Jesus explains, was not for His own reassurance, but for the encouragement of these Greeks and others who were standing about.

These Greeks had been attracted to Him by what they had heard of His ministry, But if Jesus be lifted up, He will draw not only Greeks, but all men unto Him. It is explicitly stated that this lifting up referred to the manner of His death. The close of this section states that Jesus hid Himself from these far-off visitors.

V. Closing Public Utterance -- vs. 37-50. The public ministry of Jesus now being about to close, John sums up some of the results. In spite of all His miracles, the Jews refused to believe on Him. In this is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah. They could not believe because God had closed their eyes. But it was like Pharaoh's hardening his heart. The resistance of God by these Jews set in motion that law that makes light darkness to those who refuse to walk in it.

There were believers even among the chief rulers, but they feared to confess Him because it would mean their loss of prestige and of a means of a livelihood. They seemed to have more love for men's good will than for God's, and more faith in men's ability to provide than for God's ability.

The word "believe" is a prominent word in this closing section of Jesus' public ministry, He that believeth on Jesus believeth not on Him only, but also on the Father. Believing brings light into hearts that were darkened before. Darkness is the normal state of those who do not believe on Jesus, but believing in Him dispels the darkness. Even if a man does not believe on Jesus, yet when here the first time. But those who reject the Light Jesus does not judge, for judgment was not His work when here the first time. But those who reject the Light will be judged. The words that Jesus spoke did not originate with Himself; they were the words of the Father. Since the Father is Judge of all, His words, spoken by Jesus, will stand as a witness against those who have heard and rejected them. The Father gave to Jesus commandment as to what He should speak. Reviewing the words He had spoken in His public ministry, now closing, Jesus says, "I have not spoken of Myself."

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13 -- THE DISCIPLES INSTRUCTED AND SIFTED -- John 13:1-35

HAVING finished His public ministry at the end of the twelfth chapter, Jesus now devotes Himself to the instruction and sifting of His immediate followers. The traitor is still among them, Peter will deny Him, and all will forsake him and flee. But, outside of the traitor, the rest are ignorant of his devices and their own weaknesses.

I. The Washing of the Disciples' Feet -- vs. 1-17. The annual celebration of the Passover, that great type of the crucifixion, was now at hand, and "Christ our Passover" was about to be offered. Jesus approached this event, not as a calamitous break in His ministry, but as the consummation of it. All the rest would have been vain but for this climax of His work.

The love He had for his own was that kind called agapao (see Lesson 11); the kind that has the good of the loved one in mind. Satan had put it into the heart of Judas to betray Him. Jesus knew this, but He knew also that all things were in His own hands. The humility of Jesus is manifest in His conduct at this time. Though He was the One Who measured the waters in the hollow of His hand (Isa. 40.12), He condescended to pour water into a basin and wash the disciples' feet. It appears that no servant had been provided to do the menial tasks for the apostolic party while sojourning at the Passover celebration, and, as none of the disciples had the grace to offer to do this themselves, Jesus took the place of a servant for His disciples.

This afforded Jesus the opportunity to teach one of those deeply spiritual lessons that the disciples could not understand at the time, but that they would understand afterward (vs. 7). There was one of the disciples who was not clean, not because his feet were not washed, but because his heart was not right. He who is washed, or has just had his bath, does not need to take another bath all over just for getting some soilure on his feet. If he washes his feet that cleanses him. So one who has been washed in the washing of regeneration does not need to be regenerated over again every time he makes a mis-step and soils his feet spiritually, But it should be noted in this connection (vs. 8) that if a disciple does not submit to this washing from spiritual defilement contracted by the way, he is cut off from fellowship with the Lord. In the land of Palestine, with the sandals they wore in those days, the washing of the feet was necessary daily, it is a good practice to judge one's conduct with the test of Scripture (washing of water by the word) at the close of

each day, lest some contamination be received involuntarily from contact with the world, it may be necessary for Christians to do this for each other, hence Jesus says, "ye also ought to wash one another's feet." it is true, also, that every disciple should be ready to do any menial task for a brother Christian.

II. The identification of the Traitor -- vs. 18-30. Jesus prepared the way for the pointing out of the traitor in the previous section when He said, "Ye are not all clean." He now proceeds to tell them more on that line with the object in view, "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe that I am He." While the method and purpose of Judas would come as a terrible shock to the disciples, it would further identify Jesus as the Messiah when they remembered that, from the way He spoke, He knew all about it beforehand. That it was no surprise to Him would reassure the hearts of the disciples in the dark hours after His crucifixion and before His resurrection.

Having thus prepared the way for the breaking of the terrible news He plainly declares, "One of you shall betray Me." Moderate as had been His method, the disciples were shocked, and looked one on another, each wondering in himself which of the others it might be. Later, it seems, they each began to suspect themselves, for Matthew and Mark both record the fact of each one asking Him, "Lord, is it I?" and Luke suggests this also. John, who sat next to Jesus at the table, received from Him a sign as to which one it was and conveyed it to Peter. While Judas, last of all asked if it were he, it was no surprise to him to know he was the one, though it may have been a surprise to him that Jesus knew.

Jesus' method of pointing out the traitor was exceedingly courteous. He simply dipped a sop of bread in the gravy and passed it to Judas. This was ordinarily construed as a mark of honor for the head of the table to so treat a guest. Having thus secured his attention, Jesus told him to do what he did quickly. But, aside from John and Peter, the disciples understood that Jesus had sent him on an errand of some kind as he was treasurer of the little band.

III. After the Exclusion of the Traitor -- vs. 31-35. Judas gone, Jesus is left a little while alone with his disciples that mean to be faithful to Him, and who eventually faithfully endured all that came upon them for His sake. To them He opens the deepest things of His ministry, only the introduction of which we will consider now.

Even in the going of the traitor the Son was glorified. The ranks of the disciples were purified, and, though actuated by Satan, the devices of the enemy through Judas were to be so overruled as to occasion and precipitate the consummation of the entire object of the Son's mission on earth. Where is there a more striking illustration of the fact that all things work together for good to them that love God, that God maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and that nothing can be done against the truth, but for the truth? in spite of all the devices of Satan against the Son, the better he seemed to succeed the more he brought out the glory of the Lord.

The new commandment of love, which later makes so great a part of John's First Epistle, is here introduced. This, again, is *agapao* instead of *phileo*. The latter is the spontaneous affection of the emotions; but *agapao* is love controlled by the will. The command is addressed to the will. Love of affection is controlled by the sensibilities and often blinds one to the good of the loved

one. But the love that is controlled by the will, wills to love even the unlovely as a matter of principle, is not blind to the faults of the loved one, and therefore rebukes sin in loved ones for their own good.

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14 -- THE NATURE OF THE COMFORTER -- John 13:26-14:31

JESUS' Announcement that He was going away, with which the last lesson closed, gave rise to three questions asked in turn by Peter, Thomas, and Philip. The answers to these questions preface, the discourse about the Comforter, concerning which subject John only of the Gospel writers records anything.

I. The Three inquiries and Answers -- 13.36-14.14. The first question pertained to where Jesus was going; the second question pertained to how the disciples could follow; and the third pertained to the knowledge of the Father.

1. Peter's Question. "Lord, whither goest Thou?" is responded to by Jesus to the effect that none can follow Him now, but that they will follow Him later. Peter insists, "Why cannot I follow Thee now?" and adds that he is willing to lay down his life for the Lord, intimating that he understood the Lord to mean He was going by the way of death, and he was willing to take the death route in order to follow Him. Jesus shows Peter how little he knows his own heart and foretells he will that very night deny Him thrice.

The chapter division thrown in after Jesus' statement to Peter breaks the continuity of the thought so that it appears like a new subject taken up at the beginning of chapter 14, but it is really a continuance of the answer to Peter's question, but addressed to all the disciples. Though He is going away, and though Peter is going to deny Him, though many things just ahead will be calculated to greatly distress them, yet He consoles them: "Let not your heart be troubled." Though He precedes them to the Father's house, there is still room there for them. Furthermore He is going in advance for the express purpose of preparing a special place for them. And when the place is fully prepared He is coming again to receive them into that place.

2. Thomas' Question. Jesus' last statement in answering Peter, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," gave rise to Thomas' question: "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Jesus' answer is, "I am the Way." Furthermore the Father is the destination: it is to the Father that Jesus is going, and He is the way by which Others will come to the Father -- and there is no other way to Him but by Jesus Christ. Then, too, to know the Son is to know the Father, for the Son is the revelation of the Father. He that knows the Son also knows the Father.

3. Philip's Question. Jesus answer to Thomas gave rise to Philip's question, or, more correctly, his request: "Lord, shew us the Father." Perhaps Philip's desire was that Jesus bring the Father into the realm of visibility. But this would defeat the plan of redemption; for the purpose of Jesus coming in visible form among men, was not that He might bring God down to them, but that He might bring them up to God Since God is a Spirit, the real revelation of God must be a spiritual

revelation. For this reason Jesus Himself is about to disappear out of the realm of visibility, and the Comforter is to take His place as the further Revealer of the Father and of the Son. The evidence of the Father and the Son being with the believer, while not manifest to natural eyes, will be manifest in the visible world through the works wrought by the Spirit. If they cannot grasp the mystical thought of seeing the Father in the Son, even after the Son has disappeared, He encourages them to believe the evidence of the works that will follow the believer after He has disappeared. They will do works, in dependence upon the Father, similar to the works He has done; the prayers they pray in His name to the Father will be answered.

II. The Nature of the Comforter -- 15.31. Having by the replies to these questions, prepared the disciples for what He is about to say, Jesus proceeds to unfold the doctrine of the Comforter or Paraclete. The evidence of their love will be. the keeping of His commandments, and the Son Who has retired out of the visible world will pray the Father, and the Father will send the third Person of the Trinity into the world in a manifestation unknown before. He indwelt the human nature of the Son the years of His ministry. The Son could not remain indefinitely in the world and fulfill His mission, But the Comforter can, abide "for ever." The world cannot receive this Comforter, though He deals with the world, as is later revealed. Jesus will soon pass out of the visible world, and the world seeing only physical things will not see Him more but they, through the operation of the Spirit, will see Him in another kind of manifestation, with other senses. And this "seeing" will be so real that they will have a consciousness of both the Father and the Son being with them.

Judas, not Iscariot, asks a further question at this juncture: "Lord how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thy self unto us, and not unto the world?" Perhaps we will get the meaning better if we substitute "why" for "how." Why are the disciples so favored, and the world left out? Jesus explains: it is because of keeping His words and loving Him. The world neither keeps His words nor loves Him, therefore cannot receive this manifestation, if they will not receive the manifestation of the Son in the physical realm where their unaided senses can discern Him, how is it possible for them to follow Him into the mystical realms whence He is now about to retire.? if the visible Son is rejected, so will the invisible Spirit be rejected.

Jesus has been their Teacher, but henceforth the Comforter will teach them, bringing to their remembrance what Jesus has said unto them. Jesus is not going to talk much more with them, He is already retiring to leave the place to His successor, the Comforter. Peace is to possess the hearts of the disciples when the Comforter comes, and it will be the peace of Christ. Jesus told these things to the disciples beforehand that when they came to pass they might have added evidence of the truth of what He said.

The going of Jesus to the Father proved His love for the Father, and would be in accordance with His Father's commandment.

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15 -- THE WORK OF THE COMFORTER IN THE BELIEVER -- John 15:1-27

THE Work of the Comforter is related to His nature. Christ proceeds to set forth in this chapter something of His work in and through the believer.

I. The Vine and its Branches (1-10) are used as a figure to set forth the mystical relationship that is to exist between Christ and His disciples after the coming of the Comforter, in the body Christ could be associated with His disciples; but in the mystical body He can be united to them and they with Him. This relationship is described as that of the true vine. Earthly vines there are, but they are not true vines; but our conception of the true vine is what we know of vines of earth. The gold of the streets of the New Jerusalem is the only true gold. What we have on earth is but named after that as a poor illustration of it.

The vine, the branches, and the fruit are all one in mystical union. A vine without branches, or branches without vine, or fruit without either is impossible. The Father is the vineyard keeper. He cuts away unfruitful branches, and sprays the fruitful branches. The objective is fruit, even as keepers of earthly vineyards raise vines for fruit and not for ornamentation. Fruitfulness is naturally the concern of intelligent branches, it is essential that we understand what is fruit. The evangelist might think his converts were fruit; the pastor, that added members are fruit. But really these, if genuine, could not be more than branches. No vineyard keeper would raise vines just for branches; even though fruit is impossible without branches, it is fruit that is desired. The fruit of the Spirit is given in Gal. 5.22, 23: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. If the Christian does not produce these what would be the use of more Christians? it is the production of these that gives value to more branches. It is a fact of grape culture that the vine with fewest, well-selected branches bears the most fruit and the best. In this connection observe that abiding is the secret of fruit-bearing. Those who will abide will have their prayers answered. Notice carefully the preposition in verse 7: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Have you not generally read into this verse the preposition for instead of unto? Are not most prayers for external things that can never become attached to the vine and cannot possibly be fruit? But things done unto you and in you are part of life; and these things done unto us produce fruitfulness.

II. The Disciples and Christ -- 11-17. This section supplements the preceding one, and applies to practice the ideals there set forth. Jesus had told them that His words should abide in them if they desired fruitfulness. This means that the Christian in his conduct should be the exemplification of what Jesus taught. He later added that He kept the Father's commandments and thus abode in His love.

The reason He says these things to His disciples is that this joy might be imparted to them, and their joy be full. His chief joy was to please the Father, and, by pleasing Him, He abode in His love. A child that pleases his parent is loved by the parent in a different way from one who does not please. A worker who pleases his employer must do what the employer directs, As a child comes in for special favors from a parent he pleases, and an employee promotion from a pleased employer, so a child of God who pleases Him makes the way for his prayers to be answered, in the answer to the question, is it my chief joy to please the Father? will be found the reason for answered or unanswered prayer.

As there is a friendship between the Vine and the branches, so there must be a like friendship between the branches themselves. The relation to the Vine is abiding in love, so the relation of the branches to each other is loving one another, The Lord laid down His life for the

members of His body, and it is suggested that we should love in like manner, either to die for Him or for fellow members. This love leads from the relationship of servants to that of friends. Servants do what they are told without knowing why; friends are told the why of things. The choice- that gave us this relation to Christ was on His initiative, and not on ours. He chose and ordained for the purpose of fruit bearing. Notice this section ends like the previous one, with the secret of answered prayer. There the response was unto you, some thing done' within you; here it is "He may give it you," dealing evidently with externals:

III. The Disciples and the World -- 18-27. The new relationship entered into with Christ means a changed relationship to the world. The world hated Him; it will therefore hate us. This will not be because we stir up animosity. but merely because we have been made different from the world. This hatred will find its limit only in persecution. The persecution will be for His name's sake, the only Name by which men can be saved. The world system has its own way of saving men, therefore it hates any other method than its own. its way is a failure, His way is successful. Jealousy because of this success intensifies hatred and persecution. Ignorance of the Father lies at the root of this hatred, and ignorance of the Father is because of man's going astray from God. The plan to bring man back to God is hated by the enemy of men's souls.

But all this hatred is without cause. If there is in a Christian's conduct a reason why the world should hate him -- -- such as doing wrong -- he is not persecuted for righteousness' sake, and therefore does not come in for the promise to those so persecuted, But if there is no cause for the world's hatred, then the promise is effective, and the persecuted Christian can be joyful in his persecution.

There is a double witness to the world, as told in the last two verses of the chapter. The substance of this witness is to be "of Me" When the Comforter comes into the world, being sent back by Jesus after His ascension, He will testify to all men's consciences. The outward testimony of the' disciples will confirm this inward witness and arouse men either to conviction or opposition according to the attitude they take toward the testimony.

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16 -- THE WORK OF THE COMFORTER THROUGH THE BELIEVER -- John 16:1-33

HAVING in the last Lesson considered the work of the Comforter in the believer, we now consider something of His work on the world through the believer. After this, in this chapter, is more teaching about the detail of His work in the believer, and a conclusion of His teaching of the subject of the Comforter.

I. The Comforter and the world -- 1-11. Foreknowing that the disciples will meet with serious opposition from the world, Jesus prepares them for persecution by telling them beforehand what they may expect. This is in order to save them from stumbling when this ordeal comes upon them, lest they consider it an evidence they are mistaken, When the time comes they will remember He foretold these things. The sorrow of the disciples was essentially selfish, They were so occupied with their own loss in the going away of Jesus, that they gave no consideration to what

was ahead of Him, But He reiterates it is good for Him to go away, for only so can the Comforter come.

The Comforter is to work on the world in two ways: He will work through the believer, and He will work in cooperation with the believer. The effect of this work is conviction of the world along three lines, and every line has a relationship to Jesus Himself. The "reprove" of the Authorized Version is better "convict," as the Revised Version. The Paraclete, Who comes to the disciples as the Comforter, comes to the world as a Reprover and Convicter.

First, He convicts of sin, not, notice carefully, because of the breaking of the law, though all have broken it, and could justly be condemned therefor; but because they believe not on Jesus. Jesus has taken the penalty of the race for breaking the law, and willingly offers free pardon to any who will believe on Him. Therefore men remain under condemnation, not because of the broken law, but because they do not believe on Jesus.

Second, He convicts of righteousness. The world which has lived in sin so long is disposed to ridicule the idea of any one being righteous, But the fact that Jesus, Who had lived as a man among men, went direct to the Father unchallenged, proves that a way has been provided whereby man can be right in the sight of God. Over against the fact of sin is the fact of forgiveness of sin and consequent righteousness.

Third, the Paraclete will convict of judgment on sin. Conviction, when not yielded to, produces opposition to the truth of which one is convicted. How can the widespread and persistent opposition to the doctrine of retribution be accounted for on any other ground than that men have been convicted of the fact of such retribution, but, not yielding to it, have determined to silence their convictions? The prince of this apostate world is already Judged as proof of the judgment coming upon all men.

II. The Comforter as a Guide -- 12-15. Perhaps the climax of the teaching of the Comforter is in these verses. Jesus has many things to tell the disciples. His reason for not telling these things is not due to any unwillingness on His part, but an unreceptivity on their part. But this will be overcome by the Comforter, Whose great work will be to reveal the things of the Son and the Father to the believer. To guide means more than to teach the theory. As life responds to truth received, capacity is increased to receive additional truth, and so He guides into all truth. Any spirit that does not glorify Jesus, however wonderful may be its revelations, is not the Comforter.

III. The Little While -- 16-24. There is to be a "little while" that the disciples are to be alone, but it will only be a little while. There are three possible ways of interpreting this period of time, it may be made to refer to the period between the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus; it may be made to refer to the time of His going until His second coming, which by the great clock of heaven, on which a thousand years is as a day, it will be but a little while, But in connection with the context it seems to refer to the interval between the time of His going and the coming of the Comforter, which will bring a new consciousness of Jesus.

IV. The Procession and Recession of the Son -- 25-33. The central thought of the last section of this chapter concerns the coming of the Son from the Father, and His return to the Father.

This is sublimely, but simply, stated in the 28th verse. The Son did not come into the world to bring God down to man's level, but He came to break a way through from God to man that man might be taken back to God from Whom he had been alienated by sin. Thus Jesus came out of the invisible into the visible, and then back into the invisible, in the movement He provided a spiritual process by which men, by the forgiveness of sins and the filling with the Holy Ghost, can enter in spirit the realm inhabited by God, a relationship that awaits perfection in the resurrection of the body and His translation into the character of a spiritual body.

The new consciousness of Christ is to bring many privileges to the disciples, it is noticeable that the word "ask" is differently used in this chapter. In vs. 19 it means to ask in the way of making an inquiry, as the disciples desired to inquire of Jesus what He' meant. But in the last part of vs. 23, and in vs. 24, it means to ask in the way of requesting something, it is the privilege of the believer who has entered into the new consciousness of Christ and its consequent new relation to God, to ask and receive to the fulness of His Joy.

The chapter closes with an expression on the part of the disciples to the effect that they understood what He means, but it is evident from His remark and the events of the following days that they did not have but a very faint idea of what this all meant, and did not until the coming of the Comforter. There are heights and depths of revelation in God far beyond the knowledge of the saintliest Christian. When we think we understand, there yet remain vast regions to explore. The Comforter is our Guide into all truth.

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17 -- THE SAVIOUR'S INTERCESSION -- John 17:1-26

JESUS, having finished His instruction to the disciples, now prays for them and those' who will believe on Him through their word. We here approach nearest the throne of God of any place in this Gospel of the Son of God.

I. The Son and the Father -- 1-5. The prayer opens with communion between the Son and the Father, the intercession for the disciples and church being based on that relationship. Utter dependence on, and submission to. the Father breathes in every word of this prayer. There is no petition looking toward ease or comfort, but rather petition for ability to carry out the sacrifice necessary to the completion of His work for the' glory of the Father and the salvation of men. He left the glory that He once had with the Father to do His work, now, as He finishes it, He prays to be' restored to His glory. But this restoration to glory is in order that the Father may be glorified and men saved.

II. The Son and the Disciples -- 6-19. Having prayed about His relationship to the Father, He now turns to pray for the disciples -- "which Thou gavest Me out of the world."

First Petition -- -His first prayer for them was that they might be kept -- "Keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou has given Me." Dark days were ahead for them. Peter's denial was foreknown, and the forsaking of the rest. But Jesus commits their keeping to the Father, and He will keep them and bring them again into victory. Jesus has finished His work in the world, and is

soon to go to the Father; but these are to be left in the world that hated and rejected Him, and will need the keeping power of the Father. Jesus has such confidence in this power to keep them that He commits to them the work that has cost and will cost Him so much to initiate. When He was with them He kept them, all but the "son of perdition," and the only reason He lost Him was that the Scriptures cannot be broken.

There are three aspects of relationship to the world mentioned in the fact of their keeping. The whole object of Jesus' mission was to save the world, and yet here He distinctly says He does not pray for the world, but for these given to Him out of the world. The carrying out of His plan to save the world rests upon the right relationship of these disciples to the world.

First -- "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." in order to exercise a saving influence on the world one must be taken out of the worldly system.

Second -- "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Therefore, while not of the world, the world was the sphere of their service. The success of their work depends on separation from the world in spirit, and suffering for the world in service.

Third -- "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Their nature is not of the world, their sphere is the world, and their office is to be God's ambassadors in the world.

Second Petition -- The Savior's second petition was that they might be sanctified. He declared that He had sanctified Himself in order that they might be sanctified. His sanctification did not have to do with His condition, but with His position, He was already holy, therefore His sanctification meant separation unto service. The like separation He provides for them, and, in the process of separation, sanctifies them in condition. The holy task requires holy workers. The work of the disciples is dependent on the accompanying power of the Holy Ghost, and this power is only communicated through holy vessels, separated from the world and separated unto God.

III. The Son and the Church -- 20-26. The prayer of the Savior reaches beyond the group of immediate disciples to those yet to become believers: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." Here He is praying for the whole church throughout the church age. He prayed for their work on earth and their reward in heaven.

On Earth -- It is essential to their success on earth that believers be one. This oneness cannot be produced by mechanical processes. It is a oneness of organism rather than a oneness of organization. A tree is an organism. a house, made of sawed up trees, is an organization. The former ever grows, the latter begins to decay as soon as it is finished. As there are many branches to the one tree, so there may be many groups of believers with minor differences, but one in spirit and aim. If there is not a spirit of unity organization cannot produce it. Every believer has fellowship in spirit with all other believers. The manifestation of this to the world leads the world to believe in Jesus.

In Heaven -- But the end of the church is not to be on earth. its final objective is to land its members where He has gone: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." Jesus said that He had given to the disciples, and therefore to all the church, the glory the Father had given Him. The manner in which the Son glorified the Father on the earth was to suffer for Him here. Do we as His disciples esteem it glorious to suffer for Him here? Whenever God's people have suffered for Him on earth then great ingatherings to the church have followed. The crucifixion of Christ was followed in due time by many additions to the believers. On mission fields suffering saints have been harbingers of coming ingatherings.

But there is another glory awaiting the church, consistent with the text (II Tim. 2.12). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." The glory of suffering here is to be followed with the glory of reigning with Him there. Heaven will have two great blessings mentioned here. The first of these is, "be with Me where I am." it is the satisfaction of the betrothed bride to be with her bridegroom, regardless of where he is. But if in scenes of delight it is enhanced and enriched. The second of these is, "that they shall behold My glory." To be with Christ in the transcendent glory of the heavens, to be His beloved with perfect fellowship with Him, is the goal of the Christian life.

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18 -- THE SAVIOUR ARRESTED AND TRIED -- John 18:1-19:16

THE quiet of the upper room contrasts vividly with the events that followed during the remainder of that eventful night. Here was the Saviour with the eleven faithful disciples teaching them the mysteries of His Person, of heaven, and of the Comforter, as quietly and calmly as though trouble were the last thing in the world likely to occur. Then follows the quiet moonlight walk through the deserted streets of the city, across the brook Cedron, to the solitude of the garden of Gethsemane. Here the last great battle is fought out in prayer, as the erstwhile enthusiastic and boastful disciples fall asleep from lack of interest. Then follow the gleaming torches and muttered voices of the mob, the arrest, the trial, while the disciples are' scattered, deserting their Master with Whom they had boasted they were ready to die.

I. The Arrest -- 1-12. The garden prayer is omitted from John's Gospel for in that is revealed His humanity especially, while in John's Gospel His Deity is particularly emphasized, That the arrest of Jesus was entirely voluntary on His part is demonstrated from the fact that His first simple question and answer prostrated the entire mob. What a contrast with the calm surrender of Jesus is the frenzied action of Peter in wildly swinging his sword in a futile attempt to defend Him! He was trying to make good his word that he was willing to die with Him. May not some of our strenuous efforts for the defense of the truth be as ineffective as Peter's brandished sword? Man is accustomed to accomplish his end through effort and the vigorous overcoming of opposing circumstances. The method of Jesus -- to conquer by submission to forces opposing -- is foreign to the flesh, is not most of the so-called Christian work of which we' know along the line of the world's ways?

If Christ's restraint of His Divine power contrasts vividly with the efforts of Peter to defend Him, what shall we say of that thing in unregenerate human hearts that, just after beholding and experiencing the force of His Deity, will rise at the first opportunity and lay hands on the Son

of God with murderous intent? What depth there is to the Divine love that will lay itself down for such brutal beings as these! What depravity in human hearts that will rise up in antagonism to man's best Friend!

II. The Trials -- 8.13-19.16. Jesus had six trials in the course of that night and the next morning, only three of which are mentioned in John, The six are as follows: 1. Before Annas -- John 18,13; 2. Before Caiaphas -- John 18.24; 3. Before Jewish Council -- Matt. 27.1, Luke 22.66; 4. Before Pilate -- Matt. 27.2, Mark 15.1; .5. Before Herod -- Luke 23.7; 6. Before Pilate the second time -- Luke 23.11. To these might be added the seventh, when His case was referred to the High Court of Heaven that reversed the decisions of all lower courts and set Him free in resurrection (Rom. 1.4). Here His claim to Deity was maintained.

Before Annas -- Little is said of the detail of the trial before Annas, He was the man who manipulated the office of the high priest as a shrewd politician. He sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas, his son-in-law, whom he had been instrumental in getting into the office of high priest. Before Caiaphas -- The method of the priests was pervasive of all Jewish laws, and contrary to universally acknowledged judicial procedure. Before they could hope to get a verdict of death from the governor they must produce some civil charge, for which there was not the slightest ground. In trying to get Jesus to incriminate Himself they violated a principle of law that a man on trial is not obliged to answer a question calculated to incriminate himself. This is why Jesus rebuked them and asked that they question those who claim to have heard Him. To abuse a prisoner is contrary to all law in every civilized land. Jesus did not let their sinful conduct go unrebuked, but did nothing to protect Himself.

Before Pilate -- Pilate was a sinful man, but he was not. prejudiced against Jesus nor jealous of Him as were the Jewish rulers. He saw the shallowness of the Jewish indictment of Jesus and declared Him innocent, demanding that if He had violated some Jewish religious law they take Him and try Him according to their law and not bother the civil courts with the matter. They could produce no civil charge, but intimated that He was trying to make Himself a king and therefore He was a dangerous and seditious man.

Pilate exhausted every device he knew to release Jesus and still retain the favor of the Jews. Even His scourging was not in animosity to Jesus, but part of His plan to free Him. He examined Him by scourging (see Acts 22:24) and, securing no confession from Him, declared to the Jews that he found no fault in Him, even under the torture of examination by scourging.

The argument of the Jews with Pilate that brought him to their terms was: "If thou let this Man go, thou art not Caesar's friend." Profane history mentions a plot at this time being formulated against Caesar by some of his under-officers, and there was a suspicion that Pilate was a party to this plot. To displease the Jews at this time meant the priests would use their influence with Caesar to bring Pilate to trial. Pilate had rather have the favor of Caesar than the favor of the King Who stood before him. So he cast off Jesus, and Caesar later cast off Pilate. The Jews hated the Roman yoke, and they hated robbers, but they hated Jesus worse than either Caesar or Barabbas.

The Background -- Jesus is the main Figure in all this scene, but His greatness is enhanced by the figures that are seen about Him. There is Peter. While Jesus was being tried before the

highest Jewish tribunal and standing true, Peter was denying Christ before a servant girl. There was Barabbas, While the most innocent Man Who ever was put on trial was being condemned, a well-known criminal was being set free. There was Pilate, While the King of the universe was calmly waiting for the day of His kingdom, Pilate was conniving to retain his transient political office. There was the high priest of the Jews, type of the true Priest, stooping to lowest sin uncondemned, while the Great High Priest was crucified as a malefactor.

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19 -- THE SAVIOUR, CRUCIFIED AND BURIED -- John 19:17-42

"CHRIST died for our sins according to the Scriptures," is one of the two greatest fundamental facts of our religion as we understand I Cor. 15.3. We may well approach this climax of the Saviour's work with bowed heads and solemn countenances, On the one hand we see the consummation of man's hate to a loving God; on the other the consummation of God's love to rebellious man.

The Crucifixion -- 17-30. Many things recorded by the other Gospel writers are omitted from John's account. This is by design and not from oversight.

The Cross -- There is no conflict between John and the other Gospel writers in his saying that He went forth bearing His cross. They fill in a detail that he omits when they record the fact that Simon of Cyrene bore it after Him. He very likely started with it, but, through human weakness, was not able to proceed as rapidly as the soldiers wanted to go. As John does not stress the human side, but the Divine, this is omitted, as are many other details.

The account is simple in the extreme -- "They crucified Him." There is no stressing of the spectacular and terrible details of the scene that would have occupied the pen of an uninspired writer, and perhaps too often are used to make graphic sermons on the subject. The thieves are there, and the multitude, but no word of theirs is recorded here. The Son of God is supreme even in His death. The inscription is slightly different in the four Gospels, but, since it was written in three languages, it may have been written in at least three different wordings originally and the different writers copied different languages. Though written by a Gentile, and perhaps in derision, the inscription was wonderfully true, and Pilate would not be persuaded to change it.

The Coat -- "That the scripture might be fulfilled," is the only reason assigned that the soldiers did not divide the coat into four pieces as they did the other garments. Of the Scriptures, of course, they knew nothing and cared less; but He Who inhabits eternity, and to Whom all time is one eternal NOW, can write of things to come as readily as of things past and present.

The Cares -- In the midst of His physical suffering and the agony of bearing the sins of the world, Jesus did not forget the perplexity of others. His mother, deprived of her support and consolation by His death, is lovingly committed to "the disciple whom Jesus loved." How could the commandment with promise be more powerfully emphasized?

The Consummation -- Again, the reason Jesus said "I thirst" is recorded to be in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And, again, in accord with the Scripture prophecy, though they knew it not, they gave Him vinegar to drink. "It is finished," is His simple statement as He consummates the plan that makes provision for the salvation of all who believe on Him as their Savior. The greatest undertaking that ever occupied the mind of God or man was thus completed. True to His statement in the tenth chapter, no man took Jesus' life from Him: He laid it down of Himself. All things having been finished, He gave up the ghost and voluntarily died as an act of His own will, committing His spirit into the hand of the Father.

II. The Burial -- 31-42. Isaiah had said seven hundred years before, "He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death." Here, we see Him dying between two thieves, and now the rich come to bury Him. It was essential to the right setting for the resurrection that the body of Jesus be buried decently. But no preparation was made for it. The disciples were all poor and too perturbed to plan the burial if they had had means to do so.

The Spear -- "A bone of Him shall not be broken," was the prophecy, being typified also in the admonition that not a bone of the Passover lamb was to be broken. The Jews, having accomplished their purpose in bringing Jesus to the cross with no religious compunctions, now become solicitous that the coming "high-day" sabbath shall not be desecrated by the bodies hanging on the crosses after sun-set. Pilate yields to their entreaties to hurry up the death of the victims and instructs the soldiers to break their legs with that end in view. But Jesus was already dead. How often it seems as though the prophecy would fail, and yet it comes to pass! The Scriptures cannot be broken.

Notice the accuracy of the record, While it says regarding the prophecy about no bone being broken that it was fulfilled, it says there is another prophecy to the effect that they shall look on Him Whom they have pierced, But of this it does not say that it was fulfilled. It awaits fulfillment when He shall come again, and the house of Israel shall look on Him Whom they have pierced and recognize in Him their Messiah.

The Sepulcher -- Nicodemus up to this time had appeared to be a rather indifferent disciple, and Joseph of Arimathea, though here introduced as a disciple, is not mentioned in the Bible before by name. Different kinds of people come to their own under different circumstances. The eleven, who had braved the ignominy of being followers of Jesus when He was alive, drew away from Him in His death. The two who had kept in the background, not willing to be identified with Jesus in His life, come out into the open and identify themselves with Him when He is dead. Each kind of disciple has his weakness and has his usefulness.

Joseph had prepared for himself a sepulchre hewn out of the rock. Why he prepared it so long before he was likely to need it he may not have known, But he was preparing it for Jesus that He might have a worthy sepulchre. All things fall in line that run along the line of prophecy. There is not a hitch in the program of Divine anticipation, and, as the sun drops like a red ball behind the western horizon the store has rolled into its place at the door of the sepulchre in what is called the nick of time!

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20 -- THE SAVIOUR RESURRECTED -- John 20:1-21:25

"HE rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," is the other of the two great fundamental facts of our religion (the first being mentioned last week). The crucifixion culminated the work of Christ in redemption; the resurrection sets the Father's seal on the validity of that work, and gives promise of the eventual realization of redemptive power in the body of every believer.

I. Evidences of the Resurrection -- 1-10. The empty tomb, while at first interpreted by the disciples as a calamity, was an evidence of the Lord's resurrection. What looked like the work of ghouls was the work of the Lord. What looked like grave robbery was victory over the grave. The second witness to the resurrection was the condition of the grave-clothes. They, too, were empty, but not scattered and disordered, as were those of Lazarus very likely when he had been loosed and let go. The body of Christ had become a spiritual body by resurrection power, and, though still capable of being seen and handled, could pass through the fabric of the clothes without disturbing them. The mute testimony of those chrysalis-like clothes was so convincing that it is said of the beloved disciple, "he saw, and believed."

II. Credentials of the Risen Christ -- 11-31. While the testimony of the empty tomb and vacant garments was confirmatory of the negative testimony of the angel, "He is not here," positive testimony of the resurrection is ample to confirm the fact.

There is first, the appearance to Mary as she lingered about the empty sepulchre, vainly trying to solve the mystery of its emptiness. Her grief puzzled the angels who asked, "Why weepest thou?" it took the Lord Himself in visible form and His reassuring voice to convince this grief-stricken woman that her grief was unwarranted. But her sorrow was instantly turned to joy, a wonderful evidence of the reality of the transaction.

Then there is, second, the appearance to ten of the disciples shut away alone, reasonably convinced that the Lord was alive, but wholly at a loss to know how to interpret the fact, or to appropriate it to themselves. The empty tomb, the vacant grave-clothes, the testimony of the women were all believed, but it took the presence of the Lord to make them glad.

Finally, there is the belated appearance to Thomas, who, absent from the place of assembly, had missed seeing the Lord, and who had declared he would not believe without material evidence. The testimony of ten men whom he knew to be honest would not convince him, not but what he believed them to be honest, but they might be deceived by appearances they had not properly investigated. To this man the risen Lord grants a special interview. Thomas was an honest doubter, demonstrated on his part by putting himself in the way of receiving the evidence he demanded -- being on hand when next the disciples met on the first day of the week. With honest doubters Jesus is kindly disposed, as demonstrated by this incident. How well this demonstrates, too, that Jesus was just as truly with the disciples when not seen as when seen. He had heard Thomas say what he did, for He immediately addressed Him when He appeared. What an incentive to a prayer meeting would it be if we realized that Jesus was truly there actually hearing all that is said!

We must not leave the twentieth chapter without special attention to the 30th and 31st verses. If John 3.16 may be called the golden text of the Bible, these verses may be called the heart of the Bible. For may it not be truly said of the entire Bible, as these verses say of the Gospel of John, "these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name?" This sets forth the object of John in writing his Gospel, and the object of the written word throughout.

III. Commission of the Risen Lord -- 21.1-25. This concluding chapter gives a view of Jesus in every day life. He is interested in the toils and disappointments of His people. They toil in vain without Him, but at the critical moment He appears and gives success.

We have, first, a picture of the aimless disciples. It is not likely that they had decided to go back to the work from which Jesus had called them at the beginning of His ministry. But, not knowing what to do, and wanting to do something, they went a fishing, possibly to meet immediate expenses. The toilsome night of these seven disciples was a pertinent comment on undertaking to do anything without His instructions.

The loving Lord, though He seems not to have appeared to the disciples for some days, had His eye upon them. As the dawn after their fruitless night approached, He built a fire upon the shore and prepared their breakfast. As they pull in their empty fishing tackle and make for the shore, He gives the simple word of command, which, obeyed, turns the night's fruitlessness into abundant reward. They recognize the Lord and they dine with Him on the shore. This is probably the event which Peter mentions in the house of Cornelius when he says, "us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead."

The three-fold commission of the Lord to Peter fully restores that apostle to his place of leadership among the apostles. It is interesting to observe the two words used for "love" in this connection (compare lesson 11). In asking the question, "Lovest thou Me," Jesus used the great word agapao, but in his answer Peter used only the word phileo. The former indicates love as a settled purpose of the will, while the latter word indicates that love that is a creature of the affections only, and liable to extremes. The last time Jesus asked He used the word phileo, which seems to be the reason Peter was grieved rather than because of the fact that He asked three times. The last statement of Jesus in the book of John is regarding His coming again, which is the legitimate expectation of every Christian. While tarrying we need to be working. Watching and working are necessary concomitants of the vigorous Christian life.

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THE END