

SIX FACETS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

**Six facets of spiritual life which are
key to spiritual growth**

John 2:13-4:54

**Part 2 in a series
on the Gospel of John**

Jack Rendel

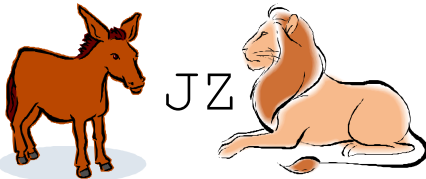
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key to spiritual growth**

**The Second Division
of the Gospel of John**

John 2:13-4:54

Jack Rendel



Publications

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**For my parents,
George and Betty Rendel, who
introduced me to spiritual life**

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Preface

My name was a problem! My real name is John but my nickname is Jack and as a child they called me Jackie. I grew up in Nigeria, West Africa, and in the area in which I lived the people used the Hausa language. In that language Jackie meant donkey. I wasn't very happy with that name! My African friends were very merciful and changed my name. They changed the "j" of Jackie to a "z". The resulting word Zackie meant lion in the Hausa language. I was thrilled with the change!

There was a prophet in the Bible by the name of Balaam who disobeyed God. The King of Moab hired him to curse the children of Israel. On his way to meet that king an angel of God appeared in his way with a sword in his hand. The prophet didn't see the angel but his donkey did.

God caused the donkey to be able to speak and she spoke to Balaam telling him that he was in danger. (Numbers 22:28)

So this book is written by me who was called a “donkey” ... about Jesus, who is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Please pray as you read this book that God will use the words of this “donkey” to speak to you and bless your heart. If you were wondering this also explains why I have used a donkey and a lion in the logo for my publications!

The outline found in this book has been the basis of messages I have preached. The book “fills out” the messages for further meditation and encouragement. May the Lord bless you as you read, meditate, study and share with others.

Introduction

I am excited about the Gospel of John!
The first verse I ever memorized was John
3:16,

*For God so loved the world, that he
gave his only begotten Son, that
who(so)ever believe(th)s in him
should not perish, but have
everlasting life. (AV/KJV,
parentheses are mine.)*

It was through that verse that my father
led me to the Lord as a boy.

It was through reading a Gospel of John
that George Verwer, the founder of OM
came to know the Lord Jesus. A Mrs.
Clapp was praying for the high school
across the street from her house. George
attended that high school and through her
son she sent him a copy of the gospel.

The Gospel of John tells us about spiritual life, abundant spiritual life. It seems to be organized around the spiritual life and feasts of the Jews. These were times of worship, jubilation, and, yes, feasting. Reading and studying this gospel is a spiritual feast!

I have tried to take time to carefully work out the patterns in this gospel and to organize my material around those patterns. In the Indices at the end of the book there is a Table of Contents of the Gospel of John which may help in further study.

One of the clearest patterns is that found in the division I want to write about in this book. It covers chapter 2:13 to chapter 4:54. Here we find six stories and some of them are very familiar to us, but maybe up to now we have not really noted how the 6 stories fit so neatly together.

I call this part of John “Six Facets of Spiritual Life”. Each of the 6 stories emphasizes a major element of spiritual life 1) cleansing 2) birth 3) growth 4) drink 5) food and 6) family. These elements are part and parcel of physical life. It is not unusual in the Bible to find that physical life and spiritual life are parallel! In God’s world that is normal. He made both physical and spiritual life so they are integrated. They are part of the whole.

This world, though often spoiled by us, is not random, but highly organized. Though marred and twisted by our rebellion against the Creator, leading to wars, murders, thieving, lying, destruction of the environment, and many other evils, in the background we see as we exam everything from an atom, to a one celled amoeba, to the human eye, or a galaxy that the design and organization is absolutely incredible!

Though this parallel is not ideal just think of a city that has been bombed and shot up in a war. It will be a place of devastation and destruction but as we go about amongst the people we will see some buildings still standing or partially standing and those buildings will show us that a city is an organized place. We will see people caring for the wounded and rebuilding the fallen structures. The people themselves will be an evidence of design and purpose. A bombed city while badly bruised is not a place of total randomness and disorganization.

Our world has been “bombed” by spiritual and moral forces which have bruised and hurt people, nations, animals and the rest of the earth. It has brought hatred, tears, crying, and agony which were never intended by its Creator. Genesis chapters one and two say again and again that when God made a particular part of the earth he saw that it was good (Genesis 1:4,

10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31; 2:9). A God who was concerned about good made a good world.

God still is concerned for the good of its inhabitants. John 3:16 tells us he is concerned that we not perish but have everlasting life. Later in John 10:10 Jesus refers to the thieves who steal God's sheep. He, however, has come to give God's sheep ... that's all who trust in him ... abundant life.

There is no better way to described abundant life than through the symbol of a feast. We all like feasts, banquets and parties. The Gospel of John tells us the same thing. Jesus' relationship with those who believe and love him is a feast, a banquet. It is not a series of dry dead rituals but a party!

While Jesus' party is a place of happiness and security it also has its serious side. Have you ever been to a party which is thrown together with little preparation?

The guests arrive and there is not enough space for everyone there. They ordered the food but it arrived four hours late. Someone forgot to order the drinks ... water only, sorry! No one bothered to tell those invited what time it started so some people arrived after it was over and others thought it was the following day. That could be a frustrating party! So parties have their serious side. Jesus' party does as well.

This part of John 2:13 -4:54 begins with a Jewish religious feast in Jerusalem, as do the next four sections or divisions of John. Jesus went to this feast. We might think this feast had only to do with the people of that age and little to do with us. However, each of the six stories which take place during and after that feast present key elements which touch us today. So let's discover what they are!

**SIX FACETS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE:
John 2:13-4:54**

**The Second Division
of the Gospel of John**

John's gospel divides into large sections that are not divided by chapters but rather by visits to Jerusalem at the times of Jewish religious feasts. Each section is in turn subdivided into stories with their own themes.

We could use the pizza pie, but any kind of pie or even a wheel divided by its spokes would work, to represent the structure of John's Gospel, after all it does have to do with feasts.

Six Facets of Spiritual Life - John

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? 13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. John 3:11-13 AV-KJV

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3992, 3993, 3994, 3995, 3996, 3997, 3998, 3999, 4000, 4001, 4002, 4003, 4004, 40

A Brief Overview

Let's have a quick over view of each story.

| Six Facets - John 2:13-4:54 | |
|---|--|
| Market in Jewish Temple, Jerusalem 2:13-25 "In Man" | Messed up Person at Jacob's Well, Samaria 4:1-26 "Eternal Drink" |
| Nicodemus: A Teacher Puzzled 3:1-21 "Birth...Again?" | The Disciples: Trainees Puzzled 4:27-42 "Secret Food?" |
| John the Baptist Responds with Joy 3:22-36 "Growing Son" | A Family Responds with Faith 4:43-54 "Living Son" |

(PowerPoint® slide no. 5)

The Market in the Jewish Temple, Jerusalem 2:13-25 “What’s in *Man*?” It needs cleaning out!

Jesus found a market in the temple in Jerusalem and *he drove them all out*. He was challenged by the Jews and spoke of the destruction and resurrection of his “temple,” his body. Many believed in him in Jerusalem but he did not trust himself to them because He knew what was in man.

Nicodemus: A Teacher Is Surprised 3:1-21 “*Birth ... Again!*”

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and complimented him as a prophet from God. Jesus explained the new birth to him so that he might also be able to enter the kingdom of God.

John the Baptist Answers With Joy 3:22-36 “Continued Growth”

In this scene a Jew and John’s disciples argued about purification. John was asked why everyone had left him to go to Jesus. John told them he was full of joy at this and that Jesus must increase and he, John, must decrease.

No Bucket At Jacob’s Well, Samaria, 4:1-26, “Deep Drink”

At Sychar in Samaria, while his disciples looked for food, Jesus spoke with a woman at the well. He told her he could give her water that would become a fountain inside her; He revealed to her that he knew her life; and then told her about true worship.

The Disciples: Puzzled Trainees, 4:27-42, “Secret Food?”

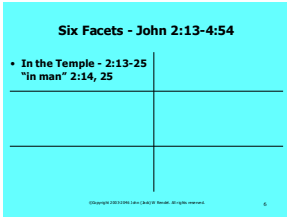
Meanwhile the disciples returned with a few “Big Macs®, French fries and Coca-Colas®!” Jesus told them he already had food they knew nothing about. Then he challenged them about the harvest fields and the work they were to do gathering a harvest to eternal life.

A Son Is Healed, 4:43-54, “Family of Faith”

Jesus reached Galilee and healed the son of a nobleman, a son which he never even saw. The official and all his family believed. The next division of John begins with another visit to Jerusalem at the time of a Jewish feast.

So let’s look at each story. The six stories together represent six facets of spiritual growth.

Chapter 1. The Market in the Jewish Temple, Jerusalem 2:13-25 “What’s In *Man*?”



(PowerPoint® slide no. 6)

What’s in You?

“Is it in you?” This is the strap line for the Gatorade sports drink advertisement. Are the drink and therefore the energy in you?

But what is in you? What is in man?

What Was in the Temple?

In the temple Jesus found a market place. There were markets in Jerusalem and shops all over the city. Jesus did not object to those markets and shops. But He did get upset when the market started taking over the courts of God’s house where the

people, Jews and Gentiles, were to stand and worship God.

Problems in God's Temple, and in the hearts of the Jews, go back to the times of Jeremiah the prophet.

*Wash your heart from evil, O
Jerusalem, That you may be saved.
How long will your wicked thoughts
lodge within you (Jeremiah 4:14
NASB-u)?*

When Are There Too Many?

Maybe we could illustrate what happened to the Temple in this way. On board the ships **Doulos** and **Logos 2** we have shops of various kinds. That's okay. There are the book fair, the ship shop, the coffee bar and the book table at the conferences. No problem, we are a floating city. Cities have shops and markets.

But what if we decided to remove all the chairs in the main meeting room and fill it with tables and stalls selling yet more things, to a degree that there was no room for us to have a place for our devotional times, study program, prayer evenings, worship meetings, Sunday meetings and conferences where we could sit or stand and worship the Lord and hear His Word? That would be going too far.

What is Your Deepest Desire?

As a boy growing up in Africa I would pour over Sears catalogues which offered many things to buy. I wanted shotguns, rifles, bullets and pistols. It was a bit like filling my heart with a market place, maybe a little like the temple which the Jews had filled with a market.

What do you spend your time thinking about, clothes, sports equipment, cars, electronic gear, music CDs, computers and hobbies? None of these things in themselves need be wrong. But they begin

to offend when they have a more important place than the Lord in our hearts.

A Clean Out

Just as Jesus cleansed the temple so we must be cleansed inside. Many centuries before these events David expressed this need for cleansing in his own life. *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. (Psalm 51:2 NASB-u)* David wrote Psalm 51 after committing adultery with Bathsheba and arranging for her husband Uriah to be killed in battle.

Other potentates of David's time committed similar cruelties but they did not stop for a minute to consider what they had done as sin! Kings could do whatever they pleased. Maybe the fact that a person as high and as powerful as David would repent, should capture our attention and help us see that, if he needed to repent, so do we.

We must be cleansed of our sin just as 1 John 1:8 and 9 teach us.

8 If we say that we do not have any sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we make it our habit to confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us those sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (ISV).

Two issues are present here. There is the initial washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5-6) when a person repents of his sinful life and decides to follow Jesus. Then as we go through life we need daily cleansing from sin as we still do commit sin (1John 1:8-2:1).

We are not entirely free from sin in this life. Jesus expressed this to Peter when at the last supper Jesus was about to wash Peter's feet and Peter refused. Jesus told Peter if he did not wash Peter's feet Peter

had no part in him. Peter responded immediately by saying, "Lord, *then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head* (John 13:9 NASB-u)." Jesus replied to that by saying whoever has bathed only needs to wash his feet.

Jesus said to him, He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you (John 13:10 NASB-u).

Peter had repented at the baptism of John because we know he was one of John's disciples. When he met Jesus he then followed him because among other things John called Jesus *the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world* (John 1:29 NASB-u).

No Other Place More Important

Jesus was consumed with passion for his Father's house. "... *zeal for your house consumes me,*" was a quote from Psalm

69:9 (NIV), and the disciples remembered it. Notice just how concerned Jesus was for his house, his Father's house. This was the one place on earth where the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who revealed himself to Moses, and later to David and Solomon, lived.

Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them (Exodus 25:8 NASB-u).

I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. They shall know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord their God (Exodus 29:45, 46 NASB-u).

If the Temple was truly God's dwelling place, the place where he lived, then it was the most important place on earth! Solomon knew that God lived in heaven and that no house on earth could contain

him and he expressed that reality, yet he built him a house to dwell in Jerusalem.

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built (1Kings 8:27 NASB-u)!

Using other terms we could say that God's house in Jerusalem was "his home away from home." There was no other place more important. There was no other place more important to visit, no other place more important to keep clean and prepared for God's worship, for fellowship between him and people. God loves people and wants them to be able to come into his presence and fellowship with him. He doesn't want people to be hindered in anyway from coming to him.

God, the Most Hospitable

In many cultures hospitality is very important. How good it is to sit down

with people in their home over a cup of tea or coffee and chat.

God is also hospitable. He commanded Moses to build the tabernacle and later he told Solomon to construct a temple so that he might live amongst his people. The tabernacle was located in the middle of the camp of Israel in the desert.

But God did not only place his house in the middle of the camp he also invited people to come into his house. The people could come to God's house to worship him. The priests, the people's representatives before God, could even enter into the most holy place in the temple.

Destroy This Temple...

Jesus was then asked by the Jews what sign he would show them to prove his authority to do those things. He responded by claiming he would raise his own body, the real temple of God. You see

God in Christ was “tabernacling” or dwelling (1:14) amongst men. The temple in Jerusalem was a shadow of who Jesus was. He was the fulfillment of the temple! Ask a Jew of that time to get his mind around that one!

But there is something else here that we often overlook and that is that Jesus said, “*Destroy this temple ... (2:19 NIV).*” He was referring to his death on the cross three years later when he would shed his blood for the cleansing of our sins. He would cleanse our temples, the temples of our bodies where he would take up residence by his Spirit,

*Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?
(1Corinthians 6:19 NASB-u)*

What Was In Man

Many believed in him in Jerusalem seeing the miracles he did, but he did not trust himself to them because he knew what was in man. Later we see how they wanted to make him king because he filled their bellies with food! Jesus didn't want superficial faith based on miracles and full tummies. (John 6:15) Verses 25 to 29 tell more of the story.

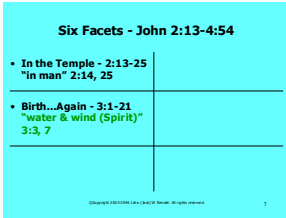
25 When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You get here?" 26 ¶ Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27 "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal." 28 Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" 29 Jesus

answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." (John 6:25-29 NASB-u)

These people were not filled with spiritual food; they only cared for the physical.

Jesus calls on us to believe in him who died and rose for our cleansing and justification. He is the very Person in whom spiritual life begins.

Chapter 2. Nicodemus: A Teacher Is Surprised 3:1-21 “*Birth ... Again!*”



(PowerPoint® slide no. 7)

Sweet Babies!

When were you born? Have you been at anyone else’s birth? A birth can be a great event! Special celebrations and church services are organized when a child is born. It can lead to a lot of baby talk, cooing and sometimes sleepless nights of crying and screaming for food, as well as, cleaning after urinating or defecating.

This next story is about birth, spiritual rebirth, being born again.

Now There Was a Man ...

After the introductory story about the cleansing of the temple, and Jesus being unwilling to commit himself to man, for he knew what was in man, the story of Nicodemus starts with the words, “Now there was a man ... (John 3:1 NAS95).”

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and complimented him as a prophet from God. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling Jewish council, which was not normally sympathetic to Jesus or to the apostles. His position on this council meant he was a respected man with some religious authority.

An Indian Nicodemus?

One of our teams also had a meeting with a respected religious man whose heart, like Nicodemus’ was somewhat softened to Jesus message.

Sadly, our teams also face persecution from time to time. Will you join me in prayer for film teams like this one from North India whose ministry was recently opposed?

An OM India men's film team was confronted by some fundamentalist young people who opposed their work in a particular village in North India. The opposition members told them not to show their films or distribute literature in the area. The team members talked politely with the group and tried to share God's love with them. However, they were not ready to listen.

Meanwhile, a Hindu priest was watching this interaction from the steps of the temple where he worked. He interrupted the young people, telling them not to prevent the OM India team from doing their work. The priest complimented the team on their work, saying that it was beneficial for the local area. The team

members were amazed to hear these words.

When the fundamentalist young people left the scene, the team members spent more time talking with the priest and gave him a New Testament and some Christian books. In addition, they invited him to that night's film show. The team prays that this man would follow Christ in the months to come. ("In Step with OM India", News for Partners of Operation Mobilization India from Joseph D'souza, June 2005.)

Nicodemus was a sample of "man in whom Jesus could place no confidence (John 2:24-25)." Nicodemus had the same spiritual needs others had. Jesus cut out the small talk with Nicodemus and told this grown man he had to be born again of water and wind, or in other words, the Spirit.

He then emphasized the invisibility of that event by referring again to the wind.

Jesus also told Nicodemus he could tell him about heavenly things because he came from heaven. Jesus was the One who preexisted and came down from heaven.

Snake Lifting?

Jesus told the story of Moses raising a snake on a pole in the wilderness as a picture of what would happen to him on the cross. Just as the Israelites were given back their life by looking to the snake so we are born again by looking to Christ on the cross.

When the people trusted God's word through Moses to look up at the snake they were restored to life. It was life giving and the life that was given back to them was an invisible action, seen only in the results of restored life to those who looked up at the snake. I quote from the book of Numbers:

4 ¶ Then they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey. 5 The people spoke against God and Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food." 6 The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. 7 So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and you; intercede with the Lord, that He may remove the serpents from us." And Moses interceded for the people. 8 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live." 9 And Moses

made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived. (Numbers 21:4-9 NASB-u)

Jesus explained that he would also be lifted up as that serpent was lifted. In the same way, when people believed in the Jesus, who would be lifted up, they would receive eternal life. In other words when the people raised their eyes and looked at the serpent on the pole they were given new life, or life again. They were reborn. They did not enter their mother's womb again, anymore than did Nicodemus, but had life put within them again.

He then touched on God's love in the giving of his Son, and condemnation, and coming to the light, so that a person's deeds could be seen to have been done through God.

Born Not Baptized

Let us clarify that “born” is not “baptized”. They are two different words. Earlier John the Baptist had said Jesus would baptize in the Spirit, not in “water and Spirit”. (1:33; 4:1, 2) In this context Jesus talked about being born again, not being baptized. These two symbols are important and are found in Scripture but here in John 3 the symbol is birth not baptism.

Water Symbolism

Water is a necessity for life. Without it we die. The Spirit of God is a necessity for life both earthly and heavenly. It is useful to remember our necessity for God’s Spirit by our more tangible need for water.

Let me illustrate this from a “near death” experience I had in the Iranian desert.

In 1967 a team of us left Bandar Abbas, Iran’s main southern port city. We left for the frontier city of Zahedan, near the

border with Pakistan. To reach that city we had to go due north on the main road. Then we would have to take another road which ran south and east out of Tehran to Pakistan.

Our team leader thought he would shorten the trip by taking a smaller road through an area which was partially desert. As we traveled down that road it became narrower and narrower and the towns along it further apart. In the end the road disappeared altogether.

It was late when we finally stopped, the diesel tank almost empty. We could not go on, nor could we go back. The heat was oppressive. Our water ran out. We only had a can of peas left. We opened the can very carefully, eating the peas and drinking the juice in the can. We divided up the peas amongst the four of us ever so carefully! Then we went to bed in our sleeping bags, in the open air, with our tongues and mouths swollen with thirst.

We each prayed and I began to think that this could be the end. We would die in that desert.

The next morning the heat of the blazing sun forced us from our sleeping bags. There was nothing for breakfast. We gathered to pray wondering what would become of us.

On each side of the road were two hills and in the distance in front of us was a huge flat valley and beyond the mountains climbed into the sky beyond the valley. The valley before us extended to the right and left.

As we prayed we could feel the sun beating on our heads. Then suddenly we heard something strange to our ears like the clinking of tiny bells. We looked up to see a man on a camel in the distance, traveling down the valley. He would pass right by us. We started waving our arms

and croaking as loudly as we could with dry cracked voices. We were afraid he wouldn't see us!

However, he did see us and took us to a small oasis where there were some springs of water. After drinking we filled our water bottles with water and the man took us to an outpost of the gendarmerie. There they let us fill our diesel tank and they showed us the way back to the main road.

Wind-Spirit Symbolism

Rebirth is invisible. You don't gain physical weight when born of the Spirit. Babies when born are sometimes weighed and the weight recorded. You might be holding your baby when he or she is born and the matron or nurse "demands" the baby back. You could become a little frustrated at that. That person takes the baby, places it in a container and puts it on a scale. The baby is being weighed! In spiritual rebirth no physical weight is

involved. You are born again of the Spirit who is invisible and “weightless”.

Stay Plugged In!

Deeds done through God are the results of the new birth. The new birth is a real spiritual birth. This is where the deeds done through God come from later. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus said we were the light of the world but let's not fool ourselves into thinking that we in our own strength have done these things. They have been done through God.

We are the light or lamp, but we are not the source of light. A lamp does not shine of itself. It needs the electric current to light up. God is our “current”. Let's stay plugged into God.

“Continuous Voltage”

In their article “Continuous Voltage” Harold Myra and Marshall Shelley talk about ‘staying plugged in’. I quote, *“Spiritual strength, as Billy Graham*

experienced it, means remaining connected to your power Source.”

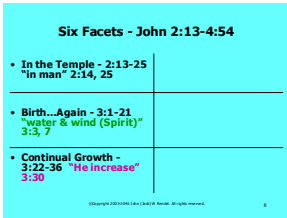
That confidence in the power of the message frees the leader from having to work over-hard on presentation techniques to convince the hearers. When a basketball player is not in a position to take a shot but puts it up anyway, coaches call it "forcing the shot."

Forced shots are usually ineffective. Coaches will tell players to wait until they're in a good position, then the shot has a better chance of success. Likewise, people can sense that efforts are forced when a leader isn't convinced his message has spiritual power.

Because Billy was well connected to his continuous voltage, he knew where the power came from. He simply made himself available to

receive it. (*Continuous Voltage*,
Leadership Journal, Harold Myra and
Marshall Shelley pp. 1 and 9, Summer
2005)

Chapter 3. John the Baptist Answers With Joy 3:22-36 “Continued Growth”



(PowerPoint® slide no. 8)

Prophet versus Prophet?

John was full of joy, and said so in verse 29, but why? People came asking him why his followers were disappearing and furthermore why they were all going to the man he had presented to Israel. They thought they were setting up prophet against prophet. Maybe they were used to seeing spiritual leaders envy each other? Here was a chance to create a scene, a little tension, a newsworthy piece of gossip. Did you hear that prophet John? Is he angry! Jesus is taking all his disciples and he is angry!

No, that was not John's reply!

John Replied

1. He said, I am not the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed One, the King of Israel. I am his herald. When a herald announces his king the herald does not expect all the people to gather to him. They gather to the king!

When the teams of the NBA (National Basketball Association of the USA) are announced at the games with a great fanfare, the person announcing the names of the players does not then demand that they allow him to go out on the court and play the game! He could not compete with them. They are the star players and he is the announcer, *their herald*. Once he has announced them he has done his job and they play. Once John had done his job he was removed and Jesus took the spotlight.

2. John said, our relationship is like the bridegroom and the friend of the groom.

The bride marries the groom, not the friend of the groom! He said, My joy is full and complete when I hear his voice. He must increase, I must decrease, or he grow and I shrink.

3. He said that each person receives what God gives you from above. In Romans 12:3 Paul teaches us not to think more highly than we ought to think of ourselves, but soberly, according to the grace given us to minister in different ways and through various gifts.

4. Next, John said that Jesus is from above and speaks from above, so his revelation is higher his. I am from the earth.

Since he comes from above, whoever accepts his word, makes God true for having come from above both he and his word are from God.

5. Next, God is not stingy with his Spirit. The more we want from him to minister as he supplies the more he will give us. He doesn't measure out the Spirit to us in tiny stingy doses. God is generous. If we want to grow he will be thrilled. He is saddened when we don't want to grow and neglect His Spirit.

In the Old Testament God spoke to the governor of his people Zerubbabel when they returned from Babylon to build a house for the Lord in Jerusalem. To encourage Zerubbabel the Lord told him through Zechariah that all they had to accomplish was not going to be accomplished by “...*might nor by power but by my (God's) Spirit,*” and he added a “*thus saith the Lord*” (Zechariah 4:6 AV/KJV), to that statement, for emphasis! And then who more than anyone else allowed God's Spirit to work in him without limit, Jesus. We limit God, Jesus never did.

6. Then the Father has placed everything in the Son's hands. That is normal, that things go from Father to Son. I, said John, am not the Christ. God had not placed everything in John's hands, nor in our hands but in the hands of Jesus.

7. Finally, people are to believe in the Son, not in John, nor in anyone else, for by believing in the Son they have eternal life! If they reject the Son they will not see life but God's judgment rests on them. Paul takes up both of these themes in the letter he wrote to the Christians in Rome. In Romans 1:18 he writes about the wrath of God which rests on man because of his sin. In Romans 3:21 Paul makes his next main point about the righteousness of God which is given to all who believe in Jesus Christ.

Who Are the Mandaeans?

So, it is incredible today to find groups who still follow the Baptist. There is one in

Iraq called the Mandaeans. I quote from a newsletter of 2005:

As you probably know, the elections in Iraq have just taken place. Please, please pray. Our Middle East North Africa Director writes, 'Although circumstances in Iraq have made it difficult to carry out our work there at the present time, we continue to reach out to the Iraqi people outside their borders, and we wait for God's time to return.'

An unfortunate consequence of the ongoing war has been the militant attacks against the historic Christian minority population and a lesser-known group called *'The Mandaeans' who are followers of John the Baptist*. Both have experienced threats, bombings and murder in recent months, driving thousands out of their ancestral homeland of the past 2,000 years and into

neighboring Jordan and Syria, creating unease about their future. We've had the opportunity to minister to some of these hurting people.'

Let Jesus Grow in You!

While we may thank God for what many prophets have done down through the centuries let us not take our eyes off Jesus! He is our salvation and our life. As John said, "He must grow and I must decrease", and that holds for all who might try to contend for the place that only Jesus can and should occupy in our lives.

One Twig at a Time

Did you grow up to be an adult overnight? Of course not. It took years, something we must remember about spiritual growth.

Growth could be compared to setting up a house. It takes time to find and put each

part and piece in place. Listen to what the Hoyts working in the Chad, Africa write.

Thank you for your faithful prayers for us. Without a doubt, your prayers make a difference in our lives. This past month has been another busy one. Praise the Lord we are finally into our house and beginning to feel like it is home as we set everything up. It has taken a while but the effort has been worth it. The canoe crossings went well, all 20 of them over a period of 2 months! *As the Nangjere say, "A bird makes its nest one twig at a time (Hoyt Update, November 9, 2005)!"*

As we pray for and work at nourishing others in their faith their growth will not be instantaneous! The farmer is patient as he waits for his crop to grow, mature and then ripen for harvest.

A Gap

A man from a town in Pakistan received an OM Bible correspondence invitation card in 1994. He placed it inside a magazine and forgot about it. Ten years later in 2004 he started reading this magazine and discovered the old torn card inside. He repaired it and sent it to us.

He has since completed a Bible course, after which we sent him a New Testament. He now has the complete Bible. He came to meet us and we showed him the Jesus film. He prayed to accept the Lord Jesus as his Savior. He has been linked up with a pastor and other believers in his town who are discipling him (Pakistan Prayer Update, M. Wakely, January 2004).

This story illustrates the patience we must have!

Chapter 4. No Bucket at Jacob's Well, Samaria 4:1-26 "Deep Drink"

| Six Facets - John 2:13-4:54 | |
|---|---|
| • In the Temple - 2:13-25 "in man" 2:14, 25 | • Eternal Drink - 4:1-26 "fountain" 4:10, 14 |
| • Birth...Again - 3:1-21 "water & wind (spirit)" 3:3, 7 | |
| • Continual Growth - 3:22-36 "He increase" 3:30 | |

(PowerPoint® slide no. 9)

The Needier

Sometimes the best way to reach a community is by reaching the needier in that community. Mercedes, from Mexico, ministered in Extremadura, Spain, reaching out to young women drug addicts. This touched the mothers' hearts and the community. People came to Christ. The mayor of the town even put Mercedes on the health and social security list without her having to pay into the system. They so appreciated her work amongst their teenagers.

Jesus met one of the needy people of Sychar a town of Samaria, enemies of the Jews. Jesus did not go to their religious shrine and cleanse it. That would have started a war! He approached it differently. He sort of came in through the “back door,” by initiating a conversation about drinking water.

***Mate* Drink**

When it comes to international drinks I have had my surprises! I first had a drink very popular in the southern cone of South America, called *mate*. *Mate* is pronounced *maá-tay*, or *máh-teh*, not *mait*, nor *mayt*. It is made of a leaf much like tea but contains more vitamins than tea. The crushed leaves are placed in the tiny gourd and hot water from a thermos is poured into the gourd on top of the leaves. Sugar may be added to sweeten the *mate*. A metal straw is used to drink it. In some areas *mate* is drunk cold and in larger gourds.

While the mate plant is native to South America, Syrians who immigrated to Argentina have taken the drink back to Syria on visits, so it is known in the Middle East.

I was speaking at an evangelical church in Luján, Argentina, where the country's largest cathedral is located. The pastor asked the OM leader, the church leaders and me to meet before the meeting.

They brought out the *mate* and as I was the main guest they gave the *mate* pot to me first. I sat sipping it, enjoying it and listening to the conversation. I sat there with the *mate* in my hand for five minutes or so wondering when they were going to bring out little *mate* pots for everyone else. Then it dawned on me that I was to return the *mate* upon emptying it so that others might also partake! Was I embarrassed! They all had a good laugh at this foreigner who did not know local customs! While in some countries *mate*

may be drunk individually in Argentina it tends to be a social event, enjoyed amongst friends, and is passed from person to person.

Captain, Do You Have a bottle of Whiskey?

He was chief pilot in a seaport until his retirement. He brought the OM ship Doulos into port ten years earlier and clearly remembered that occasion. "While I was on the bridge, I asked the captain for a bottle of whisky," he recalled. "The captain gave me a Bible instead!" For five years, he did not open the book. One day he started reading it and decided to follow Christ. He is still reading that Bible!

"I'm very glad the captain gave it to me instead of whisky," he said with a big smile. The former chief pilot is now a member of a church in his city (OM Ships Communications, OM Headlines, Oct 31-Nov 6, 2005).

This former pilot was looking for a drink just as the Samaritan woman was looking for a drink as she went to the well at Sychar. Instead of whisky he was given a book about Jesus from which he began to “drink” spiritually just as Jesus had explained to the Samaritan.

A Special Well

But Jesus was at a special well, Jacob’s well, not just any well. It held historical, cultural and religious significance. Not surprisingly it led to a spiritual conversation. It was also very deep and Jesus had no bucket. But He could draw on deeper spiritual waters the woman knew nothing of.

In the conversation she asks about places of worship and specifically mentions Jerusalem and the mountain nearby in Samaria, which was important to them as Samaritans.

Spirit and Truth

Jesus, though it might sound presumptuous or even bigoted, did not dodge the fact that the Jews had the right doctrine about Jerusalem and salvation. They had the truth. The Samaritans did not have the truth. But the Jews, many of them, did not have the Spirit. The father was looking for those who had both the truth and the Spirit to worship Him. So in the long run neither “in Jerusalem”, nor “in that mountain”, were the key issues, but rather the Spirit and truth.

God Is the Living Water

Let us go to God for that living water because he is the living water. Let's not make the mistake Israel made centuries ago. Jeremiah 2:13 tells us about it.

For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (NASB-u)

We find the same problem outlined in *Jeremiah 17:13*,

O Lord, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, Because[sic] they have forsaken the fountain of living water, even the Lord. (NASB-u)

This portion is not the only one in John where living water is mentioned. Jesus cried out at the Feast of Tabernacles, in 7:38, *He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, "From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water."* (NASB-u)

Jesus was basing his references to drink on Old Testament Scriptures.

Springs of Salvation

Two Old Testament Scriptures which refer to believers being full of living water are Isaiah 12:3, on the one hand, a short

chapter which I quote in order to include the context, and the other is Isaiah 58:11.

*1 Then you will say on that day, "I will give thanks to You, O Lord; For although You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, And You comfort me. 2 "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the Lord God is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation." 3 **Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.** 4 And in that day you will say, "Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; Make them remember that His name is exalted." 5 Praise the Lord in song, for He has done excellent things; Let this be known throughout the earth. 6 Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, For great in your midst is the*

Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 12 NASB-u)

Isaiah 58:9-11 declares,

*9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness, 10 And if you give yourself to the hungry And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness And your gloom will become like midday. 11 "And the Lord will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a **watered** garden, And like a **spring of water** whose **waters** do not fail. (NASB-u)*

So in our life, worship, and ministry let us keep the Spirit and the truth in balance.

Let's not neglect the Spirit in worship and let's not neglect the truth in worship.

Let us also remember that when the Lord comes into us he puts within us that well of living water, who is he himself. That is why it is living and keeps flowing. The living God is the fountain within us.

Overflowing with Living Water

It is possible to be overflowing with God everyday. But we need to be in touch with the source of this living water. As we read about Jesus, and read the whole Bible, which is the context of Jesus' story, the Spirit can use the truth to fill us to overflowing with his spiritual living water.

Notice how the woman of Samaria became a witness to her fellow Samaritans as she overflowed with the living water Jesus gave her. She shared with them who Jesus was, the Messiah, and what Jesus had told her, everything she had done.

Are you preaching to a congregation? Are you leading group Bible studies? Are you organizing prayer meetings and encouraging people to pray? Do you work with others in a business and have contact each day with them? Do you own a business in which you are selling items to the public and see them daily? Are you farming and meeting people as you come and go to your fields, or in the market, as you sell the produce of your crops? It is important to overflow with God's truth and God's Spirit so that your life will be a like living water to spiritually thirsty people. They will experience the refreshing living water of Jesus in you and some will ask about him. He will be glorified in your life and some will be saved.

Chapter 5. The Disciples: Trainees Are Puzzled 4:27-42 “Secret Food?”

| Six Facets - John 2:13-4:54 | |
|---|--|
| • In the Temple - 2:13-25 "in man" 2:14, 25 | • Eternal Drink - 4:1-26 "fountain" 4:10, 14 |
| • Birth...Again - 3:1-21 "water & wind (Spirit)" 3:3, 7 | • Secret Food - 4:27-42 "will & work" 4:32, 34 |
| • Continual Growth - 3:22-36 "He Increase" 3:30 | |

(PowerPoint® slide no. 10)

Food Is Work? Food Is Doing God’s Will?

I never ever equated food with work, with doing God’s will! Eating to me was not work! I stopped work to eat. I enjoyed eating.

Now the real sluggard is the one, according to Proverbs who can’t even bring his hand to his mouth to eat. It’s too much work (Proverbs 26:15).

A Famous Lunch

One of the most famous lunches I have ever seen on television was the episode in which Mr. Bean, an English comedy actor,

prepares his snack lunch on a park bench. One of the worst moments is when he cleans the lettuce for his sandwich by washing it in the park drinking fountain.

Then he searches for a way to dry out the wet lettuce. To everyone's horror he takes off his sock and stuffs the wet lettuce in the sock swinging the sock around and around his head to force the water out of the lettuce with the centrifugal force, like that of an electric spinner or extractor! Anyway looking at the bright side of it all, he was willing to work for his lunch!

Jesus' Food

In any case Mr. Bean's lunch was like any other lunch in the sense that the bread, lettuce, pickle and fish were like the ingredients of any other lunch. Other lunches might consist of bean cakes, couscous*, or soup and bread, or tortillas with beans, rice and cheese or a little meat. Mr. Bean's lunch was literally material, physical food. But Jesus'

reference to food is not to a literal physical food, but a figurative or symbolic food.

**A Berber dish consisting of spherical granules made by rolling and shaping moistened semolina wheat and then coating them with finely ground wheat flour. This is boiled and served with vegetables and chickpeas (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Couscous>, accessed 17 September 2009).*

Jesus' food was spiritual. It was the will and work of the Father that he referred to as food. Maybe He was trying to communicate just how important to him the will and work of the Father was. Most people want and many enjoy their food. Jesus wanted and enjoyed doing the Father's will and work!

Jesus said that doing God's will made a person his mother, brother and sister (Mark 3:35). This is remarkable in light of

the fact that the next story has to do with the family of faith.

Paul appeals to us on the basis of God's mercy that we prove God's perfect will by offering ourselves as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1, 2).

Ephesians 6:6 reveals a concern with our doing the will of God from the heart, as our motivation. We are to do the Lord's will from deep within, not just when the eyes of people are on us. In chapter 6 of Matthew, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his followers to hide when they prayed and not to announce the fact when they gave alms. In that context he referred to rewards which will be given to those who pray and serve, but those who do the will of God because they want people to see them will lose their heavenly reward. Those people have opted for an earthly reward, the praises of people, instead of the praises of God.

Could we use some help in doing the will of God? Yes. What about having a prayer partner like Epaphras?

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Messiah, salutes you, always striving for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God (Colossians 4:12 HNV).

Missionaries ask other believers to be their prayer partners but so should the rest of us. We need each other's prayers. Missionaries with faithful prayer partners see results. Prayer partners are not just financial donors, though important. They do business with God in prayer for the worker, for the believer.

Two Alternatives

It seems we have but two alternatives, as given in Peter's first letter, "*... in order no longer to live in the lusts of men, but in the will of God the remaining time in the*

flesh” (1Peter 4:2 MKJV). We must 1) no longer live in the lusts of men and 2) make every effort to live in the will of God. Will this be a battle? Yes it will! It may take 40 years or more before a person sees substantial victory in his or her life. We are all different and we will respond in different ways.

Look at the case of John Mark. Many commentators believe he was the writer of the second gospel. He ran away, along with the others, when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14:51). He left the missionary team of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:5, 13). But later Paul asked for him and said he had become useful for the ministry (2 Timothy 4:11). John Mark had struggles and so do we, but our goal is to learn to do God’s will and to accomplish his purpose. You may fall many times but keep this goal of doing the will of God before you. Pray that the Lord will help you do his will.

Take a day off just to meet with the Lord and ask him for his help. During that day read the Scriptures and look up verses about God's will. Read and pray. Read and pray. Make a list of areas where you have fallen down and where you are weak. Present that list to the Lord and ask him again for his help. This is no game. It is very serious. Don't just give in to living "in the lusts of men" all your life! Grapple with this issue. Fight for your spiritual life. Don't give in and don't give up!

The context of this conversation with the disciples is the visit to Sychar in Samaria where Jesus met a woman who had had five husbands and the one she lived with now was not her husband. While this woman and her men had sunk into living "in the lusts of men" Jesus came with a different motivation, which would rescue her from her failings, and not just rescue her but many from her town as well.

Out of Your Comfort Zone

Doing the will of God might send you to people and places where you are not necessarily comfortable, where you may need to “rub shoulders” with people who are not to your liking or “standard”, or to places where it does not seem “worth your while”.

James says that pure religion and undefiled is to visit the widows and orphans in their pain and to keep oneself uncontaminated by the world (James 1:27)! The Old Testament prophets called again and again on the people of their day to not take advantage of the foreigner, the orphan or the widow (Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 10:18; 24:17, 19; Job 29:19; Psalm 94:6; Psalm 146:9; Isaiah 1:17, 23; Jeremiah 5:28; 7:6; 22:3; Ezekiel 22:7; Zechariah 7:10 and Malachi 3:5).

Please pray for brothers and sisters who are reaching out to the orphan and other needy people. Maybe you could join a team or give to their ministry.

Over one Christmas season, the Vinnitsa team of OM Ukraine planned to visit schools and orphanages to present a Christmas program of songs, drama and poetry. Over the following two months, the team hoped to share this program with 1000 children and many teachers, with the vision to give hope to the hopeless. The year before, during Christmas and Easter, the team visited 15 orphanages. The following year, they hoped to visit the remaining 16 that are in their region.

Along with the special Christmas program, the team prepares gifts of toys and Christian books to present to each child. Some children also receive the first lesson in a Bible correspondence course that they can participate in during the rest of the year. Local Christians are invited to participate in this special local outreach (OM Ukraine communications, OM Headlines, Ruth Garvey Williams, Dec. 5-11, 2005).

Two Sons, Willing and Unwilling

John and Abigail Adams, the second President of the United States and his first lady, suffered a profound disappointment in their lives. It dragged out into years of anguish. In fact the “final act” took place right before the end of his four years in office. Their second son Charles, who was such an affectionate boy as a child, destroyed his own life, wasting his time and his money in alcoholic drink. He died at 30 years of age overcome with cirrhosis.

In contrast the oldest boy, John Quincy, distinguished himself in the foreign service and eventually became the sixth President of the United States. At one point having encouraged his parents to invest their “nest egg” (life savings) in a company that failed he took responsibility for it and mortgaged* his house among other things to recover that money for his parents (McCullough, David, *John*

Adams, pp. 555, 576, Simon & Schuster 2001).

*He borrowed money on the value of his house and land.

This story illustrates at least to some degree how we can do the will of our Father in heaven, as John Quincy illustrated, or not do the will of our Father in heaven, as Charles demonstrated.

What a different way to look at the will and work of the Father! Let's do it. Let's go for it!

Chapter 6. The Nobleman's Son Is Healed 4:43-54 “Family Of Faith”

| Six Facets - John 2:13-4:54 | |
|---|---|
| • In the Temple - 2:13-25 "In man" 2:14, 25 | • Eternal Drink - 4:1-26 "Fountain" 4:10, 14 |
| • Birth...Again - 3:1-21 "water & wind (Spirit)" 3:3, 7 | • Secret Food - 4:27-42 "will & work" 4:32, 34 |
| • Continual Growth - 3:22-36 "He increase" 3:30 | • Family of Faith 4:43- 54 "They believed" 4:53 |

(PowerPoint® slide no. 11)

The Prophet in His Own Land, Among His Own People

As He came into Galilee, Jesus made an observation recorded in John 4:44, “(Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)” In other words it is quite tough for a prophet in his own land. Maybe some of you ministering in your own country know that experience.

Earlier people had tried to get John the Baptist annoyed by comparing his ministry with that of Jesus. But in the long run whose honor should we be concerned

about? We should honor the One who gives us life. We should believe on the One who gives eternal life! We can be thankful for the prophets, but let's not put them above Jesus! He is the Giver of life. He gives eternal life to us.

Faith Challenged

In this scene in Galilee Jesus gives life to the son of an official. He is the Giver of life. But he challenges the official about his faith. He said unless you see miracles you won't believe. He was challenging the man to believe without seeing the miracle right away. In fact he actually sent the man away empty handed, at least in terms of seeing a miracle! The official had to go back home believing, without seeing!

From a Distance

Jesus also gave back to the official the life of his son from a distance. He did not go and touch the son of the official, nor lay his hand on him nor say any special words over him. John used this to emphasize

that Jesus did this sign by spiritual means, not physical! Jesus did not use a magic finger to touch the boy or a special magic formula pronounced over him.

Further and to the point, would the nobleman believe Jesus without having seen his son healed as yet? He would and he did because he turned around and left for home, believing Jesus' word, without having seen. Jesus had challenged him with the words, "*Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe (4:48 NASB-u).*" This man, however, did believe without seeing. However, the nobleman did see his son healed. In spiritual history some things have been accomplished and have been witnessed, such as Jesus' miracles and teaching, his death and resurrection; other things we still wait for and have not yet seen, such as Jesus visible return to earth.

A Family of Faith

The life this boy and his family received was not just physical restoration but spiritual restoration and life. The Bible says that the official, that is the father, and all his household believed!

As John responded with joy at Jesus' voice so this family responded with faith to what Jesus said and did.

The Family of Faith

So then, whenever we have the opportunity, let us practice doing good to everyone, especially to the family of faith (Galatians 6:10 ISV).

We are to be especially concerned about doing good to the family of faith, referring to the church.

Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have fighting between us, between your shepherds and my shepherds. After

all, we're family" (Genesis 13:8 MSG).

Abraham's concern is normal, that mature members of a family be concerned about family members treating each other well. Paul simply follows this tradition exhorting spiritual family members to be good to each other.

When I was a boy I argued and fought with my brothers and sister. But as I matured I realized that was wrong and changed my attitude, learning to treat them with respect and love. We are now friends, not enemies.

Let's remember that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:10). If a fellow Christian upsets you remember that they are not the true enemy. The true enemy is the flesh in each of us which causes so much trouble and heartache. In any case learn to leave this kind of

problem with the Lord and pray for that person.

Sticking to the Family

It is a privilege to be a member of the family of faith, but to draw on its strength a person must stick close. The writer to the Hebrews exhorts us to not give up meeting together or exhorting each other (10:25). Let me quickly say that it does not mean we must necessarily be at every meeting the church organizes although that may sound heretical. The number of meetings we attend is not always a measure of spirituality. Time needs to be given to serving others as well. But we must meet with other believers, the members of the family, because we are blessed through joint worship, teaching, prayer and fellowship.

Is It in Us?

Is it in us? I hope so and hope it's more than sports and energy drinks like Gatorade or Irnbru!

Let us go forth as witnesses of the Lord Jesus, full of joy at the preaching of others, as well as our own opportunities to preach, and as a family full of faith, ready to minister to each other!

A Review

| Six Facets - John 2:13-4:54 | |
|---|--|
| Clean House 2:13-25 "in man" 3:14, 25 | Changed Person 4:1-26 "fountain" 4:14 |
| Birth...Again 3:1-21 "water & Spirit" 3:3, 5-7 | Secret Food 4:27-42 "will & work" 4:34 |
| Continual Growth 3:22-36 "herald of joy" 3:30 | Living Son 4:43-54 "family of faith" 4:53 |

(PowerPoint® slide no. 12)

So let's review what we have been saying. We have six stories and they tell us about six key factors in spiritual life and growth. Let's use what I call "Another Wordless Book", with the words added, to review.

The following pages in the indices represent a "wordless book" you can put together and use to teach the steps to

spiritual life and growth as you help new believers grow in their faith.

Indices

Another Wordless Book

Page 1

Cleansing

John 2:15 "... and (Jesus) drove them all out of the temple..." NASB-u

Page2

Birth

John 3:7 "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be **born again.**' NASB-u

Growth

John 3:30 "He must **increase**,
but I must decrease. NASB-u

Drink

John 4:14 but whoever drinks
of the water that I will give him
shall never thirst; but the water
that I will give him will become
in him a **well of water**
springing up to eternal life."
NASB-u

Food

John 4:34 Jesus said to them,
"My **food** is to do the will of
Him who sent Me and to
accomplish His work. NASB-u

Family

John 4:53 So the father knew
that it was at that hour in which
Jesus said to him, "Your son
lives"; and he himself believed
and his whole **household**.
NASB-u

Table of Contents of John

| Introduction | Five Feasts | | | Conclusion | |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| <p>THE SAVIOR 'S APPEARING</p> <p>THE GLORY OF HIS FULLNESS, GRACE AND MORE GRACE 1:1-28</p> <p>1. The Word, who is God and with God, full of grace and truth, who made the world, became flesh and dwelt among us. Moses gave the Law but we are born of the Word, who gives us of his fullness, grace and more grace.</p> <p>2. John was not the Christ or one of the prophets but a voice crying, "Make straight the way of the Lord."</p> | <p>1. PASSOVER 2:13-4:54 (Birth of nation)</p> <p>THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD (4:42) PART I</p> <p>Six facets of spiritual life:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The <i>cleansing</i> of the temple and <i>man</i>. 2. <i>Born</i> again. 3. <i>Increase</i> (growth). 4. <i>Drink</i> of living water. 5. My <i>food</i> is to do the Father's will. 6. A <i>family</i> believes. | <p>Believing and (Not) Seeing: The Nobleman and Thomas</p> | | <p>5. PASSOVER 11:55-20:31 (Death and life of first born)</p> <p>THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD (12:32) PART II</p> <p>Six facets of purification (11:55):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anointed with perfume. (a sweet odor of sacrifice, Lev. 1:9). 2. Washing feet (daily cleansing). 3. Pruning (now you are clean). 4. Prayer (mediation of priest). 5. Defiled in the praetorium, substitute for Barabbas (sin for us). 6. If you forgive (forgiveness). | <p>UNTIL THE SAVIOR RETURNS</p> <p>JESUS REVEALED HIMSELF AGAIN ... A NET FULL OF LARGE FISH 21:1-14</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At Jesus' command they caught a net full of 153 large fish. They ate some for breakfast. 2. The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" |
| <p>THE LAMB OF GOD 1:29-42</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (The next day, i.e. second day) Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, identified by the Spirit's anointing. 2. (Again the next day) Look, the Lamb of God, called the Christ by his first disciples who had been John's disciples. Jesus told them to come and they would see where he stayed. Simon to be called Cephas (Peter). | <p>2. A FEAST 5:1-6:71 (Unnamed feast, in which the Sabbath is emphasized. Possibly it was the Feast of the Dedication as Passover was near, see 6:4)</p> <p>THE SAVIOR'S WAY WITH OFFENSES AND OFFENDED PART I</p> <p>Two offenses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accused by Jews of breaking the Sabbath. 2. Drinking Jesus' blood and eating his flesh is a hard saying for his disciples. | <p>Believing and Knowing: Peter and Martha</p> | <p>4. DEDICATION 10:22-11:54 (Inaugurated with the rededication of the temple in 164 BC after an offense to the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes)</p> <p>THE SAVIOR'S WAY WITH OFFENSES AND OFFENDED PART II</p> <p>Two offenses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accused by Jews of blasphemy. 2. Martha and Mary complain he did not come before Lazarus died. | <p>MY LAMBS, MY SHEEP 21:15-21</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To Peter Jesus said: Feed my lambs; tend my sheep; feed my sheep. 2. Follow me. | |
| <p>YOU SHALL SEE GREATER THINGS ... SIX LARGE JARS BRIM FULL OF WATER TURNED INTO GOOD WINE 1:43-2:12</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (The next day) Nathaniel, an Israelite in whom there was nothing false called Jesus the Son of God and King of Israel. Nathaniel to see greater things, angels...upon the Son of Man. 2. (Also the third day) Six large stone jars full to the brim of good wine at the wedding feast. Jesus revealed his glory and his disciples believed on him. | <p>Believing and Worshipping: The Man Born Blind</p> | | <p>3. TABERNACLES 7:1-10:21 (Commemoration of forty years living in tents in the wilderness where a generation sinned and died)</p> <p>THE SAVIOR'S WAY WITH SIN AND SINNERS</p> <p>3 stories concerning sin:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The world does evil. 2. Whoever is without sin ... 3. Neither this man nor his parents sinned that ... | <p>A WORLD FULL OF TRUE TESTIMONY 21:20-25</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "... until I return." 2. We know that the testimony of this disciple, who leaned on Jesus at the last supper, is true. 3. The world could not contain all the books about the things Jesus did. | |

An Approach to Studying And Preparing Messages

1. Pray as you read and meditate, asking the Lord to enlighten your mind.
2. Read the whole book of the Bible you have chosen for study four times over. If you have read the book recently then read it fewer times.
3. Read the chapter or portion of the Bible book you are studying two times quickly.
4. Read quickly through the chapter of this book two times.
5. In the case of this study go over the outline at the beginning of this book or if using other studies review any outline provided.
6. If there is a corresponding PowerPoint® presentation read through it.

7. Begin to jot down thoughts, quotes, Bible references and stories that come to mind.

8. If a diagram would help people see the point, try to draw it.

9. If using this book begin to accept or discard parts of the chapters in this book and add your own thoughts and stories.

10. Look for significant words that are repeated or words that build progressively a theme throughout the text.

11. Try to find objects such as a stone, a branch of a tree, a piece of bread, a feather, glass of water, a cloth, perfume, a bottle of oil, a pencil, a piece of paper, a bowl, a knife, a spoon, a mud brick, a rule (ruler), a piece of rope or anything else you can use to illustrate a point in the message or study that will help people remember that point.

12. Remember that even up to the last seconds before you begin to speak or give your lesson, thoughts will come to you. Some of my best stories came to me minutes before I rose to speak.

13. As you prepare remember to persevere even when you feel dry and uninspired. To see a harvest a farmer must plow, disk, drag and cultivate a field. Going up and down a field plowing can be long and arduous but is all part of the preparation.

14. Keep asking the Lord to help you and give you wisdom. Ask him to help you think clearly about both the Scripture and your audience, and their needs.

15. Use the questions who? what? where? why? when? and how? to bring out the major themes in the portion.

16. Keep in mind the three steps of 1) observation, 2) interpretation and 3) application.

- 1) Observation is seeing what is actually **written** in the Bible.
- 2) Interpretation for those of Bible times, as well as for us, is the **meaning** of the Bible text you are studying.
- 3) Application has to do with **living and obeying** the lessons learned.

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