



SLG Gospel of John  
Week 10      Day 64-70

**Daily Devotion Guide**  
Life Together Series: Five-Year Plan  
[www.totalgrowth.org](http://www.totalgrowth.org)

**I. Invocation and Adoration:**

**1. Invocation Prayer**

“Use me, my Savior, for whatever purpose and in whatever way you may require. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel: fill it with your grace. Here is my sinful and troubled soul; quicken it and refresh it with your love. Take my heart for your abode; my mouth to spread abroad the glory of your name; my love and all my powers for the advancement of your believing people; and never allow the steadfastness and confidence of my faith to abate.” Amen. (D. L. Moody)

**2. Adoration through Psalm 144**

(We’ll use this Psalm, not for today’s Bible reading, but for the sake of focusing our thoughts on God.)

Read slowly this passage at least three times and each day gather one thought about this psalm that points to God’s character and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

**II. Confession**

Pause now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your sins and ask for forgiveness.

**III. Thanksgiving**

List, one by one, things for which you should give thanks.

#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 19:31-42**

This week we shall finish the study of the Gospel of John. Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

“The Preparation” had become a technical term for the “Preparation for the Sabbath” that is Friday, and according to the Jewish law the dead body of an executed criminal was not to remain all night “on the tree” (Deuteronomy 21:23), but was to be buried that same day. (NICNT, *John*, 722)

- (1) How does the request to remove the dead bodies from the cross speak to the double standard of the Jews in terms of not wanting to desecrate their land?
- (2) The breaking of the legs presumably would speed up the death of the crucified ones so that they would not be able to breathe; and the flow of blood and water from Jesus’ body also seems to indicate the fact that He was dead: what is the significance of:
  - a. The fact that Jesus’ legs were not broken? (see Ps. 34:20; Exod. 12:46; Num. 9:12 about Passover regulations), and
  - b. The piercing of the side of Christ? (see Zech. 12:10)
- (3) As this incident so described is peculiar to John’s Gospel, what reasons does he give for including this account in his writing? (Jn. 19:35-36)
- (4) Does the reading of this account strengthen your faith? Why or why not?
- (5) What risk were Joseph and Nicodemus taking in asking for Jesus’ body for a proper burial?
- (6) What might have motivated them to do so now?
- (7) 75 pounds of embalming spices seemed quite excessive (but fit for king’s burial, see 2 Chr. 16:14). How would you compare this embalming of Jesus when He was dead to the anointing by Mary when He was alive in John 12:1ff?
- (8) The colt Jesus used to enter Jerusalem was one that no one had ridden on (Mk. 11:2), and now He was buried in a tomb that no one had ever used. Do you know think they were mere coincidences? What might be the message behind them?
- (9) When we read the last few words of this chapter, we might get a sense that Jesus finally rested! But how different was this rest from that of the death of any human being?
- (10) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

#### **V. Meditative Reflection: Hypocrisy is Destructive**

**“Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.” (Jn. 19:31)**

The Roman custom was to leave the bodies of the crucified on their crosses as a warning to others, so it would be rather unusual to remove the body of Jesus immediately from the cross. However, the Jews were so pious that they did not wish to desecrate their land by having these crucified bodies hanging overnight on the cross, because Deuteronomy 21:22-23 clearly commands:

“If someone guilty of a capital offense is put to death and their body is exposed on a pole, you must not leave the body hanging on the pole overnight. Be sure to bury it that same day, because anyone who is hung on a pole is under God’s curse. You must not desecrate the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.”

The sin would be made more grave in their opinion if they allowed the bodies to be hung during “a special Sabbath”.

As it turned out, Jesus’ crucifixion did signify that He was under God’s curse, but not for His own sin but the sin of the people. Leon Morris is right on when he says, “The Jews did not want their land defiled by the dead, but they were not concerned that they themselves were defiled by their deeds.” (NICNT, *John*, 723)

Their hypocrisy almost caused the breaking of Jesus’ legs which would have nullified the prophetic words concerning the Lamb of God (see Ps. 34:20; Exod. 12:46; Num. 9:12), if not for God’s intervention. Unfortunately, such hypocrisy continues today even within the church of God, and we should subject ourselves to constant self-examination, lest we inadvertently conspire with the evil one to destroy the work of God.

<b>Day 65</b>
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#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 20:1-9**

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Can you imagine what Mary Magdalene and the other women must have gone through in the last two nights leading up to this morning?

- (2) Why did these women run to the tomb so early by themselves? (see note below)
- (3) Who was Mary Magdalene? (See Lk. 8:2)
- (4) Based on what Mary told Peter and John, what did she think had happened?
- (5) It is rather unusual for John to write this account all in the present tenses (although the NIV translates all the verbs in the past tense). Can you imagine why?
- (6) John describes the burial cloth was “folded up”; what might the significance be?
- (7) John Peter and John ran to see what happened. They saw and believed the words of the women, but not Christ’s resurrection. Why? Did Jesus not tell them in advance many times? Which might be the reason:
  - a. Their spirits were simply too shattered?
  - b. They felt completely betrayed by Jesus?
  - c. They felt guilty of their own betrayal of Jesus?
  - d. They were too afraid of the Jews (20:19)?
  - e. They were too “slow of heart” (Lk. 24:25)?
  - f. It was simply too incredible?
- (8) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

**Note:** Perhaps, it is helpful to set out the order of events on Easter morning, combining the accounts of the four Gospels:

- In the early morning, the women went to the tomb of Jesus to anoint His body. (Mk. 16:2-3)
- The three women were Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James) and Salome, followed by other women. (Mk. 16:1 & Lk. 24:10)
- The three women found the stone had been removed by an angel (Matt. 28:2).
- Mary Magdalene hurried to tell Peter and John, who ran toward the tomb. (Jn. 20:2-4)
- Then, Mary (the mother of James), Salome and then the other women arrived at the tomb, entered it and saw angels who assured them Jesus had risen. They ran in joy and fear back to inform the disciples (Matt. 28:8)
- Peter and John arrived and saw the empty tomb without understanding and left (Jn. 20:4-10)
- Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb (outrun by Peter and John) and stood there weeping, and Jesus revealed Himself to her (Jn. 20:11-18).
- As the other women returned to tell the disciples, Jesus appeared to them (Matt. 28:9-10).

## **V. Meditative Reflection: Christ is Risen!**

**“Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)” (Jn. 20:8-9)**

While the four Gospel accounts give varying details of the events of that Easter Sunday morning, these accounts are far from conflicting; in fact, they are complementary, and many scholars have drawn up approximate timetables of the events of that first Easter Day (see note on today’s Scriptural Reflection). They show that the Gospel accounts can be reconciled.

While some scholars note that some of the events of that morning “cannot be explained”, that does not mean that these accounts are not true. In fact, all four Gospel accounts affirm that the tomb was empty as solid evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is also noteworthy that John, in particular, writes the bulk of chapter twenty (up to verse 29) in the present tense, which, in my opinion, is his way of emphasizing the fact that he is giving his first-hand eye-witness account. Indeed, he has heard with his own ears, seen with his own eyes, touched with his own hands, the Risen Lord — the Word of life (1 Jn. 1:1).

This is John’s way of answering all the critics of his days (including those of our time) who seek to deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

<b>Day 66</b>
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#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 20:10-18**

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Why did the two disciples decide to go home?
- (2) Why did Mary Magdalene decide to stay at the tomb, all by herself?
- (3) Why were the angels there in your opinion? What for?
- (4) Why didn’t they simply tell Mary what had happened, instead they asked her why she was crying? Wasn’t it obvious?
- (5) What did Mary address Jesus as in v. 13?
- (6) Why didn’t she recognize Jesus?
- (7) Why did Jesus also choose to ask instead of tell her the truth?
- (8) What did she intend to do with Jesus?

- (9) What did Jesus ask Mary to tell the disciples? What is the significance of His words?
- (10) Tactically, what should be more important: appearing to the disciples first or to Mary first? Why then did the Lord choose to appear to Mary first?
- (11) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

## V. Meditative Reflection: Showing Himself to Those Who Love Him

**“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned toward Him and cried out in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher).” (Jn. 20:16)**

Of all the events that are described by the four Gospel accounts, the encounter by Mary Magdalene of Jesus touches me most.

Although John only mentions Mary Magdalene in his Gospel account, it is clear from the Synoptic that she was going to the tomb together with the other women (Mk. 16:1 & Lk. 24:10). This is further affirmed by her report to Peter and John saying, “*we don’t know where they have put Him*” (Jn. 20:2; italics mine.)

However, John singles her out in his account for a reason. She was the one who ran to tell John and Peter of the empty tomb, and she was the one who stayed behind alone afterwards at the tomb.

Her action shows both her courage and her love for the Lord and she was awarded with likely being the first one who saw the Risen Lord that morning.

There are several points in the description by John of Mary that are worth-noting:

- (1) After the departure of John and Peter who did not offer comfort or help to her, Mary was left alone standing outside the tomb crying. Lenski remarks that it denotes “unrestrained weeping”: the death of Jesus was already traumatic enough to her, and now even the body was missing. Maybe, all she wanted was to see the body of Jesus just for the last time, and even that was deprived of her!
- (2) Even at the sight of angels, there was neither shock nor fear: one has to wonder why, and Luther provides us with his insight. “No man is so brave-hearted but what he would be terrified if unexpectedly he should behold an angel; and she even a woman. Yet she moves about so that she neither sees nor hears nor inquires about anything; so complete her heart is elsewhere.” Indeed, there was only one thing her heart focused on — Jesus!
- (3) However, when Jesus appeared to her, she couldn’t recognize Him: the sorrow was so deep that she was not really looking at Jesus. While the angels and Jesus called her

“woman” at first, the Lord now called her, “Mary”; she instantly recognized this familiar address by the Lord — so loving and tender. And, she responded also with her usual loving and tender address to the Lord by saying, “Rabboni!”

Frankly, from a tactical point of view, it would have been far more important for the Lord to appear to the eleven disciples who needed to be commissioned to be witnesses for the Lord. However, the Lord has chosen to appear first to Mary Magdalene and it reminds me of two sayings by the Lord:

“Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven — as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” (Lk. 7:47).

No, I am not saying that Mary Magdalene was that prostitute in Simon’s house, but just the same, the driving out of seven demons by the Lord from her marked such a great forgiveness that evoked even greater love from her (Lk. 8:2); and

“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (Jn. 14:21).

Indeed, true to His promise, the Lord is obliged to show Himself to those who love Him, and certainly Mary Magdalene showed greater love for Jesus than others that He would not bear to have her grieve unnecessarily for an extra second and He showed Himself to her at the soonest possible moment — even before His return to the Father (Jn. 20:17)!

<b>Day 67</b>
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#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 20:19-31**

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Can you imagine what might the disciples be discussing before Jesus’ appearance to them, following the report of the women and of Peter and John?
- (2) Since Jesus said, “Peace be with you” to them at least twice, it would not be a standard greeting. How important were such words to the disciples at the time, and what might it mean to them to see Jesus even though the doors were locked?
- (3) How significant was it for Jesus to show “the nail marks in His hands” and the scar on His side to the disciples?

- (4) Are these scars of defeat or of victory?
- (5) Consider the following things that Jesus did right at His first appearance to all the disciples, all within the context of their being commissioned:
  - a. What is meant by “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you”? Does it refer to “what”, “how” or “why”?
  - b. How significant is the receiving of the Holy Spirit by the disciples (especially in light of their being sent)?
  - c. V. 23 appears to link the commission to “forgiveness”. How are the two related?
  - d. On what is forgiveness based throughout the teaching of the Scriptures? (See 1 Jn. 1:9)
- (6) What might be the reason that Thomas was not there a week ago with the disciples? Why did he refuse to believe the collective witnesses of so many disciples? What might be his reasoning?
- (7) Do you think Thomas did put his fingers into Jesus’ hands and side? Why or why not?
- (8) How would you have responded if you were Thomas? Why did he say, “My Lord and My God”? What did he mean?
- (9) Why are those who believe without seeing blessed? In what sense are they blessed? Are you?
- (10) At these words, John draws a conclusion to his Gospel account:
  - a. What is the purpose of the writing of the Gospel of John?
  - b. Do you think the Gospel of John has served his purpose? Why or why not?
- (11) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

## V. Meditative Reflection: In Defense of Doubting Thomas

**“But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”(Jn 20:25)**

Although, Thomas is often portrayed as one who had the least faith among the eleven disciples and was dubbed, “Doubting Thomas”, I do not think that he was necessarily of less faith than the other ten disciples, and for that matter, you and me.

All eleven disciples were hiding in fear after the crucifixion of Jesus, thinking that they might be next. In addition to fear, it is not too far-fetched to say that their faith in Christ was greatly shaken, if not shattered:

- They had devoted three years of their lives following Jesus; and in their words they had given up everything to follow Him (Matt. 19:27) — now with His cowardly death, their

Messianic dream was shattered and they had now become a laughingstock of their friends and loved ones;

- As much as they had been warned by Jesus of His suffering, and have been foretold of His resurrection, the suffering of Jesus, and especially His crucifixion was just too human and did not and could not befit the Messiah, let alone the Son of God — they were totally thrown into confusion; and
- They truly loved the Lord — the arrest, the kangaroo court, the beating, the spitting and finally the nailing to the cross — just too horrific and heart-broken.

As a result, although they had heard from the women about the empty tomb and even John and Peter had verified the words of the women, their sorrow, their bewilderment, and their shattered dreams (not to mention a sense of betrayal by Jesus, perhaps) — all have prevented them from entertaining the idea that perhaps, Jesus had really risen just as He said!

If Jesus did not show Himself to them that first Sunday evening, they would not have believed any report of Jesus' resurrection. The fact that Thomas was not hiding with them that first evening might suggest that he had given up on the Lord and on himself and had decided to part company with these disciples. So, he must have laughed at the words of these ten disciples of having seen Jesus. At best, in his mind, they had seen a ghost, that was why he sneered at them and said, "Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." (Jn. 20:25)

In fact, I admire his honesty. At the same time, I also admire his instant repentance. I do not believe he dared put his fingers to touch the Lords' scars. All it took was the Lord's appearance, and his repentance was complete and total as he said, "My Lord and my God!" (Jn. 20:28)

According to church traditions, Thomas was the one who brought the gospel to India and died as a martyr.

<b>Day 68</b>
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#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 21:1-14**

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

John pointed out that this was the third appearance of Jesus to the disciples (v. 14) and this particular appearance appears to be taking place within the context of Jesus' command in Matthew 28:7, 10; Mark 14:28.

- (1) There were only seven disciples mentioned here, where might the rest be?
- (2) Simon said, "I'm going out to fish". Did he mean for fun, to kill time while waiting for Jesus, or an attempt to return to his former profession? (Note that he appeared to be using nets to catch a full load, not hobby fishing)
- (3) How similar was the whole setting with that in Luke 5? Was it accidental?
- (4) Since they did not recognize Jesus or His voice, what made John suddenly realize, "It is the Lord"?
- (5) Why did Peter jump into the water and yet he and the other six disciples dare not talk to Jesus when they reached the shore? Do you think they even looked directly at Jesus? Why or why not?
- (6) Why did Jesus choose to repeat this miracle of Luke 5?
- (7) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

## V. Meditative Reflection: Reclaiming First Love for Christ

**"But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first" (Rev. 2:4-5, NASB)**

As John draws his Gospel account to a conclusion, he purposely adds an account of their fishing in the Sea of Tiberias as a finale. To me, this account must have been very significant to John himself.

As much as the Lord has appeared to them twice already (and this would be the third time according to 21:14) and they appeared to have recovered from their disbelief, a sense of failure must have lingered among them. All of them had pledged to die with Jesus and not to disown Him, not just Peter (Matt. 26:35) and all have deserted Him at the worst possible moment as Jesus needed them most, at the time of His arrest, not just Peter (Matt. 26:56).

In order that they could be fully restored to Him, the Lord knows that first and foremost, they needed to restore their "first love" for Him, and for at least Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, it was the time they decided to leave their boat, the huge catch and their family (see Lk. 5).

As a result, the Lord re-created the same scene all over again:

- At the sea of Tiberias (or Gennesaret);
- After a night of futile effort, catching nothing;
- Only to listen to Jesus by casting the net on the side of the boat; and
- Resulting in catching a number of fish!

That “*déjà vu*” feeling must have caused John to cry out, “It is the Lord” and Peter to jump into the water, because it served as a powerful reminder to them of how determined they were to love and follow the Lord. As a result, the subsequent reiteration of His calling to Peter to “follow me” (21:19) was certainly meant not just for Peter, but for all of them!

Indeed, no matter how far we think we have fallen from grace, the Lord asks us to “remember” and to reclaim our “first love” for Him, and He extends to us the same reiteration, “Follow me”.

<b>Day 69</b>
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#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 21:15-17**

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Given the preceding context, what might be the most likely conclusion about what Jesus meant by “more than these”? Can you list two possibilities?
- (2) Jesus has purposely changed Simon’s name to Peter in John 1:42. Why did He choose to call him Simon as He questioned him three times? What might be the message?
- (3) Irrespective of what language Jesus actually spoke in, John, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, clearly uses a play on words here with the word “love” as follows:
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> question: “do you love (*agape*) me?” Peter’s reply: “I love (*phileo*) you.”
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> question: “do you truly love (*agape*) me?” Peter’s reply: “I love (*phileo*) you.”
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> question: Jesus changed to asking, “do you love (*phileo*) me?” Peter’s reply: “I love (*phileo*) you.”

While modern scholars try to play down on the difference between the use of the two words “*agape*” — God’s kind of love, and “*phileo*”— personal affection, the play on word cannot be mistaken (see Meditative Reflection article of today). What might this tell you, both about Jesus and Peter?

- (4) Why did Jesus respond to Peter’s replies with the emphasis on the feeding or taking care of His sheep?

- (5) Why was Jesus so concerned if Peter loved Him, especially with “agape” love?
- (6) What if the Lord asks you today the same question: what is your answer?
- (7) While Jesus asked Peter to respond to His question with feeding of His sheep, what do you think He expects of you today?
- (8) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

## V. Meditative Reflection: Agape or Phileo?

**“When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ he said, ‘you know that I love you.’” (Jn. 21:15)**

As much as one of my beloved professors once remarked, “It is absurd to drill on the different meanings of love used in this dialogue between Jesus and Peter because they were speaking in Aramaic”, and one New Testament scholar also remarked directly to me that, “Modern scholarship has ruled out the difference between the two words (i.e. *agape* and *phileo*)”, I think following words of Lenski are still valid and I truly believe that the use of the words by John was not accidental, but inspired:

“Jesus asks, ‘ἀγαπᾷς με’ (do you love me); and Peter answers, ‘φιλῶ σε.’ To this day, despite the information long available regarding these two words, some reverse the meaning of these two verbs and let ἀγαπᾷν refer to the lower form of love (the English “like”) and φιλεῖν to the higher form. And they confuse the true ideas, for they think of ἀγαπᾷν only as love for a benefactor and of φιλεῖν as love for the person himself. Older commentators think that the two verbs show no difference. An appeal to the Aramaic is beside the mark. While Jesus here spoke this language, the narrative is recorded in Greek. The Aramaic may or may not have two verbs that are the exact counterpart of these used in the Greek; every language has means at hand besides bare verbs for indicating desired differences of thought, such as are most decidedly indicated in this entire section (v. 15-17). The verb ἀγαπᾷν is the love of intelligence, reason, and comprehension, coupled with corresponding purpose; in this its content vastly outranks the other type of love. And φιλεῖν expresses the love of mere personal affection or liking, including even the passions where the context requires, and no intelligence or high purpose is involved; this content places the verb on a low level. It could never be said of God that He φιλεῖ the sinful world; as far as φιλεῖν is concerned, He could only abominate the foul world. Jesus never asked us to

love our enemies in the sense of φιλεῖν; He never Himself loved His enemies in this way. But ἀγαπᾶν — yes, with this love God did love the world, and we can love our enemies, comprehending all that is wrong with them and reaching out with the mighty purpose of removing that wrong, sanctifying the world, converting our enemies. Compare 3:16, and every other passage in which either of the verbs is used in this Gospel. Only in a few cases, where either type of love would apply, either verb might be used; but even then the great distinction would remain - the two are never equal.” (Lenski, *John*, 1418-9)

<b>Day 70</b>
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#### **IV. Scriptural Reflection: John 21:18-25**

Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day.

- (1) Why did Jesus say, “Follow me” to Peter? Had he not followed Jesus for three years already? Did it not mean he might have stopped following? What really had happened to Peter?
- (2) In repeating His call to Peter, why did He have to foretell Peter’s future in v. 18?
- (3) What was Peter’s immediate reply to this repeated call? What does it tell you about Peter, even at this time?
- (4) What was Jesus’ reply to Peter’s response to His call? What was Jesus’ emphasis?
- (5) Reflect on this third appearance of Jesus: what, in your opinion, was the core reason for Jesus’ 3rd appearance? What was its significance?
- (6) From the last two verses of the entire gospel (21:24-25), write down in your own words the concluding points of John about his gospel:
  - a. Who was John? How special was he among the disciples?
  - b. Why was he qualified to write this gospel?
  - c. How did he qualify the contents of his gospel?
  - d. What was the purpose of his writing? (Refer back to 20:30-31)
- (7) Reread John 1:1-14, and summarize the main points of John’s witness or testimony.
- (8) Do you think he has presented a powerful enough testimony to back up all the points he has made?
- (9) What is the main message to you today and how may you apply it to your life?

## V. Meditative Reflection: Can John's Gospel be Trusted?

**“This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.” (Jn. 21:24)**

“There are obvious and striking differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels (Mt, Mk and Lk). These include:

- John contains no narrative parables, no account of the transfiguration, no record of the Lord's Supper, no mention of Jesus' temptation and no report of Jesus casting out demons.
- John includes a vast amount of material not found in the synoptic tradition, such as the records of extended conversations with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman and the disciples, as well as of significant miracles (e.g., the turning of water into wine and the resurrection of Lazarus).
- John recounts an extensive Judean ministry for Jesus, including several visits to Jerusalem, whereas the Synoptic Gospels focus on His Galilean ministry.
- Certain features of John's presentation also raise chronological difficulties for understanding Jesus' action in the temple (Jn 2) and the precise sequence of events during Passion Week.
- Perhaps most significant, notable stylistic differences emerge between John's Jesus, who discourses poetically on themes of light, life, witness and truth, and the synoptic Jesus, who argues forcefully and consistently on the theme of the kingdom of God.

The accumulation of these differences has generated speculation regarding the historical reliability of this document as a testimony concerning Jesus (20:31). There are, however, significant reasons for believing John to be historically accurate:

- In any attempt to assess the reliability of John, pride of place should be given to John's own testimony about the nature of his literary endeavor. John alone among the Gospels provides an explicit statement of purpose (see 20:30-31). This purpose statement reflects the writer's intention to present selective accounts of Jesus' ministry, aimed at persuading the reader that Jesus of Nazareth really is the promised Messiah. The apostle was well aware that Jesus did many other things, commenting at the close

of his Gospel account, “If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (21:25). Many of the apparent Johannine omissions are thus essentially acknowledged by John and, therefore, are not to be considered as evidence against historicity.

- No other Gospel addresses the theme of truth as frequently as John’s. He used a series of signs and a parade of witnesses to reinforce the main thesis of his work. The trustworthiness of these witnesses, including John’s own explicit claim to have been an eyewitness (19:35), is integral to his purpose and should remind the reader that accuracy was deeply important to this apostle and author.
- This concern for accurate reporting is reflected in the exact recording of numbers (2:20; 21:11); the translation of foreign terms (1:38, 41; 20:16); and the precise depictions of persons, places and customs (2:6; 4:20; 5:2; 19:40).
- A close reading of John reveals numerous agreements with the Synoptic Gospels, in terms both of broad themes and of specific details.

Modern readers of John are wise to refrain both from overstating the apparent contradictions and from excessive efforts at harmonizing John with the other Gospels. John successfully accomplished his stated aim: to present an eloquent, accurate and persuasive testimony that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God (20:31).” (Archaeological Study Bible, p.1761)

## VI. A Time for Silence

You have meditated much with your intellectual faculty today. Now have a moment of silence (the length is up to you, 5 or even 30 minutes), and ask God quietly, “Lord, is there any important message from you today that I might have missed? Show me, your servant is listening?”

## VII. Supplication

Use the following chart to cover people and ministries that you want to remember before the Lord, apart from praying for yourself:

	Your family	Other people	Church Ministries	Other Ministries	City & World	Others
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

## VIII. Benediction

“The end of all things is near. Therefore (may you) be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Amen” (Adapted from 1 Pet. 4:7).