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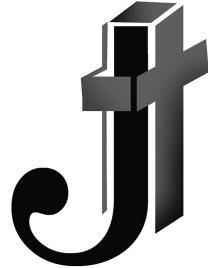
TABLE

SERMON GUIDE

WEEKS 1-8

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Publisher's Note: These sermons are fairly unedited and are certainly not "uniformed" in design or style. The purpose of the Sermon Companion to *Meeting God's People* is to provide some sermonic directions for teachers and preachers. These are offered as potential templates for the corresponding devotionals in *Meeting God's People*. Part of our purpose in this is so that you can see different styles. Part of it is that different readers who use this material will surely find some things among these 52 that will be helpful to them. We offer them pretty much as given to us. We asked each preacher to provide his own editor. We are thankful to each one of these good men and for you as well. May God bless the use of these lessons toward to health of *Meeting God's People*. Special thanks to Joey Sparks for his help making this work come together.

WEEK 1

Genesis 3:15

J E F F
A B R A M S

“Cain and Abel—A Broken Brotherhood”

(Genesis 4:1-15)

Cain was a murderer of the worst (and first) kind. He killed family. He killed (at that time) his only brother. He killed his parents' son. In one violent act of anger, he wiped out 25 percent of the world's population!

In the world's short history, there had never been a murder, never been a funeral...until a brother killed a brother.

These days, murder is tragically common... In America there are usually about 20,000 murders each year—worldwide, about 450,000. Sadly, we are all too familiar with murder. We are inundated with media coverage, novels, books, crime shows, and movies detailing, perhaps even glamorizing, murder.

But when Cain killed his brother Abel, this was a killing before there was killing. Prior to this there had been no death of any kind. No one had dug a grave.

But that all tragically changed...and the world changed...and a family changed...when Cain killed Abel.

The first murder, murderer, and man murdered...merits our attention.

What's the story here? Most importantly...what is God trying to teach the brotherhood from this first brotherhood gone bad?

Two brothers had noble professions. One a shepherd, the other a tiller of the ground.

Two brothers were required to sacrifice. One got it right. One got it horribly wrong.

There is understandable confusion here. At first glance nothing stands out as radically different in what each brother gave. As one who tended sheep, Abel predictably offered a lamb and as a grower of various crops, Cain predictably offered something of his garden.

God was pleased with Abel and displeased with Cain. Why? It's a question that will be debated until Jesus returns.

Perhaps we are making this more difficult than it ought to be.
Read everything the Scriptures say about this matter.

Genesis 4:3 "Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord."

Genesis 4:4 "Abel brought the firstborn of his flock and of their fat."

Genesis 4:4 "the Lord respected Abel and his offering."

Genesis 4:5 "but He did not respect Cain and his offering."

Genesis 4:6 God said to Cain, “If you do well, will you not be accepted?”

Hebrews 11:4 “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain...”

1 John 3:12 “Not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous.”

Jude 1:11 “...they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit...”

What do we learn from the above passages?

Cain brought, “an offering,” Abel brought, “the firstborn.” See the difference? Abel gave the best and Cain did not. In giving an inferior gift, Cain did not, “do well.” Cain’s offering was therefore, “not respected” because it was not, “excellent.” Furthermore, Cain was, “of the wicked one,” his works were “evil,” and his way was the way of one who runs “greedily.”

The issue wasn’t so much the type of sacrifice he offered but the type of greedy heart from which it was offered.

The problem was not that God preferred meat over salad...He simply preferred the best over less than the best—and He still does.

God desires and deserves the best of us. This is the chief lesson for the brotherhood of believers to grasp.

But this “Cain and Abel” saga also gives today’s brotherhood other morsels to chew on...

Consider for example what Cain lost.

1. His temper (Genesis 4:4-5)

Anger rarely or never blesses anyone, makes one more eloquent, more godly, more respected, or wiser.

2. His brother (Genesis 4:8)

Sin affects more than just the sinner—all in the sinner’s circle of influence are harmed...perhaps even fatally. A brother lost a brother. Parents lost a son. And sheep lost their shepherd...and our sins can cost us our Shepherd.

3. His connection with God (Genesis 4:13-14)

Sin’s greatest penalty is to be separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Grace’s greatest accomplishment—reunion with the Father through Jesus!

4. His home (Genesis 4:16)

It seems this was a family tradition. As his sinful parents lost their home in Eden, sinful Cain lost his home in Nod.

5. His legacy (Jude 1:11)

Cain is known today for murder, anger, greed—his life a sad monument to where wickedness leads.

Abel speaks nobly from his grave, “give your best.”

And from his grave Cain finishes his brother's sentence with, "or else!"

A closing thought...

What if, when questioned by God about his inferior offering, Cain had responded differently?

What if he had taken a deep breath and chosen remorse over rage? A true tragedy would have been avoided.

"Cain and Abel" is a cautionary tale for us. Being "our brother's keeper" compels us to choose grace over grudges and reconciliation over revenge. Always!

SERMON HELPS:

- Contrast what angers God with what typically angers us.
Shouldn't we give whatever angers us the test...does this anger God?
- Explore the benefits to all our relationships of “letting not the sun go down on our wrath.” Is there a more helpful passage for relationships (including marriage) than Ephesians 4:26?
- Consider the remarkable grace extended to Cain in God providing this wicked murderer a “saving mark.” What’s the message for us about the amazingness of grace?
- Does the following point that some make have any merit? “Cain was unwilling to shed blood in offering a sacrifice to God but had no qualms about shedding the blood of his brother?”

WEEK 2

Isaiah 53

DALE
JENKINS

The Suffering Servant and The Salvation He Secures

Isaiah 53

1. **The Pain He Faced:** *"He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain"* (v. 3). Jesus took on the physical, emotional, and spiritual pain of ours and replaced it with healing and hope.
2. **The Punishment He Endured:** *"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities"* (v. 5). Christ got the punishment that was due us. He took it all so we could be reconciled to God.
3. SONG: Back in the late 80's the group Acapella sang a song that movingly illustrates this truth:



Illustration: I heard our dad (Jerry Jenkins) use this illustration many times:

Years ago, in a one room, school house, on the frontier a new school began. Year after year teachers would come and then leave. One year they hired a very young teacher. Everyone thought he would fail. The first day he said for this to work well we have to have rules, but I'm going to let you make the rules. Someone said we should have a rule that you can't steal anything. The teacher wrote that rule on the chalkboard. Someone else said we should have a rule that you shouldn't punch anyone or hurt anyone. The teacher wrote that rule on the board. Before too long, The chalkboard was full of rules. He then said for this to work right there has to be punishment if the rule is broken, what do you suggest? A biggest boy in the room said if anyone breaks the rules they should get three hard licks with the paddle. All agreed. Everything went well until one day little Johnny was caught stealing a boy's lunch. The teacher called him to the front for him to receive his punishment. When the teacher said for him to take off his coat to receive the hard licks from the paddle, Johnny didn't have a shirt on. The teacher asked him what was up. He said well, my mom died a few weeks ago and dad is doing the best he can but he can't get the clothing washed and we don't have enough food. I took the lunch to take home to my brother and sister. Everyone was moved, but the teacher said, the rule has to be enforced. The big boy in the room spoke up and said, I will take Johnny's licks for him. That is what Jesus did, the law has to be fulfilled, death for sin, Jesus stepped forward and took our licks for us.

4. **The Price He Paid:** "The punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (v. 5). Jesus paid the ultimate price, offering Himself as the sacrifice to secure peace with God. The Son of Glory left the riches of heaven and came and dwelt among us. "He who was rich became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich." Simply read this lengthy text: 2 Corinthians 5:10-21.
5. **The Path He Opened:** "We all, like sheep, have gone astray... and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (v. 6). We left the path, we went astray. Jesus opened the way for lost sinners to return to the fold of God.
6. **The Promise He Fulfilled** "*After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied*" (v. 11). Christ's resurrection and victory bring assurance of redemption! He is the Lamb. He is the fulfillment!

- Dale Jenkins, Spring Hill, TN

WEEK 3

John 2
“Destroy this Temple”

T Y L E R
A L V E R S O N

Destroy This Temple

John 2:18-22

INTRODUCTION:

- A. ILLUSTRATION: Isidor Isaac Rabi, the son of Jewish immigrants, was an American physicist who won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1944 for his discovery of nuclear magnetic resonance. In a story published by the *New York Times* on January 19, 1988, Rabi was asked, “Why did you become a scientist, rather than a doctor, lawyer, or businessman, like the other immigrant kids in your neighborhood?” He responded by saying, “My mother made me a scientist without ever intending it. Every other Jewish mother in Brooklyn would ask her child after school: ‘So? Did you learn anything today?’ But not my mother. She always asked me a different question. ‘Izzy,’ she would say, ‘did you ask a good question today?’ That difference—asking good questions—made me become a scientist!”
- B. Asking good questions is a key to success in not only science but also many different areas of life. One area where asking good questions is essential and helpful is when we meet around the Lord’s table on the first day of the week and prepare to do so throughout the week.

JOHN 2:18-22: From the passage that we are studying today, I would like for us to ask two questions that are very significant as we participate in communion on the first day of the week. These

two questions should also control how we live the rest of the week.

A. Question #1: Who Is Jesus?

- a. CONTEXT. When this passage is read in context, Jesus was in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover and had just finished cleansing the temple (2:13-17). Seeing those who were selling animals to be sacrificed and moneychangers at their tables and being motivated by zeal for God's house (cf. Psalm 69:9), Jesus drove them out of the temple complex with a whip of cords and poured out the coins and overturned the tables of the moneychangers. While the Synoptics seem to suggest that Jesus cleanses the temple as a result of the merchants taking advantage of people and thus making a house of prayer into a den of robbers (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-47; cf. Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11), John depicts Jesus as rebuking them for simply doing business in the temple.
- b. Instead of thinking through the sign that was presented before them in the cleansing of the temple, the Jews demanded a miraculous sign from Jesus that demonstrated His authority to do such a thing. Jesus' response was puzzling to the Jews and was later used against Him (cf. Matthew 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29): "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Thinking physically, the Jews could not understand how Jesus could claim the ability to

rebuild a torn down temple in three days when it took forty-six years to build it originally. John explains to us what Jesus was actually referring to. He was not referring to the physical temple in Jerusalem. As 2:21 states, “But he was speaking about the temple of his body.” What is the actual message that Jesus is communicating? When the Jews eventually destroyed Jesus’ body in His suffering and crucifixion, His body would be raised up three days later.

- c. What does this tell us about Jesus’ identity? Who is Jesus? Jesus is the new temple. Jesus is the fulfillment of the temple’s meaning and purpose. To give a few examples:
 - i. The temple was the location of the fullness of God’s presence on earth. As God in the flesh, Jesus fulfilled that purpose (John 1:14).
 - ii. The temple was the location where God met with man. Now, God can only meet with man through Jesus (John 14:6).
 - iii. The temple was where the Father’s glory was manifested. Now, the Father’s glory is manifested through Jesus (Hebrews 1:3).
 - iv. The temple was the center of all worship offered to God. Jesus is now the center of all worship (John 4:23-24).
 - v. In the temple, bloody sacrifices were made to God for sin. In Jesus’ body, the ultimate bloody

sacrifice was made for sin (John 19:16-30) and was raised up three days later (John 20:1-31).

vi. Just as Jesus aligned Himself as the new tabernacle (John 1:14), He is the new temple.

B. Question #2: How Should We Respond to Jesus?

- a. How did Jesus' disciples respond to Him in this passage?
 - i. When Jesus was raised from the dead, three thoughts surfaced and began to live in the disciples' hearts in 2:22.
 1. First, they remembered what Jesus said.
 2. Second, they believed the Scripture (cf. Psalm 16:10).
 3. Third, they believed the words of Jesus.
- b. When we consider the identity of Jesus as the new temple, how should we respond to Him? How should we respond to Him when we meet around His table? How should we respond to Him in our daily lives?
 - i. First, we should be encouraged to remember what Jesus has said. Our minds should go back to what Jesus teaches us about Himself.
 - ii. Second, we should be encouraged to believe and trust the Scriptures.
 - iii. Third, we should be encouraged to believe and trust what Jesus has said.
 - iv. Seeing Jesus as the new temple should motivate us to remember in our minds and to believe in our hearts what the Scriptures teach

us. When we do that, we will have no choice but to obey and live by them on a daily basis.

CONCLUSION: As we meet around His table on the first day of the week and prepare to meet around His table throughout the week, let's live in relationship with Jesus for who He is. Who He is controls who we are as we seek to remember and believe what we find in the pages of God's Word.

SERMON HELPS:

A. Word Study.

- a. In John 2:19-21, John uses the word ναός (*naos*) three times. It is used 45 times throughout the New Testament and is not found any other time in John.
- b. This is different than the word ἱερόν (*hieron*), which is used in John 2:14-15. It is used 72 times in the New Testament and 9 more times in John (outside of 2:14-15).
- c. Both terms are translated as “temple” throughout the New Testament every single time that they are used.
- d. In John, ναός is used only in the conversation where it refers to Jesus’ body. When the physical temple in Jerusalem is being referred to in John, he uses the term ἱερόν.
- e. There is a slight difference between the two terms. According to Thayer, ναός refers only to the sanctuary consisting of the Holy Place and Most Holy Place. On the other hand, ἱερόν refers to the entire temple structure.

B. Quotes.

- a. “It may be said with certainty that the new presence of God on the earth would be raised from the dead within three days of His death and burial.” Source: David L. Lipe, *John 1-12*, Truth for Today Commentary: An Exegesis and Application of the Holy Scriptures (Searcy, AR: Resource Publications, 2019), 108.

b. “John explains that what Jesus was really referring to (in v. 19) was his own body, that body in which the Word became flesh (1:14). The Father and the incarnate Son enjoy unique mutual indwelling (14:10–11). Therefore it is the human body of Jesus that uniquely manifests the Father, and becomes the focal point of the manifestation of God to man, the living abode of God on earth, the fulfillment of all the temple meant, and the centre of all true worship (over against all other claims of ‘holy space’, 4:20–24). In this ‘temple’ the ultimate sacrifice would take place; within three days of death and burial, Jesus Christ, the true temple, would rise from the dead.”

Source: D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 182.

c. “Indeed, if the authorities had eyes to see, the cleansing of the temple was already a ‘sign’ they should have thought through and deciphered in terms of Old Testament Scripture.” Source: D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 181.

WEEK 4

John 6:33-35 **“I Am the Bread of Life,** **pt 1”**

A A R O N
A U S T I N

John 6: 33-36

Introduction

- 1) Very few things in this world have as long of a history as bread. Very few are as vital to us as bread.
 - a) Well over 350 mentions to bread (in one form or another) throughout scripture.
- 2) Jesus makes statement – John 6:33-36 “I am the bread of life.”
- 3) What is meant by His statement?
 - a) Learn about significance of bread throughout scripture.
 - b) Then we find our answer.

Background texts to consider

- i) Genesis 3: 18-19
 - (1) By sweat of face you will make bread.
 - (a) Not something that comes easily, must require work in order to attain.
- ii) Genesis 14:18
 - (1) Bread is given as a gift from Melchizedek to Abram.
- iii) Genesis 18:5
 - (1) Bread is given as a gift from Abram to men of God.
- iv) Exodus 12: 34
 - (1) Unleavened bread used during Passover.
- v) Exodus 16:4
 - (1) Bread that rains from heaven.
- vi) Leviticus 24:5-9
 - (1) Showbread
 - (2) Numbers 4: 7 continual bread

vii) Matthew 4: 2-4

- (1) Not bread alone, but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

viii) Matthew 6:11

- (1) Give us this day our daily bread.

ix) Matthew 14: 13-21

- (1) Abundance of bread

x) John 6: 33-36

- (1) Bread of life

- (a) Comes from the Father

- (b) Comes down from heaven – reference Exodus

- 16:4

- (c) Gives life to the world

- (d) Will not hunger or thirst

- (i) Greek – peina – to ardently crave; seek with eager desire, hunger

- (ii) Greek – dipsa – to desire or long for ardently, thirst

- (iii) Will be satisfied

xi) Matthew 26: 26-29

- (1) Unleavened bread (likeness of Passover Exodus 12) used in the institution of the Lord's Supper

- (2) I Corinthians 11:23-29 – to be taken in a physical and a spiritual way continually.

Application

- i) What do we learn of Jesus by referring to Himself as the bread of life?

- (1) Our spiritual sustenance is through Him!!

(a) Matthew 4:4 & Deuteronomy 8:3

(b) We should be so full of Him we are not hungry for anything else!

(i) Illustration of bread being served at restaurants (Italian) before meals. For example Olive garden, would be one most are familiar with

(ii). *I live in an Italian community in Krebs, OK, we have a couple of well known establishments; Pete's Place, Roseanna's, you should try them out if you are in SE Oklahoma.*

(iii) You sit down and order as they bring you bread. You may be hungry for Lasagna when you first sit down. If you are like me, much of the time spent waiting for your dish to arrive is spent eating bread (breadsticks).

(iv) When order arrives, you may not be hungry because of amount of bread eaten whilst waiting.

(c) May our spiritual appetite be so satisfied by Christ we do not have any desire left to satisfy sinful desires. HE is what sustains us. Nothing else. No more hunger.

(2) Jesus is always present wanting to sustain us.

(a) Reference back to the showbread mentioned in Numbers 4: 7, Exodus 25:30

(i) Here the show bread is referred to as the continual bread.

(ii) If commands are followed, the bread is renewed each Sabbath, and there is never a time when the bread is not present on the table. Never a time when the priests would be without bread.

(iii) He has assured we have access to Him!

1. John 14: 6
2. Matthew 11:28-30

(iv) The question is, are we looking for Him?

(3) We need His sustenance daily! – Matthew 6:11

(a) Why is bread mentioned in this context on a daily basis?

(b) We eat daily! Plain and simple. We have a daily dependence on food. Not a day goes by when we are not taking in nutrition, exception is of course fasting, but that is always followed by a period of supplementation.

(c) It would be foolish to think we could live a healthy and strong life if we only consumed food once or twice a week.

(i) Why do we do assume we can do this spiritually?

1. Each one of us must have a daily dependence on Him Spiritually! This is the only way we can be strong and healthy spiritually! Daily dependence.

2. II Corinthians 4: 16

3. I Corinthians 15:31

WEEK 5

John 6:48-58
“I Am the Bread of Life,
pt 2”

D A N N Y
B O G G S

TRUE FOOD AND TRUE DRINK

(John 6:48-58)

By Danny Boggs

Introduction:

- A. I was about to eat the bread of the Lord's Supper one Sunday morning when our 3-year-old son looked up at me with a smile and asked, "Are you hungry?" We had been trying to teach him why Christians eat the Lord's Supper, so I answered him in a whisper, "Yes, I'm hungry for Jesus!"
- B. What about you? Are you hungry for Jesus?
- C. I'm hungry for lunch, too.
 - 1. There comes a point during every Sunday morning sermon when a number of us get to thinking about lunch.
 - 2. The people interacting with Jesus in John 6 had trouble thinking about more than the food Jesus had multiplied for them from one boy's lunch.
 - 3. The miracle excited them and had them momentarily thinking in more powerful directions (v.15).
 - 4. But the next day Jesus knew their bellies had reasserted themselves (v.25).
- D. Jesus and his fellow Jews have been having quite the interchange about food, life, and faith in him when we get to verse 48.
- E. Read John 6:48-58.

I. “I am the bread of life.”

A. Why had these folks followed Jesus to the other side of the sea? Free food! And they hoped to get on the free food list for the rest of their lives (v.34), just like another generation did when God fed them with manna in the wilderness for 40 years.

B. Jesus can do better than the bread and fish or manna and quail because Jesus is more than the Moses of their history: “I am the bread of life.”

1. Jesus says “I am...” about 23 times in the Gospel of John.
2. Most audaciously he says:
 - a. I am the bread of life (v.35,48), the bread that came down from heaven (v.41), the living bread that came down from heaven (v.51).
 - b. I am the light of the world (8:12, 9:5).
 - c. I am the door (10:9).
 - d. I am the good shepherd (10:11).
 - e. I am the resurrection and the life (11:25).
 - f. I am the way, the truth, and the life (14:6).
 - g. I am the true vine (15:1).
 - h. And before Abraham was, I am (8:58).

(1) All the overtones in the other sayings become outright in this one.

(a) He is the self-existent God who gave Moses his job (Exodus 3).

(b) He is the one from everlasting to everlasting (Psalm 90:2).

(2) All of this is Jesus in his own words.

(3) Do not underestimate Jesus!

(a) Think more about him.

(b) Think more of him.

C. He made the most audacious claims and did the most

amazing things—like feeding the 5,000.

1. His momentous sayings form *what* we believe about Jesus.

2. His miraculous signs are *why* we believe in Jesus.

II. Bread is for eating.

A. Whether it's toast for breakfast, a couple of slices for a sandwich at lunch, or a delicious roll with dinner, bread is for eating.

B. What's the best bread?

1. Some people think it's a warm roll with cinnamon butter at Texas Roadhouse.

2. Some people would say it's a throwed one from Lambert's Café.

3. Some people say it has to be homemade, like grandma's sourdough.

4. Don't you think the bread Jesus handed out to the 5,000 was the best bread they had ever eaten?

5. But no one makes the best bread. Jesus is the best bread!

C. How do you eat the bread of life?

1. When Jesus gets a little more specific and says, "Eat my flesh and drink my blood," it's a gruesome

thought unless you keep up with what he is really saying.

2. When the world of the first and second century didn't keep up with what Jesus was really saying, it became one more reason they opposed Christians—cannibals!

D. Again, how do you eat the bread of life? When the Jews ask, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” in verse 52, Jesus has already answered in these ways in John 6...

1. Work for it (vv.27,29). Know that nothing is more deserving of your effort.
2. Believe in Jesus (vv.29,35,40,47).
3. Come to Jesus (vv.35,37,44,45).
4. These things are what you will do when you hear and learn from the Father (v.46).

E. Have you ever eaten anything only once?

1. Did you swallow a medicine that took care of a problem once and for all?
2. Did you eat something really good somewhere that you have never been able to find again?
3. Did you eat something so bad that you would never eat it again?

F. Eating the bread of life is not a one-time thing. Once the Jews asked, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”, Jesus kept on answering with a “keep on” kind of verb:

1. Whoever “feeds” on my flesh and drinks my blood (v.54).

2. Whoever “feeds” on my flesh and drinks my blood (v.56).
3. Whoever “feeds” on me (v.57).
4. Whoever “feeds” on this bread (v.58).

G. It’s impossible for an informed Christian to read John 6 without thinking at all of the Lord’s Supper. Whoever feeds on Jesus will eagerly want to eat the Lord’s Supper every Sunday. But eating the Lord’s Supper is only part of eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

H. Eating the bread of life is consuming Jesus and being consumed with Jesus every day! He becomes what you your life is all about.

III. Do you have the craving?

- A. All the way through John 6, people are wrestling with what to think about Jesus and what to do with him.
 1. One day he surprises them with food, and they love it!
 2. There’s so much of it all the sudden that it leaves them thinking he must be the Prophet to come (v.14). They want him to be their king (v.15).
 3. They chase him across the Sea of Galilee (v.22-25). They want more of his food.
 4. But Jesus is the food. Can they believe it? Is he really what they want?
 5. By the end of the day, “many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him” (v.66).

6. Simon Peter, however, was convinced that Jesus had what he wanted and couldn't get anywhere else (v.67-69).
- B. Do you crave life with Jesus? The life he gives is more abundant (John 10:10).
 1. Existence is already God's gift to us.
 2. Some people are dead even though they are alive (Eph. 2:1, 1 Tim. 5:6).
 3. The devil wants us to think that the high life is always getting a little more of what this life has to offer.
 4. But we come to Jesus and believe in Jesus when we have seen enough disappointment to be dissatisfied with this life.
- C. All the way through the discussion Jesus has emphasized the kind of life (1) that only God can give and (2) that he only gives in Christ.
 1. When we keep feeding on his flesh and drinking his blood, we have his constant companionship (v.37,57). What's better than that right now?
 2. And then...
 - a. He gives eternal life (vv.27,40,47,54,58).
 - b. If we die before he comes with eternal life, he will raise us up (vv.39,40,44,51,54).
- D. In more ways than one, I can't live without Jesus!

Conclusion:

- A. "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink" (v.55).

B. Life in Christ is the only true life. Are you in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4) and living true life?

C. When Jesus had told all about his eating his flesh and drinking his blood that day, many of his disciples admitted, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” (v.60).

1. Can we really believe that Jesus is everything he says he is?
2. Can we really allow ourselves to be so reliant on Jesus?

D. It's a paradox:

1. Only Jesus can satisfy us completely. “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst” (v.35).
2. But those who really get him can never get enough of him!

SERMON HELPS

“Truly, truly...”

Jesus says “Truly, truly...” 25 times in the Gospel of John. Our word “amen” is actually the Greek word *amen*, and it’s translated “truly” in the ESV and other versions. When Jesus says, “Truly, truly...”, it’s like he is saying, “This is so good (or so true), I have to amen myself. It’s so good, I have to amen myself before I even say it. In fact, it’s so good, I have to amen myself twice before I even say it.” In the New Testament, only Jesus says, “Truly, truly...” and only in the Gospel of John. He says it four times in John 6.

Live, Life, Die, Death, Eat, Drink

Jesus’ original listeners had to be careful to keep up with exactly what Jesus meant by what he was saying. He didn’t mind then having to exercise their minds to get hold of his truth, either. He used words with more than one meaning, depending on their contexts. He used words metaphorically, too.

In our congregation, it’s easy for two people to think we’re talking about the same person when we’re not. We have four men named Gary and four women named Linda.

Let’s be sure we understand what Jesus means when he uses words with multiple meanings, and let’s be sure to help our listeners understand.

Sources of Truth about Jesus

We wouldn't have to have the Bible to know that Jesus was a real first-century personage. Bystanders and antagonists to the church in its first few centuries (like Josephus, Pliny, Tacitus, Suetonius, Lucian, Celsus, and Porphyry) sprinkled crumbs of truth about him.

But who better to tell us all the truth God wants us to know about Jesus than John? He was an eyewitness (John 15:27, 20:30-31, 21:24-25; 1 John 1:1-3). He was one whom Jesus loved (John 13:23, 20:2, 21:7, 21:20). He was given the right words by the Holy Spirit to tell us about Jesus (John 14:25-26, 16:12-15). He suffered for steadfastness in telling what he knew about Jesus. If Jesus is the bread of life, John ought to know.

Value Meal

A few years ago for the introduction to the sermon I would preach on Mother's Day, I shared this list of costly meals. Maybe I googled it. You could update it with a new search. You could get a \$110 bowl of ramen at the Fijimake Gekijyo restaurant in Tokyo, the Ultra-Dog hotdog for \$145.00 at Capital Dawg in Sacramento, or go to Italy and spend \$12,000 on Chef Viola's Louis XIII pizza loaded with lobster, caviar, eight different cheeses, and seasoned with hand-picked pink Australian river salt. If you only wanted dessert, maybe the \$1,000 Golden opulence Sundae at New York City restaurant Serendipity 3 would be sweet.

Jesus redefines "value meal": "And the bread that I give for the life of the world is my flesh" (John 6:51). He paid the price. We enjoy

it at his expense. But it's worth whatever it takes to keep eating it (John 6:27).

Craving

In his book *Salt, Sugar, Fat*, Michael Moss shows that over the last few decades some of America's largest food producers carefully studied how to help us crave all the junk food we eat. On average we eat four whopping teaspoons of salt a day and 33 pounds of cheese and 70 pounds of sugar a year; 11% of our diet comes from saturated fats. Campbell Soup, General Foods, Kraft, PepsiCo, Cadbury and other big companies hired "crave consultants" to help them determine our "bliss points," the point where food companies can "optimize" our cravings. Many of the former executives interviewed for the book won't touch the foods they try to get us to eat.

The true food and true drink of Jesus flesh and blood need no help to attract the sincere soul.

I Am

You and I say "I am" lots of things. On the downside, "I am..." hungry, confused, scared, hurting, tired, dying, lost, etc. On the upside "I am..." full, getting it, confident, feeling good, ready, alive, on my way, etc.

Only Jesus can say with authority and reality, "I am the bread, the light, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the true vine, the way, the truth, and the life" because he is genuinely the I AM (John 8:58).

WEEK 6

John 12:2-11
“Jesus Is Anointed”

K Y L E
C L I C K

The Anointing of the Lord - John 12:1-11

(Displaying Love and Devotion)

Intro:

I. Context (John 12:1, 2)

- A. Six days after the Passover feast, Jesus came to Bethany to visit Lazarus, Mary, and Martha.
- B. The crowds gathered to see Lazarus sitting beside the One who raised him from the tomb.

II. In John 12:1-11 we see 2 displays and reactions to the signs of Jesus

A. First, the actions of the unbelievers

- B. Then the display of love and devotion from a believer
- C. READ John 12:1-11

Body:

I. Actions of the Unbelievers

- A. First example of unbelievers in this passage is the Pharisees
 - 1. The Pharisees were losing their credibility and prestige among the people (9-11)
 - 2. They could not deny these signs of Jesus so they needed to do something

3. In hardened disbelief, they sought to destroy the evidence by killing Lazarus
 - a) They hoped this solution would bring back the many Jews who were going away and believing in Jesus
(12:11)

4. This is the ultimate sign of disbelief and true rebellion
 - a) This type of rebellion is tragic because it will only end in destruction (Matthew 18:6)
 - b) Jesus said that unbelievers would die in sin and face the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:29; 8:24)

B. Second example is Judas 12:5

1. Judas may have not been an unbeliever to the extreme of the Pharisees but he was not letting Jesus reign in His life and his actions showed this.
 - a) He thought the ointment could've been sold to give to the poor (12:5)
 - b) But knowing how he was embezzling funds as the treasurer of the group, he was more likely interested in opportunities to put some in his pocket
2. What Judas was doing was being more concerned about the physical than the spiritual
 - a) He was devoted to money rather than to Jesus

C. Application

1. We know people in the world around us that have heard and disbelieve.
 - a) One group that believes and displays inaction
 - (1) By being caught up in this world, they hear Jesus and then go about their busy lives, forgetting about Him
 - b) Then there are ones that, in their unbelief, try to discredit Jesus and His followers
 - (1) They typically are the ones you encounter who might go out of their way to make fun of or discredit Christianity in the work place
 - (2) Maybe those on the internet that have found a contradiction in the Bible.
 - (3) This is the same attitude as the Pharisees
2. We also know those that proclaim to believe but by their actions but you can tell their love and devotion is not with Christ.
 - a) Sadly we know some in the Lord's church.

D. But lets look at the flip side of this coin.

II. Actions of a Believer (1-8)

A. Mary had experienced so much with Jesus

1. She saw her brother resurrected from the dead (Jn 11)
2. She had heard first hand, many of His teachings
3. John 11:29-32 shows us that she greatly loved Jesus

B. Now that Jesus was in her home, sharing food and fellowshipping with the family, she took the opportunity to display her love for Him

1. In verse 3 we see that she had a very expensive container of pure nard ointment which was something many people could not afford
 - a) Judas said it was worth 300 denarii which is equivalent to 11 months wages
 - (1) Illustration
 - (a) Average annual income in the U.S is \$80,000 in 2024
 - (b) That's \$73,333 in the U.S in 2024
 - b) She came to Jesus and poured it on His feet filling the whole house with the smell
 - c) She then wiped His feet with her hair.

C. In this one act, she demonstrated her love for Jesus, her willingness to sacrifice for Him and her humility in His presence

D. Application

1. Are we devoted to our Lord like Mary?
2. Do we love Him so much that we bring everything to Him?
3. In our worship do we show love and devotion to our God like Mary did?
4. Are we willing to sacrifice for Him like Mary?
5. Are we coming to Him in humility like Mary?
6. Like Mary, believers today can display love and devotion to Jesus.
7. Like Mary, believers can humble themselves before Him in prayer.
8. Like Mary, believers can be willing to sacrifice everything.
9. Like Mary, believers can display love for Christ through acts of service to others.

I. Conclusion

- A. Recap
- B. Application for the Lord's Supper
- C. Invitation

SERMON HELPS

Applications for the Lord's Supper:

1. When we come together to partake in the Lord's Supper are we reflecting on our devotion to our Lord and Savior?
2. Our thoughts should be flooded with love for HIM as we focus on the cross.
3. We should be thinking of ways we can sacrifice things in our lives for HIM.
4. How we can serve HIM in our daily walk.

Invitation Song Ideas:

1. Pierce My Ear
2. Create in Me a Clean Hearts
3. As the Deer

WEEK 7

John 16:16-22

D A L E
J E N K I N S

“From Sorrow to Joy: Abundant Living in Jesus’ Promise”

John 16:16-22

1. Perceive the Purpose of Your Pain

"You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy" (v. 20).

- **Action Step:** Think back on some of the hurts of your past. Reflect on how God has brought you through them and the purpose they served to put you where you are today. Journal specific lessons learned.
- **Action Step:** Memorize Romans 8:28 and recite it during difficult times to remind yourself of God's purpose. Nothing will do more for your spiritual life more than memorizing Scripture.

2. Place Your Trust in God's Plan

"A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me" (v. 16).

- **Action Step:** Write a prayer surrendering areas of life where you're waiting for God's timing, asking for peace and patience. Be specific. Ask!
- **Action Step:** Use your cell phone or computer and set reminders to thank God for His perfect timing in past situations.

3. Proclaim the Power of Christ's Promise (Resurrection)

"You will see me again, and your hearts will rejoice" (v. 22).

- **Action Step:** I challenge you to spend a few minutes today after lunch with all who will in your house to read and meditate on 1 Corinthians 15:54-58 about the resurrection.

4. Practice Joy in Christ

"No one will take your joy from you" (v. 22).

- **Action Step:** Begin a gratitude journal! Or at least a page. Start focusing on the blessings and benefits you personally are finding in your relationship with Christ and with His People
- **Action Step:** Memorize Psalm 16:11. Quote it out loud when you feel discouragement creeping in.

5. Provide Comfort to the Pain (or Problems)

"When she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world" (v. 21).

- **Action Step:** You know people who have had a loss this past year. Reach out to a friend or family member in sorrow on this Tuesday afternoon, let them know you have not forgotten them.
- **Action Step:** Contact us (TJI@TheJenkinsInstitute.com) and ask for a free copy of Jeff's book "Beyond the Valley of Death: Comforting Thoughts When I've Lost My Spouse," and when it arrives write a note of love in the front and share it with them.

6. Prioritize an Eternal Perspective

"Your sorrow will turn into joy" (v. 20).

- **Action Step:** Create a list of challenges you're facing and write how each might be shaping you for what's next here and then for eternity.
- **Action Step:** Spend time praying for an eternal mindset, ask God to help you see beyond the present moment.

WEEK 8

**Luke 19:29-44 &
Matthew 21:11-17
Presentation of Jesus**

**S T A N
D A U L K**

I still remember it like I was yesterday. I was sitting in my office 30 years ago, and one of my elders, S.T. Gregg, called me and asked if I could come to his house. I was working on a sermon, and I told him that I would be there in a few minutes. When I walked into his house, he told me that he just found out he had lung cancer, and the cancer had already spread to other parts of his body. We cried, and we prayed. I tried to encourage him the best I could. He lasted 6 weeks from the day he found out he had cancer. I watched him over those 6 weeks and learned so much even though it was a really tough time for me as well. We were very close. During those last 6 weeks he focused on things that really mattered. He wanted to make sure his wife and family were taken care of financially. As long as he was able, we went around talking to the lost and especially the erring pleading with them to come back to the Lord. He was always focused on others and how he could serve them. On one occasion when he was bed bound, a couple from church came to visit him: Curtis and Vicky McClard. He motioned for Curtis to come close to him, and Curtis did. He asked Curtis how he was doing spiritually and if there was anything he could do to help him. He was a shepherd to the end. Several years ago, the Alumnus of the year at International Bible College was Mark Wills. Mark graduated from IBC and went back to Wisconsin to preach and evangelize. Mark got sick with cancer and was not doing well. The doctor asked him if there was anything he could do for him. Mark said, "Yes. Would you and your wife have a Bible Study with me?" The doctor agreed, and Mark baptized the doctor and his wife into Christ. Mark maintained his mission until he passed from this life. "And He

said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.’” Mark 16:15-16

The final week of Jesus begins with His Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem.

Luke 19:28-44 ²⁸When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹And it came to pass, when He drew near to [g]Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, *that* He sent two of His disciples, ³⁰saying, “Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring *it here*. ³¹And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing *it*?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”

³²So those who were sent went their way and found *it* just as He had said to them. ³³But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?”

³⁴And they said, “The Lord has need of him.” ³⁵Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. ³⁶And as He went, *many* spread their clothes on the road.

³⁷Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸saying:

“ ‘Blessed *is* the King who comes in the name of the LORD!’
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

He maintained His Mission.

I. He knew the cross was ahead of Him, but He maintained His Mission.

Luke 9:51 “Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.”

Matthew 20:17-19 “Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, ‘Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.’”

God has truly blessed me in my ministry. I have been with the Bernie Church of Christ for over 35 years. But it would have been more difficult for me to go to Bernie knowing all the challenges I would face through the years. I tell other preachers if I went to visit Bible majors and told them all the struggles that I faced in my ministry many would choose not to go into ministry. I have been falsely accused; I have had people who wanted to fire me; I have had to deal with people who suffered with various mental illnesses; and I have been threatened. These are just a few of the struggles you deal with in ministry. Knowing the outcome, I would do it all over again, but going into it with knowledge of the future would be a different story. Jesus knew he was going to the cross, but He moved forward anyway.

II. Jesus is praised by the people, but he maintained his
Mission

Luke 19:37-38, Matthew 21:15-16

Jesus is worthy of all praise. As Christian we are called to praise Him. Peter said in I Peter 2:5 “You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

I Peter 2:9-10 “But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

As God’s holy priesthood we are to offer the sacrifice of praise that is acceptable to God.

“Therefore, by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.”

Hebrews 13:15.

There is a difference between the giving of thanks and praise. We can thank God for the day or the blessings that he bestows upon us. When we proclaim His praises, we tell others about the beautiful day God has given us. We can tell others how God has blessed us. I can thank God for my godly, wonderful, beautiful wife, or I tell someone how God has blessed me with a godly, wonderful, beautiful wife. That way God gets the praise.

Praise of men can cause us to lose our focus. King Herod is a good example of this when giving a speech in Acts 12:21-23: “So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. ²² And the people kept shouting, ‘The voice of a god and not of a man!’ ²³ Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.”

The same people who were saying, “Hail Him” very soon will be saying, “Nail Him!”

Why do we struggle proclaiming the praises of God?

What are some ways we can proclaim His praises?

III. Jesus was criticized by the religious leaders, but he maintained His Mission.

Luke 19:39-40, Matthew 21:15

One of the hardest things to deal with in ministry is the burden of criticism that people may dump on you. I wish I was more like

Jerrie Barber who did a Sermon on “How to Accept, Invite, and Enjoy Criticism.”

On one occasion I was sitting in my office working on a series of sermons; I had started a series on the cross. One of the elders walked in my office and told me that I was too emotional. A couple times when I was preaching on the cross, I began to cry thinking about Jesus taking my place. This older elder said, “Just preach the word; don’t show any emotion. Just preach the word.” I replied, “If I can’t get emotional about preaching on the cross, I need to quit preaching.”

When I was a student at Crowley’s Ridge College in 1980, I was so excited to be on a Christian Campus. My parents were not in the church at this time, and I was just so excited to be around other Christians. It was a great joy to go to chapel everyday for a period of worship. I loved to sing and often I would say, “Amen” after the song or the devotional talk in chapel. I had a teacher that pulled me into her office and said, “Stan, some of the other students feel that your religion is not real, that you are just putting on a show.” Needless to say, I was crushed and heartbroken. I had such a great fire for God, but those words crushed my spirit.

As Christians we must always maintain our mission. Keep looking forward to the final reward. That is how Jesus kept going to the end.

”Looking unto Jesus, the ^[a]author and ^[b]finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising

the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2.

We need to look for ways to encourage those who are struggling. The following is one of my favorite stories:

One of the greatest heartbreaks of the 1988 winter Olympics was the story of speed skater Dan Janzen. Just hours before his race his sister lost her battle with Leukemia. She'd battled it for 9 years. Heartbroken, he took the track to race for his sister...when the gun sounded, he sprinted from the starting line only to have his skates lose traction causing him to slam into the protective barriers in the 1st corner. 4 days later in the 1000-meter race, he fell again. Our entire country mourned for him and with him. Dan received thousands of letters. Sports Illustrates carried the story of one of them...It came from Mark Arrowood, a disabled young man from Doylestown, PA. Mark wrote...

Dear Dan, I watched you on TV. I'm sorry you fell 2 times. I am in the Special Olympics. I won a gold medal just after my dad died.

Before we start the games, we have a saying that goes like this:

“Let me win, but if I can't win, let me be brave in the attempt.”

I want you to have my gold medal. I didn't like to see you not get one.

Try again in 4 more years!

Inside the envelope was a gold medal for the track and field event from the Special Olympics.

Dan Jansen did continue to skate, and he won 2 gold medals, and inside the presentation case at his home...hang 3 gold medals: 2 that he won and 1 that given to him by Mark Arrowood.

May we have the spiritual heart of this young man...when people fall, may we be willing to surrender our gold medals so they can get back up and try again.

Sermon outline on Tears of Jesus

- i. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem (Jesus wept for their lostness and the destruction that was to come upon them) Luke 19:41-44
- ii. Jesus weeps at the grave of Lazarus (Tears of Sympathy) John 11:32-44
- iii. Jesus Weeps facing his own death (Tears of Anguish) Heb 5:5-9

Other events in the final week of Jesus.

He Instituted the Lord's Supper

He Comforted some struggling disciples

He Served others

He Prayed for the believers

He went to the Cross

He Conquered Death