Introduction: Critical questions to consider

1. Why study this book now?

2. Why was it written initially?
   - External circumstances – 90 A.D.
   - Internal explanation

   John 20:30-31

3. What parallel exists today?
   - External circumstances – Pluralism
   - Internal explanation – Spiritual erosion

4. How do we discover the “real Jesus” today?

1st Century

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21st Century

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Timeless Principles
Studying the Gospel of John Together

1st – Three questions to ask whenever you study God’s Word:

1. What does it say? OBSERVATION

2. What does it mean? INTERPRETATION

3. What does it mean to me? APPLICATION

2nd – Read the passage REPEATEDLY to get the “Big Picture,” or general idea:

- Verses 1 – 18: Introduces the Word’s origin, identity, and PURPOSE.
- Verses 19 – 28: Reveals John the Baptist’s identity and ROLE.
- Verses 29 – 34: John the Baptist reveals Jesus’ mission and IDENTITY.
- Verses 35 – 51: Introduces us to Jesus’ first 5 disciples.
3rd – Make specific **OBSERVATIONS** about one section of the chapter at a time:

i.e. The “Logos” section:

- The Word was before time began  
  John 1:1
- The Word is God and was with God  
  John 1:1
- The Word created everything  
  John 1:3
- The Word is the source of life  
  John 1:4
- This life is the light of all mankind  
  John 1:4
- The Word is Jesus  
  John 1:14
- Jesus reveals what God is like  
  John 1:18

4th – Play spiritual “Jeopardy” with the text to clarify what **RELEVANT** questions

**God’s truth is answering:**

1. Who exactly are you and where did you come from?

   Answer: John 1:1 – 5

2. Not to be disrespectful, but can anyone corroborate your story: these fantastic claims?

   Answer: John 1: 6 – 9
3. When you look back on your earthly ministry, what was your greatest disappointment? Your greatest joy?

Answer: John 1: 10 – 13

4. Why did you choose to come to earth the way you did? What was your purpose or mission?

Answer: John 1: 14 – 18

5th – **PONDER CAREFULLY** the implications and application of this truth to your personal life, circumstance, and relationships. Ask…

- What did I learn?

- What difference does it make?

- How will I “by faith” apply this to my life today, this week?

- Who might help me? Who might God want me to help?
Introduction: Examining your “Jesus filters”

Question: Which is the easiest for you to picture in your mind?

1. □ Jesus praying
   □ Jesus partying

2. □ Jesus looking holy
   □ Jesus laughing loudly

3. □ Jesus sipping tea
   □ Jesus drinking wine

4. □ Jesus frowning at your mistake
   □ Jesus smiling at you with understanding

5. □ Jesus calm and reserved
   □ Jesus in an outburst of anger

6. □ Jesus keeping the peace – a religious leader
   □ Jesus causing a riot – a radical revolutionary

Question: Could your “filters” be blinding you to the real Jesus of the Bible?
What does John Chapter 2 SAY?

- **Context**: The first five disciples follow Him.  
  John 1:35 – 51
- **Structure**: Two specific sections – the Wedding and the Whipping

  - **Observations: The Wedding**  
    1. The host runs out of wine.  
    2. Jesus’ mother requests help.  
    3. Jesus instructs the servants, water supernaturally turns into wine.  
    4. Only the disciples and servants are aware of a miracle.  
    5. This miracle is Jesus’ first “sign.”  
    6. The disciples see Jesus in a new light and believe.

  - **Observations: The Whipping**  
    1. Jesus goes to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem.  
    2. Jesus drives out animals and money changers.  
    3. Jesus calls the Temple His Father’s house.  
    4. Jesus’ authority is challenged by the Pharisees.  
    5. Jesus performs many miracles.  
    6. Many people believe on His name.  
    7. Jesus knows men’s hearts.
What does John Chapter 2 MEAN?

➢ Questions to consider: The Wedding

1. Why did Jesus launch His movement here?
2. What are we to make of the conversation with His mother?
3. What significance is there in the six stone jars?
4. What underlying spiritual implications are we to grasp?
5. How did this miracle position, or launch, His ministry with the disciples?

➢ Questions to consider: The Whipping

1. Why did Jesus go to the feast in Jerusalem?
2. Why is John’s account different from Matthew, Mark, and Luke’s?
3. Why does Jesus react so passionately and violently at the Temple?
4. What are the underlying spiritual implications of this section?
5. How did this event shape Jesus’ relationship with the –
   • Religious leaders?
   • His disciples?
   • The multitudes?
What does John Chapter 2 mean to **ME**?

1. Jesus wants to do **GOOD** to me.  
   
   John 2:1-5
   see also – Psalm 84:11

2. Jesus wants to **TRANSFORM** my life from the inside out by a supernatural miracle, not by external religious rituals.  
   
   John 2:6-10
   see also - 2 Corinthians 5:17

3. I must **FOLLOW** Him and believe in Him to see His glory and continue His movement.  
   
   John 2:11
   see also – Matthew 4:19
   2 Corinthians 5:17

4. My **BODY** is His temple today and He demands authentic worship from me 24/7.  
   
   John 2:12-17
   see also – Romans 12:1-2
   1 Corinthians 6

5. I can trust Him and His Word because He **ROSE** from the dead.  
   
   John 2:18-25
   see also – 1 Corinthians 15

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Has your view (“filter”) of Jesus changed?

2. What new insight did you gain about His movement?

3. What next step do you need to take to follow Him?
Introduction: We are going to discover how to obtain eternal life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Three questions 3:16 raises:

1. What is eternal life?

2. What does it mean to believe?

3. Where did this 3:16 come from?
What does John Chapter 3 SAY?

- **Context**: What is genuine faith?  
  John 2:23-24

- **Structure**: Two specific sections – Nicodemus and John the Baptist

- **Observations: Nicodemus’ private meeting**  
  John 3:1-21

  1. He is an elite member of the Jewish rulers.
  2. He comes by night.
  3. He recognizes Jesus has been sent by God. (the miracles)
  4. He is confronted with his need of a second birth.
  5. He does not understand how that is possible.
  6. Kingdom entrance (eternal life) requires a physical and spiritual birth.
  7. Jesus is surprised that a “teacher” of Israel does not comprehend this truth.
  8. Jesus reveals His origin and teaching are from heaven.
  9. Jesus predicts His death and its benefit, as a parallel to Moses and the serpent.  
     (Numbers 21:4-9)
  10. Jesus promises eternal life to whoever believes.
  11. Jesus came to rescue not condemn the world.
  12. Jesus reveals why some refuse to believe.

- **Observations: John the Baptist’s public endorsement**  
  John 3: 22-36

  1. John and Jesus both baptize in the countryside.
  2. John’s disciples are concerned – John rejoices.
  3. John clarifies his role and affirms Jesus’ identity.
  4. John affirms Jesus has been sent from God and is God – the Son.
  5. Whoever believes on Jesus has (present possession) eternal life.
  6. Those who choose willfully to reject the Son of God, live (present possession) with God’s wrath upon them.
What does John Chapter 3 MEAN?

Questions to consider: To understand John 3

1. Why did Nicodemus want to talk with Jesus?
   Why at night?

2. What does it mean to be “born again?”
   Why does Jesus lead with this challenge to a moral, good, religious leader?

3. Why was Jesus surprised that Nicodemus did not understand his need for a spiritual birth? (see Ezekiel 36:25-27)

4. On what authority does Jesus speak to a “teacher” of Israel?

5. How would the Old Testament illustration from Numbers 21:4-9 clarify Jesus’ teaching to Nicodemus?

6. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this spiritual birth?

7. What promise did Jesus make to Nicodemus and to all people concerning eternal life?
   How is this different from how Nicodemus expected to receive eternal life?

8. What exactly is eternal life? (see John 17:3)

9. What was God’s motivation in sending Christ to live and then be “lifted up” (die)?

10. Why don’t all people respond positively to such a gracious offer of life now and forever?

11. Why is John the Baptist’s endorsement important?

12. When does eternal life begin?

13. What is meant by the wrath of God?
What does John Chapter 3 mean to ME?

1. Being a **GOOD** and **MORAL** person does not merit or earn eternal life.  
   John 3:1-2

2. Spiritual life demands a spiritual **BIRTH**.  
   John 3:3

3. God loves you and wants to give you **ETERNAL LIFE** as a free gift.  
   John 3:16

4. Eternal life begins the **MOMENT** you receive Jesus Christ as your **SAVIOR** and Lord.  
   John 3:36

5. We must **RECEIVE** Christ by faith to begin a lifelong relationship with God.  
   John 1:12

6. You can receive Christ **TODAY** by placing your trust in His death and resurrection as the sole basis for the forgiveness of your sins and become a member of God’s family forever.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Have you received eternal life? When? Share your story.

2. Who do you know who needs to hear this message?

3. When and how might you share John 3 with someone you care about?
**Introduction:** God wants to use you to share His Word... How?

- What does it say?  
  Observations
- What does it mean?  
  Interpretation
- What does it mean to me?  
  Application
- How do I pass it on?  
  **COMMUNICATION**

**Summary #1:** Jesus breaks through the barriers.  

John 4:1-9

1 The Pharisees heard that He was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John

2 although, in fact, it was not Jesus who baptized, but His disciples.

3 When the Lord learned of this, He left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

4 Now He had to go through Samaria.

5 So He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

6 Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as He was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give Me a drink?”

8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to Him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can You ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

- **Life Lesson #1:** We must intentionally break through **any** and **every** **BARRIER** to the Gospel of Christ.
Summary #2: Jesus offers to quench her deepest thirst. John 4:10-15

10 Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water.”

11 “Sir,” the woman said, “You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can You get this living water?

12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?”

13 Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,

14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

15 The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

Life Lesson #2: Grace, not CONDEMNATION is what draws people to Christ.

Summary #3: Jesus helps her face the truth in love. John 4:16-21

16 He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

17 “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband.

18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

19 “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that You are a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

21 Jesus declared, “Believe Me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

Life Lesson #3: Honesty with OURSELVES and with God is the prerequisite to an authentic relationship with Christ.
Summary #4: Jesus explains how true worship works.

John 4:22-26

22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

24 God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

25 The woman said, “I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us.”

26 Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am He.”

➢ Life Lesson #4: True worship is a matter of HONEST RELATIONSHIP, not religious systems.

Summary #5: Jesus allows her “wounds” to be leveraged to bring others to faith in Himself.

John 4:27-42

27 Just then His disciples returned and were surprised to find Him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are You talking with her?”

28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

29 “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

30 They came out of the town and made their way toward Him.

31 Meanwhile His disciples urged Him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

33 Then His disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought Him food?”

34 “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
35 Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

36 Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

37 Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true.

38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

39 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.”

40 So when the Samaritans came to Him, they urged Him to stay with them, and He stayed two days.

41 And because of His words many more became believers.

42 They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

➢ Life Lesson #5: God will even use our **BAGGAGE** to bring others to **ETERNAL LIFE**, as we sow the Word of God.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What cultural and religious boundaries did Jesus “break” in order to help the woman at the well?

2. List 3-4 cultural and/or religious boundaries that prevent “us” from reaching others for Christ?

3. Why do you think this woman listened to Jesus? What was His attitude toward her? How did He speak the truth in love?

4. Which of the 5 applications, from John 4, spoke to your life the most? Why?

5. Have you (or someone you care about) ever felt that you’ve done “too much wrong” for God to ever love you? How does Jesus dispel that lie?
Introduction: When life seems absolutely hopeless…

**The Context:**  
John 1-5

**The Structure:**

- **The Story** - An individual with no hope and a “strange” miracle  
  John 5:1-15
- **The Conflict** - Intentional and strategic  
  John 5:16-18
- **The Teaching** - Two direct points  
  John 5:19-30
- **The Validation** - Three testimonies  
  John 5:31-47
- **The Question** - Will you **BELIEVE**?

**The Challenge:**  
Jesus purposely challenges the cultural status quo to reveal His person and His purpose in the world.
The Story: An individual with no hope and a “strange” miracle  

Observations –
1. Jesus asks a strange question.
2. Jesus gives no mention of His motive.
3. Jesus doesn’t reveal His identity.
4. Jesus shows no “instrumental” means (He just speaks).
5. Jesus leaves immediately.
6. Jesus purposely creates controversy (He heals on the Sabbath).
7. The man expresses no gratitude.
8. Jesus reproves and warns him.
9. Jesus affirms the relationship between sin and negative consequences.
10. Jesus reveals His role as Healer and Judge in Jerusalem.

The Conflict: Intentional and strategic  

16 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute Him.

17 Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I too am working.”

18 For this reason they tried all the harder to kill Him; not only was He breaking the Sabbath, but He was even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.
The Teaching: Two direct points

Point #1 – Jesus explains His relationship to the Father: John 5:19-23

19 Jesus gave them this answer: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

20 For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does. Yes, to your amazement, He will show Him even greater things than these.

21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom He is pleased to give it.

22 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,

23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent Him.

Point #2 – Jesus explains His relationship to the world:

- He is our SAVIOR: John 5:24-26

24 “I tell you the truth, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be condemned but has crossed over from death to life.

25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

26 For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself.

- He is our JUDGE: John 5:27-30

27 And He has given Him authority to judge because He is the Son of Man.

28 “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice

29 and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.

30 By Myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and My judgment is just, for I seek not to please Myself but Him who sent Me.
The Validation: Three testimonies

The Message: There’s hope for the hopeless

The Man

| The Man’s Physical Condition = Helpless | \( \leftarrow \) | The Question for Him: “Do you want to get well?” | \( \rightarrow \) | The Man’s Response: “I need help!” | \( \leftarrow \) | The Man Received: Physical Life and Power | \( \rightarrow \) | The Warning: “Your sin will be judged.” |

Us

| Our Spiritual Condition = Helpless | \( \rightarrow \) | The Question for Us: “Do you want to get well?” | \( \leftarrow \) | Our Response: “I need help!” | \( \rightarrow \) | We Receive: Spiritual Life and Power | \( \leftarrow \) | The Warning: “Your sin will be judged.” |

Discussion Questions:

1. What was so “strange” about this story? Why?
2. Are there times in our lives when we really don’t want to help? Why do you think this is so?
3. Why did Jesus purposely heal on the Sabbath?
4. What three things occur in a person’s life when they hear and believe? (see John 5:24)
5. How does Christ’s role as “Judge” impact how you live your daily life?