



Knowing Jesus

# WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

ED HINDSON

(John 1:29)

Jesus is the primary figure of the Bible. The Old Testament promises His coming; the New Testament describes His arrival on the scene of humanity that changed the course of history. One cannot read the New Testament without being confronted by Jesus. His person is overwhelming. His character is irresistibly attractive. His teachings are life-changing. But many still ask: Is He simply to be admired, or is He to be worshiped? Is He a good man, or is He God?

The more closely we examine the person, character, and claims of Jesus, the more we are compelled to see that He was more than just a man. Jesus was born in obscurity, raised in poverty, and crucified in ignominy. Yet, His life transformed the world. His ministry was characterized by preaching the good news of God's grace to fallen humanity.

The name Jesus means "Savior"; Christ means "Messiah." Technically, He is Jesus, the Christ. The Bible emphasizes that He is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament who was born of a virgin and miraculously entered the human race as God in the flesh (Matt. 1:23; John 1:14).

More than anything else, Jesus brings hope to people's hopelessness. He is depicted as the Word of God (John 1:1), the Light of the World (John 1:7-9), the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and the Son of God (John 1:49). He meets us at our greatest points of need and offers us God's salvation, love, and grace.

## HIS DEITY AND HUMANITY

The Gospels paint four portraits of Jesus. Together, they give us a full picture of the person of Christ. Each focuses on a specific aspect of the same individual. Matthew pictures Him as the King of the Jews. Mark portrays Him as the Servant of the Lord. Luke displays Him as the Son of Man. John shows Him as the Son of God. By combin-

ing these portraits, we see the various facets of this incredible person—royalty, ministry, humanity, and deity—all in one.

John's Gospel in particular is woven around seven miracles, seven messages, and seven declarations of Jesus. The central statement being Jesus' declaration: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). His listeners immediately took this to be a claim of deity. Jesus was connecting Himself to the "I AM" declaration of God in Exodus 3:14. Around this central concept, John uses seven other "I am" statements by Jesus to give us a series of word pictures of the Savior:

- > "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)
- > "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12)
- > "I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7)
- > "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11)
- > "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)
- > "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)
- > "I am the true vine" (John 15:1)

The Gospel writers give us a picture of the most incredible man who ever lived. He healed the sick, raised the dead, fed the hungry, and loved the outcasts. His miracles were amazing. His teachings were brilliant. His insights into human nature were remarkable. Like a diamond, reflecting various streams of color and brilliance, Jesus shines as a perfect and complete pic-

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ture of God. He looked like a man, but He talked like God. He lived among people, but He also lived above them. Indeed, in Him, God "became flesh" (John 1:14).

### **HIS IRRESISTIBLE APPEAL**

Jesus is the epitome of divine love, sufficient grace, and eternal hope. No one will ever love us like He loves us. No one will ever care for us like He cares. Ultimately, He died on the Cross for our sins (1 Cor. 15:1-4). The good news of the gospel compels us to believe that He died for us personally. He calls upon us to trust His death as a sufficient payment for our sins.

Faith is the act of believing that activates our commitment to Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. It is the key that personalizes our relationship to Him. Saving faith means that we believe Jesus died for our sins and offers us the gift of eternal life. All we have to do is believe it! Such an act of faith receives the free gift of this grace, believes this offer to be sincere, and trusts Him to keep His promises—forever.

Charles Spurgeon, the great British preacher, said it best over a century ago when he wrote: "You may study, look, and meditate, but Jesus is a greater Savior than you think Him to be, even when your thoughts are at their highest." Jesus Christ is more willing to love us, accept us, help us, and forgive us than we ourselves are. It is no wonder they call Him the Savior!

Jesus came so that we might know God personally. He suffered and died for our sins so that they might be "paid in full" (John 19:30; 1 Pet. 2:21-24). Then He rose from the dead to offer us the gift of eternal life (John 10:28). We can have that gift by receiving His gracious offer by faith. Believing in Jesus is an act of trust by which we affirm that what He did for us on the Cross is enough. On that basis, the Bible promises: "Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

### **FURTHER MEDITATION:**

Other passages to study about the issue of knowing Jesus include:

- > Isaiah 53
- > Acts 4:12; 9:3-6; 10:36-43
- > Colossians 1:15-23
- > Hebrews 1:1-4; 12:1, 2; 13:8
- > Revelation 1:9-20; 3:20; 19:11-16; 22:20

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To Learn More: Turn to the key passage note on knowing Jesus at John 14:6 on page 1396. See also the personality profile of Nicodemus on page 1371.

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<sup>8</sup>Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

<sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? <sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. <sup>11</sup>Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

#### THE ANSWERED PRAYER

<sup>12</sup>"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do

also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. <sup>13</sup>And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If you ask<sup>a</sup> anything in My name, I will do it.

#### JESUS PROMISES ANOTHER HELPER

<sup>15</sup>"If you love Me, keep<sup>a</sup> My commandments. <sup>16</sup>And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—<sup>17</sup>the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be

<sup>14:14</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text adds *Me*. <sup>14:15</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *you will keep*.

### KEY PASSAGE



Knowing Jesus

## ONE WAY

(14:6)

Many routes and transportation options lead to a large city. Some people think it's the same way with God. "All roads," they say, all religions and belief systems, "lead to God."

"Wrong!" says Jesus.

Contrary to what many people think, Jesus taught only one way to gain forgiveness and eternal life, not many ways.

- "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).
- "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
- "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6).

God provided a way for us to be saved. We can praise Jesus for being that way!

To Learn More: Turn to the article about knowing Jesus on pages 1368, 1369. See also the personality profile of Nicodemus on page 1371.

### SOUL NOTE



**The Only Way** (14:6) Jesus claimed to be "the way, the truth, and the life."

Jesus is not one of the ways to God—He is the *only* way to God. Jesus is not one of many truths—He is truth. Jesus doesn't just show a way to live—He is the

Giver of life, the One who gives meaning to life. If Jesus is our "way," then He is the only One who can save us and guide our lives. If Jesus is our "truth," then we study His word and live according to its truth. If Jesus is our "life," we trust that He is in control of our lives today and into eternity. **Topic: Truth**

in you. <sup>18</sup>I will come to you.

#### INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

<sup>19</sup>"A little while I will see you no more, but I live, and you will live. I know that I *am* in the Father, and I in you. His commandments and keeps them. And he who loves the Father, and I will dwell with him."

<sup>22</sup>Judas (not the



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need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

#### THE NEW BIRTH

**3** There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. <sup>2</sup>This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

<sup>3</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

<sup>4</sup>Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup>That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup>Do not

marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup>The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

<sup>9</sup>Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

<sup>10</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? <sup>11</sup>Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. <sup>12</sup>If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven." <sup>14</sup>And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in

**3:13** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *who is in heaven*.

#### PERSONALITY PROFILE



Knowing  
Jesus

### NICODEMUS: A CONVERSATION WITH CHRIST

(JOHN 3:1)

As a member of the ruling Pharisee party, Nicodemus was in a very prestigious group. The Pharisees were the experts in the law. As zealous students of the Scriptures, they should have been the first to recognize the Messiah when He arrived on the scene. Unfortunately, they not only missed the truth about Jesus, but most of them actively sought, and accomplished, His death.

But Nicodemus *did* see something—Someone—he couldn't explain. He saw the glimmer of truth in what he had been observing about Jesus. So he sought out Jesus, going by night so as to be able to speak confidentially with this unusual Teacher.

Nicodemus started the conversation by explaining that he understood that God had to be with Jesus because of the miracles Jesus could do. Nicodemus was on the right track, and Jesus got right to the heart of the matter, explaining to Nicodemus that faith requires more than just understanding that Jesus is the Messiah—one has to be "born again." In the report of this conversation with Nicodemus, we read the words that have brought millions to their knees across the centuries, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Knowing Jesus means more than knowing about Him. To really know Jesus, we must be born all over again, experiencing spiritual regeneration. We're born again when we repent of our sins and accept Jesus Christ as Savior. With that act, we embark on a lifetime of knowing more and more about Jesus Christ. As we walk with Him, as we deepen our relationship with Him, we get to know Him better and better as our Savior, our Lord, and our Friend.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about knowing Jesus on pages 1368, 1369. See also the key passage note at John 14:6 on page 1396.

- They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*,  
 "He trusted<sup>a</sup> in the LORD, let Him rescue Him;  
 Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"
- But You *are* He who took Me out of the womb;  
 You made Me trust *while* on My mother's breasts.
- <sup>10</sup> I was cast upon You from birth.  
 From My mother's womb  
 You *have been* My God.
- <sup>11</sup> Be not far from Me,  
 For trouble *is* near;  
 For *there is* none to help.
- <sup>12</sup> Many bulls have surrounded Me;  
 Strong *bulls* of Bashan have encircled Me.
- <sup>13</sup> They gape at Me *with* their mouths,  
 Like a raging and roaring lion.
- <sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water,  
 And all My bones are out of joint;  
 My heart is like wax;  
 It has melted within Me.
- <sup>15</sup> My strength is dried up like a potsherd,  
 And My tongue clings to My jaws;  
 You have brought Me to the dust of death.
- <sup>16</sup> For dogs have surrounded Me;  
 The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.  
 They pierced<sup>a</sup> My hands and My feet;  
<sup>17</sup> I can count all My bones.  
 They look *and* stare at Me.
- <sup>18</sup> They divide My garments among them,  
 And for My clothing they cast lots.
- <sup>19</sup> But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me;  
 O My Strength, hasten to help Me!
- <sup>20</sup> Deliver Me from the sword,  
 My precious *life* from the power of the dog.
- <sup>21</sup> Save Me from the lion's mouth  
 And from the horns of the wild oxen!
- You have answered Me.
- <sup>22</sup> I will declare Your name to My brethren;  
 In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.
- <sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise Him!  
 All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
 And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!
- <sup>24</sup> For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
 Nor has He hidden His face from Him;  
 But when He cried to Him, He heard.
- <sup>25</sup> My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;  
 I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.
- <sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
 Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.  
 Let your heart live forever!
- <sup>27</sup> All the ends of the world  
 Shall remember and turn to the LORD,  
 And all the families of the nations  
 Shall worship before You.<sup>a</sup>

**22:8** <sup>a</sup>Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read *hoped*; Targum reads *praised*. **22:16** <sup>a</sup>Following some Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate; Masoretic Text reads *Like a lion*. **22:27** <sup>a</sup>Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Targum; Arabic, Syriac, and Vulgate read *Him*.

## SOUL NOTE



**The Old Rugged Cross** (ch. 22) This psalm written by David prophesies the crucifixion of Jesus: the ridicule He faced (22:6-8), the gruesome death on the Cross (22:14-17), and the gambling for His garments (22:18). Jesus Christ experienced agony for all of humanity. His horrible death on the Cross became the final sacrifice for sin, providing for humanity's freedom from sin. We need only accept what Jesus did on the Cross on our behalf, thank Him, and resolve to follow Him. The benefits are eternal. **Topic: Knowing Jesus**

ISRAEL DEFENDED AGAINST ENEMIES

1 The burden<sup>a</sup> of the word of the LORD  
Against the land of Hadrach,  
And Damascus its resting place  
(For the eyes of men  
And all the tribes of Israel  
Are on the LORD);

2 Also *against* Hamath, *which* borders on  
it,  
And *against* Tyre and Sidon, though they  
are very wise.

3 For Tyre built herself a tower,  
Heaped up silver like the dust,  
And gold like the mire of the streets.

4 Behold, the LORD will cast her out;  
He will destroy her power in the sea,  
And she will be devoured by fire.

5 Ashkelon shall see *it* and fear;  
Gaza also shall be very sorrowful;  
And Ekron, for He dried up her  
expectation.  
The king shall perish from Gaza,  
And Ashkelon shall not be  
inhabited.

6 "A mixed race shall settle in Ashdod,  
And I will cut off the pride of the  
Philistines

7 I will take away the blood from his  
mouth,  
And the abominations from between his  
teeth.  
But he who remains, even he *shall be* for  
our God,  
And shall be like a leader in Judah,  
And Ekron like a Jebusite.

8 I will camp around My house  
Because of the army,  
Because of him who passes by and him  
who returns.

No more shall an oppressor pass through  
them,  
For now I have seen with My eyes.

THE COMING KING

9 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!  
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!  
Behold, your King is coming to you;  
He is just and having salvation,  
Lowly and riding on a donkey,  
A colt, the foal of a donkey.

10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim  
And the horse from Jerusalem;  
The battle bow shall be cut off.  
He shall speak peace to the nations;  
His dominion *shall be* 'from sea to sea,  
And from the River to the ends of the  
earth."<sup>a</sup>

GOD WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE

11 "As for you also,  
Because of the blood of your covenant,  
I will set your prisoners free from the  
waterless pit.

12 Return to the stronghold,  
You prisoners of hope.  
Even today I declare  
*That* I will restore double to you.

13 For I have bent Judah, My bow,  
Fitted the bow with Ephraim,  
And raised up your sons, O Zion,  
Against your sons, O Greece,  
And made you like the sword of a  
mighty man."

14 Then the LORD will be seen over them,  
And His arrow will go forth like  
lightning.  
The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,  
And go with whirlwinds from the south.

9:1 <sup>a</sup>Or *oracle* 9:10 <sup>a</sup>Psalms 72:8

15 The LORD of  
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that day.  
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They are in  
shepherd

3 "My anger is  
shepherd  
And I will p  
For the LORD  
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The house a  
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4 From him c  
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From him t  
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5 They shall b  
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SOUL NOTE

**A Humble King** (9:9, 10) Zechariah foresaw a King who would come to power riding on the back of a donkey, not a warhorse (yet). This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:1-11). This King rode in victory into a city, onto a cross, and out of a tomb! Not only did Jesus' entry into Jerusalem fulfill Zechariah's prophecy, but it also showed Jesus' humility. Jesus became a humble human being so that He could identify with us. One day, however, Jesus will come as a conquering King to set things right in the world. **Topic: Knowing Jesus**

raise up children to Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup>And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup>I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

**JOHN BAPTIZES JESUS**

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup>And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

<sup>15</sup>But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.

<sup>16</sup>When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He<sup>a</sup> saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. <sup>17</sup>And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

**SATAN TEMPTS JESUS**

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. <sup>3</sup>Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

<sup>4</sup>But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by ev-

ery word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

*'He shall give His angels charge over you,'*

and,

*'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'*"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup>And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"<sup>b</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

**JESUS BEGINS HIS GALILEAN MINISTRY**

<sup>12</sup>Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. <sup>13</sup>And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

**3:11** <sup>a</sup>M-Text omits *and fire*. **3:16** <sup>a</sup>Or *he*  
**4:4** <sup>a</sup>Deuteronomy 8:3 **4:6** <sup>a</sup>Psalms 91:11, 12  
**4:7** <sup>a</sup>Deuteronomy 6:16 **4:10** <sup>a</sup>M-Text reads *Get behind Me*. <sup>b</sup>Deuteronomy 6:13

<sup>15</sup> "The land of Zebulun and Naphtali, By the way of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,  
<sup>16</sup> The people who have been in darkness have seen a great Light, and upon them has shined the Light of knowledge."<sup>a</sup>

<sup>17</sup>From that time on, Jesus began to preach, and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**FOUR FISHERMEN**

<sup>18</sup>And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew, who were fishing. They were partners with James and John, who were also brothers. He called to them and said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."



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**Temptation**

After fasting and hungry. A most circumstantial directive by Jesus in Scripture in order and sin. God's against Satan's...

To Learn More profile of Sar...

**SOUL NOTE**



**God's Beloved Son (3:17)** Observers wonder about Jesus' true identity. Some say He was no more than a good man and inspiring teacher. Others say that His claims of divinity prove He was crazy. Some try to ignore Him completely. The people who gathered beside the Jordan River saw a dramatic demonstration that Jesus was special when a dove descended from heaven and God announced, "This is My beloved Son." Jesus is indeed someone special, and we can believe what He said about Himself. He is God's Son, the Messiah, our Savior. **Topic: Knowing Jesus**

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and<sup>a</sup> sin no more."

<sup>12</sup>Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

#### JESUS DEFENDS HIS SELF-WITNESS

<sup>13</sup>The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."

<sup>14</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. <sup>15</sup>You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. <sup>16</sup>And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. <sup>17</sup>It is also written in

your law that the testimony of two men is true. <sup>18</sup>I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."

<sup>19</sup>Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?"

Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also."

<sup>20</sup>These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

#### JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEPARTURE

<sup>21</sup>Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come."

<sup>22</sup>So the Jews said, "Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come?'"

<sup>23</sup>And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup>Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

<sup>25</sup>Then they said to Him, "Who are You?"

And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. <sup>26</sup>I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."

<sup>27</sup>They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.

<sup>28</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that* I do nothing

of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. <sup>29</sup>And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." <sup>30</sup>As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

#### THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE

<sup>31</sup>Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup>And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

<sup>33</sup>They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage

<sup>8:11</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text add *from now on*.

"And you shall know the truth,  
and the truth shall make you free."

JOHN 8:32

#### SOUL NOTE



**Unmistaken Identity (8:16-19)** The Pharisees were challenging Jesus' claim that He was the Messiah, believing that anyone who would make such claims would be either insane or a liar. Jesus provided them with a third alternative: He was telling the truth! Jesus emphasized that He was not acting alone, because He had a unique relationship with the Father. In fact, if people know Jesus, they know the Father. Elsewhere Jesus made His point even more clear, saying, "I and My Father are one" (10:30). To know Jesus is to know God. Jesus brings God into focus for our human eyes.

**Topic: Knowing Jesus**



and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

#### MEN AND WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

<sup>8</sup>I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; <sup>9</sup>in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, <sup>10</sup>but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. <sup>11</sup>Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. <sup>12</sup>And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup>And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. <sup>15</sup>Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF OVERSEERS

**3** This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop,<sup>a</sup> he desires a good work. <sup>2</sup>A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to

teach; <sup>3</sup>not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,<sup>a</sup> but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; <sup>4</sup>one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence <sup>5</sup>(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); <sup>6</sup>not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. <sup>7</sup>Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

<sup>8</sup>Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, <sup>9</sup>holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. <sup>10</sup>But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless. <sup>11</sup>Likewise, *their wives must be* reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. <sup>13</sup>For those who have served well as deacons obtain for them-

3:1 <sup>a</sup>Literally overseer 3:3 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *not greedy for money*.

#### SOUL NOTE



**Power Packed (2:8)** Imagine the power of prayers offered “without wrath and doubting”! Anger and doubt can make prayer difficult. Anger can be so divisive that Jesus warned people to make peace before coming to prayer (Matt. 5:23, 24). Doubt can make prayer less powerful, because we cannot pray confidently if we are unsure whether God hears, cares, or will answer. Prayer offered in total dependence and trust toward God is packed with power. We should come to God without doubting His commitment to being there for us when we need Him. **Topic: Doubt**

#### SOUL NOTE



**Being His (3:16)** This verse affirms both the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. He is human, having been “manifested in the flesh,” and He is divine, having been “received up in glory.” This is the great “mystery of godliness.” We become godly not by trying to be good enough, but by depending on Jesus Christ. He lived a perfect human life, then He rose again to make it possible for us to one day be with Him. We can please God by accepting His Son, Jesus Christ. We live for Him by being His own. **Topic: Knowing Jesus**

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<sup>11</sup>Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, <sup>12</sup>saying with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
To receive power and riches and  
wisdom,  
And strength and honor and glory and  
blessing!”

<sup>13</sup>And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power  
Be to Him who sits on the throne,  
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four<sup>a</sup> elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.<sup>b</sup>

#### FIRST SEAL: THE CONQUEROR

**6** Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals;<sup>a</sup> and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.” <sup>2</sup>And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

#### SECOND SEAL: CONFLICT ON EARTH

<sup>3</sup>When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come and see.”<sup>a</sup> <sup>4</sup>Another horse, fiery red, went out. And

it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that *people* should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

#### THIRD SEAL: SCARCITY ON EARTH

<sup>5</sup>When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. <sup>6</sup>And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart<sup>a</sup> of wheat for a denarius,<sup>b</sup> and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.”

#### FOURTH SEAL: WIDESPREAD DEATH ON EARTH

<sup>7</sup>When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.” <sup>8</sup>So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

#### FIFTH SEAL: THE CRY OF THE MARTYRS

<sup>9</sup>When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. <sup>10</sup>And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on

**5:13** <sup>a</sup>M-Text adds *Amen*. **5:14** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *twenty-four*. <sup>b</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *Him who lives forever and ever*. **6:1** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read *seven seals*. **6:3** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *and see*. **6:6** <sup>a</sup>Greek *choenix*; that is, approximately one quart <sup>b</sup>This was approximately one day's wage for a worker.

### SOUL NOTE



**Worthy Is the Lamb** (5:5, 6) In his vision of God's throne room, the apostle John witnessed a wounded Lamb, the only One found worthy to open the seven seals of the scroll. The wounded Lamb is Jesus Christ, who sacrificed Himself on the Cross for our sins. His blood has ransomed us from slavery to sin so that we can become His holy people (5:9). Only Christ, who is also the conquering Lion of Judah (5:5), can preside over the unfolding of human history. Without Him, our lives would amount to utter futility. But with Him, our lives are being woven into the beautiful tapestry of God's salvation history. No wonder He deserves all glory, honor, and power (5:13).

**Topic: Knowing Jesus**