

THE WHOLE BIBLE

JOHN

This Bible study, one of 66 studies covering the entire Bible, is made up of one-page lessons covering short sections of the book. The electronic format (student's and leader's guides) allows adaptation to individual needs.

Benefits of one-page lessons:

- Hand out only what you need, relative to the length of the class session and how much content you wish to cover. Taken at a steady pace, a page can be covered in about 20 minutes.
- See at a glance all the material that pertains to the section being covered. Use the discussion questions as your basic outline and draw in material from the "Look" and "Apply" sections as you wish.

Suggestions for using these lessons:

- Teach an entire book, or teach just part of a book.
- Use a single lesson sheet for a "19 Minute" style Bible study.
- Use a single lesson sheet as a meeting opener, either as a devotion or a short Bible study.
- Build your own Bible studies. The possibilities are endless. For example:
 - Assemble all the lessons on the penitential psalms, psalms of praise, or David's early years.
 - Assemble sections that deal with predestination, and teach the pertinent passages in their context.
 - Study all references to mountains, cities, nations, etc., pointing out their importance in the lives of God's people.

Note: The appropriate pages in The People's Bible commentary volumes are referenced. However, the authors were given the freedom to develop their own studies, so these lessons are not, in a strict sense, study guides to those volumes.

We pray these lessons will help God's people grow in faith and in service to his kingdom.

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John 1:1-18

The Word became flesh

(The People's Bible, John, pages 1-22)

Look

- Verse 1 *"The Word was with God, and the Word was God"*—Jesus is the *"Word of God."* When God created the world, he used his Word. He spoke, and the world was created. When God was ready to carry out his salvation, he once again spoke the Word in a very special way. He sent his Son, the Word, to become flesh, to die for our sins, and to recreate us in God's image through his life.
- Verse 5 *"The darkness has not understood it"*—The Greek word for *understand* can also be translated "overcome." Both meanings fit very well here. The sinful world did not understand or overcome Jesus.
- Verse 7 *"Witness"*—In later chapters we will see many witnesses for Jesus: John the Baptist (1:7-8), Scripture (5:39), God the Father (5:32), Jesus' works (5:36), Jesus himself (8:13-14), the Holy Spirit (15:26), and the disciples (15:27).

Discuss

1. List everything John tells us about Jesus in verses 1-5.
2. What was John the Baptist's role in God's plan of salvation?
3. Verses 12 and 13 speak about being born again, that is, becoming God's children. Often the term "born again" is used in the context of our making a decision to accept Christ. Whose decision was it, however, that you and I ceased rejecting God and became his children?
4. Why is it important that the Word became flesh? (verse 14)

Apply

5. Note the contrast that John makes between Moses' work and Jesus' work. Why can you and I be glad that we live not under Moses, but under Christ?

The Son of God became a true human being to rescue us from our sins. John the Baptist came to bear witness to this great event and to prepare the world for the Savior.

John 1:19-34

The ministry of the forerunner

(The People's Bible, John, pages 22-29)

Look

Verse 21 The prophet Malachi had prophesied, *"I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes"* (4:5). On the basis of that passage, the Jews expected Elijah himself to return. John denied that he was Elijah in that sense. Later, however, Jesus referred to Malachi's prophecy and said that John was indeed Elijah, the one sent to prepare the way for the Messiah.

The Jews also asked John if he was the Prophet. They had in mind the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. Moses was referring to Jesus, so John denied he was the Prophet.

Discuss

1. Why might it have been easy, humanly speaking, for John to cater to the Jewish people and claim he was something he wasn't?
2. When John finally gave a complete answer, he used the words of Isaiah 40:3. How was John's ministry one of "making straight the way for the LORD"?
3. John contrasts himself ("I baptize with water.") with Jesus (He "will baptize with the Holy Spirit."). Do you think the Holy Spirit was absent from John's ministry and baptisms? What was the point of John's contrast?
4. John was born before Jesus. So in what sense was Jesus before John?

Apply

5. How do John's words in verse 29 apply to you?

John pointed the Jews and his own disciples away from himself and toward the Messiah. When John saw Jesus, he called him the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

John 1:35-51

Jesus gathers his first disciples

(The People's Bible, John, pages 29-37)

Look

- Verse 35 *“Disciple”*—A disciple is a pupil or a follower. The men who began to follow Jesus that day were beginning the adventure of a lifetime—of an eternity!
- Verse 51 Jesus told the disciples that they would see heaven open and the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. Jesus was referring to Jacob’s dream in Genesis chapter 28. Jesus would open heaven for the disciples by preaching God’s Word to them. He had come to reveal God’s will to humanity.

Discuss

1. What drew two of John’s disciples to Jesus?
2. Jesus changed Simon’s name to Peter, which means “rock.” Did Jesus name him “Rock” because of what Peter was or because of what Peter would become? Explain.
3. Did Jesus’ miracle in verse 48 create faith in Nathanael’s heart? Explain. (Hint: Note how Jesus addressed Nathanael in verse 47.)

Apply

4. Philip didn’t try to argue with Nathanael when Nathanael said nothing good could come out of Nazareth. He simply asked him to come to meet Jesus. What lesson can we learn from Philip?
5. Jesus said the disciples would see the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. Think about the meaning of this phrase. How is it a source of our comfort?

Jesus began the critical work of calling men to become his disciples. He promised to do great things before their very eyes, things that would change their lives forever!

John 2:1-11

Water into wine

(The People's Bible, John, pages 38-42)

Look

Jewish wedding ceremonies often lasted a week or longer! To run out of wine would have been a great embarrassment.

Verse 4 Jesus asked Mary, "*Why do you involve me?*" Literally Jesus asked, "What do I have to do with you?" Mary wanted Jesus to immediately use his power to supply wine. Jesus wanted to use his power to glorify his Father, in his Father's time. Interestingly, Mary's request and Jesus' purpose were both fulfilled.

Discuss

1. Mary seems to have been at the wedding in some official capacity (perhaps as a hostess or relative of the wedding couple). What wise command did she give to the servants?
2. Think about the miracle from the servants' point of view. What do you think they thought when the master of the banquet said that Jesus' wine was the best wine he had tasted that day?
3. Verse 11 shows us the spiritual results of this miracle. The disciples were believers when they started following Jesus, but now Jesus revealed his glory by turning water into wine. When his disciples saw what had happened, they put their faith in him, in the sense that their faith was strengthened and any doubts they may have had were put to rest. How did this miracle help strengthen the disciples' faith?

Apply

4. Some people find it offensive that Jesus made so much wine (120 to 180 gallons!). How would you react to a person who is troubled by this?

Jesus revealed his glory by supplying a wedding couple with the wine they needed for the rest of their party. Jesus' disciples saw this as proof of Jesus' power and authority; they grew in their faith.

John 2:12-25

Jesus predicts his death

(The People's Bible, John, pages 42-48)

Look

The people who sold animals actually provided a valuable service to pilgrims who traveled to Jerusalem. Jews from faraway places could not bring animals to sacrifice, so they simply brought money (hence the need for people to change money into various currencies). The sellers' sin was buying and selling inside the temple area, thus making the temple (specifically, the place where the Gentiles were allowed to worship) into a marketplace. Some scholars believe that the religious leaders profited handsomely from this buying and selling by renting out spaces inside the temple.

Discuss

1. The fact that Jesus drove the money changers and salesmen from the temple was shocking enough, yet when Jesus' audience examined his statement (verse 16) closely, they found something else to shock them. What was this?
2. The leaders asked Jesus for a sign to prove his authority to cleanse the temple. What sign did Jesus give them? Do you think this satisfied them?
3. Jesus never went looking for praise or acceptance from people to verify his ministry. John tells us that Jesus knew people's hearts. Why was it inappropriate for Jesus to look for praise from people?

Apply

4. Is it wrong to sell things such as Christmas cards, baked goods, or napkins inside the church building?
5. Verse 22 tells us that the disciples remembered Jesus' words from verse 20 after he had risen from the dead. Comment: Bible study often bears fruit long after you close the Bible.

Jesus' zeal for God's house caused him to drive the money changers and sellers from the temple. Later, he told the Jews that he would die, be in the grave three days, and then come back to life.

John 3:1-21

Jesus explains God's way of salvation to a nighttime visitor

(The People's Bible, John, pages 48-56)

Look

Jesus told Nicodemus that people had to be born again in order to be saved. The Greek words for “*born again*” can also mean “born from above.” Both meanings fit very well here. Certainly we need to be born *again* because our physical birth involved sin. And this second birth comes from God (who is *above*).

Verse 5 Jesus talks about being born “*of water and the Spirit*”—through Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Discuss

1. Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night?
2. In verse 3 Jesus does not directly address Nicodemus' statement from verse 2. Instead he gets to the heart of the issue. How might Nicodemus' understanding of God's kingdom have been keeping him from understanding Jesus' life and mission?
3. What is Jesus' point in verse 8?
4. Explain the comparison between Moses lifting up the snake in the desert and Jesus' being lifted up on the cross.
5. Why do some people love darkness instead of the light? (verse 19)

Apply

6. Some Christians ask, “Are you born again?” How would you answer them? Use verses 16-18 in your answer.

Jesus told Nicodemus that spiritual life comes through rebirth—trusting in the Son of God, whom God sent to take away the sins of the world.

John 3:22-36

John testifies about Jesus

(The People's Bible, John, pages 56-60)

Look

Verse 33 When people accept God's Word as truthful, they *testify* that God is truthful. By trusting in God's Word, they are declaring to the world that God's Word is truthful and, therefore, worth believing in.

Discuss

1. What was the complaint John's disciples brought to him?
2. How does John answer his disciple's objection in
 - verse 27?
 - verse 28?
 - verse 29?
 - verse 30?
3. Summarize John's testimony about Jesus in verses 31-36.

Apply

4. Why is verse 27 a good motto for us?
5. Verse 36 says, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life." It doesn't say that we will have eternal life when we get to heaven. Agree or disagree: We are already living forever with Jesus.

John refused to compete with Jesus when John's disciples complained that everyone was going over to Jesus. Instead, John confessed that Jesus must become greater!

John 4:1-42

Jesus and the Samaritan woman

(The People's Bible, John, pages 60-72)

Look

There were a number of reasons why people would have expected Jesus not to talk with the Samaritan woman. First, she was a woman; rabbis usually did not converse with women. Second, she was a Samaritan; the Jews hated the Samaritans. Finally, this woman was a “known” sinner; her friends and neighbors no doubt knew about her sinful living arrangement with a man who was not her husband.

Discuss

1. How did Jesus use the subject at hand to talk about spiritual matters? (verse 10)
2. Define “living water.” What makes Christians “artesian wells”?
3. How did Jesus show the woman her need for a Savior?
4. In verse 23 Jesus talks about worshipping God in spirit and in truth. What does that mean?

Apply

5. In verse 4 we read that Jesus had to go through Samaria. He had to go through Samaria not because it was the only route (it wasn't), but because his Father had a mission for him to accomplish there. Does God ever direct us to certain places at certain times? If so, how?
6. What did it take to turn the Samaritan sinner into a Samaritan evangelist?
7. In verse 34 Jesus said, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.” In other words, Jesus' very existence was tied up in doing his heavenly Father's will. Sharing God's love with other people brought Jesus refreshment. Can you tell of a time when sharing God's Word with others brought you refreshment?

Jesus went out of his way to confront a Samaritan woman with her sins and to share the gospel with her. As a result, a whole town put their faith in Jesus.

John 4:43-54

Jesus heals the official's son

(The People's Bible, John, pages 73-75)

Look

- Verse 44 Jesus said that prophets have no honor in their hometowns. When hometown people look at a prophet, they are quick to think of his growing-up years—his faults and shortcomings—instead of listening to the prophet's message.
- Verse 46 Both Cana and Capernaum lay near the Sea of Galilee. Locate them on a map.

Discuss

1. The royal official came to Jesus because his son was near death and the situation looked hopeless. In desperation the father begged Jesus to come to heal his son. Jesus' response in verse 48 seems heartless. Why might Jesus have said such a thing?
2. What does verse 48 tell us about Jesus' love?
3. What does verse 50 tell us about the man's faith?
4. What made it clear to the man that Jesus had performed a great miracle?
5. What was the result of this miracle on the man's household?

Apply

6. Jesus didn't go with the man to heal his son. Instead Jesus left the father with only a promise ringing in his ears. How does God often deal with us in the same way?
7. The way Jesus had answered the man's prayer made it clear that Jesus had performed the healing. This was no coincidence. Have you ever prayed fervently for something, perhaps over a long period of time, and then had Jesus answer your prayer in such a way that it was clear that he alone was behind it?

Jesus healed the son of a royal official and, in the process, strengthened his faith.

John 5:1-15

Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath

(The People's Bible, John, pages 76-80)

Look

Verse 3 The NIV note at the end of verse 3 tells us that some manuscripts include verse 4 while most do not. In a few places in the Bible there are genuine questions about whether or not a phrase or verse was in the original text or was added by a copyist. None of these instances change the doctrines of the Bible. In this case it appears that a copyist inserted verse 4 to explain why the crippled man wanted to get into the pool so badly and why the others that got into the pool before him kept him from entering.

Discuss

1. How do we see Jesus' compassionate heart at work in this story?
2. How quickly did Jesus' words go into action? how completely?
3. Some people say that Jesus answers our prayers and performs miracles—if only we have faith. Evaluate this thought.
4. Why did Jesus offer such a stern warning to the man he had just healed? (verse 14)

Apply

5. The Jewish leaders had added their own laws to the laws God gave Moses. The Jews accused the man of breaking God's law by carrying his mat on the Sabbath. They focused on their own rules and regulations so much that they missed the significance of the miracle. How do we sometimes focus on church traditions and miss more important issues?

Jesus healed a paralyzed man and then warned him against continuing to sin. While doing these things, Jesus got the attention of his enemies because it was a Sabbath Day.

John 5:16-30

Life through the Son

(*The People's Bible, John, pages 79-85*)

Look

Verse 25 *“The dead”*—Verse 28 speaks about *“all who are in their graves,”* which clearly refers to those who have died physically. In verse 24, however, Jesus says that whoever hears and believes in Jesus *“has crossed over from death to life.”* This phrase speaks about spiritual death and life. The word *“dead”* in verse 25, therefore, refers to all of us—people who are spiritually dead but who have heard the voice of the Son of God, have believed, and have come to life.

Discuss

1. When the Jewish leaders attacked Jesus for working on the Sabbath Day, he responded that he was only doing what his Father was doing. Humanly speaking, this statement signed Jesus' death warrant. Why? (verse 18)
2. In verse 22 we read that the Father entrusted judgment to the Son. In John 3:17 we read that Jesus didn't come to judge. Explain the apparent contradiction.
3. Verse 30 presents a theme that runs throughout the gospels. Can you locate it?

Apply

4. Many modern “theologians” say that Jesus never claimed he was the Son of God. How does this account make it clear that Jesus did claim to be the Son of God?
5. When does our eternal life begin?

Jesus made the Jewish leaders extremely upset when he claimed to be the Son of God. He pushed them even further when he told them that he gave eternal life, would judge the world, and would raise the dead!

John 5:31-47

Testimonies about Jesus

(The People's Bible, John, pages 85-88)

Look

Verse 31 In a Jewish court of law it was necessary to produce witnesses to the truth. In these verses Jesus supplied witnesses who proved he was the Son of God.

This entire section can be understood only in the light of how the Jews looked for praise in the sight of men, rather than God. They did their works of piety to be seen by men, so men would testify that they were good and upright. (See Matthew 6:1-18.) In this section Jesus contrasts himself with these religious leaders.

Discuss

1. How was Jesus different from the self-righteous Jewish leaders who praised themselves?
2. Whose testimony alone did Jesus consider valid? (verse 32)
3. Yet Jesus points to a human witness. To whom does Jesus point? Why?
4. Why couldn't the Jewish leaders see Jesus for who he was?

Apply

5. George read only the New Testament. He felt the Old Testament was not relevant for people who live in the New Testament era. Evaluate.
6. When you do something you know is right, and it seems as if no one is supporting you or affirming that you are doing God's will, how can Jesus' words help?

Jesus confronted the Jews. His Father's testimony was all he needed. If the Jews who studied God's Word would have listened to the Scriptures and to John the Baptist, they would not have rejected him.

John 6:1-15

Jesus feeds 5,000 people

(The People's Bible, John, pages 89-92)

Look

Verse 1 *“Sea of Tiberias”*—This is the Sea of Galilee. You might want to locate this on a map. Getting the lay of the land is important for piecing together the accounts in chapter 6.

Discuss

1. The people flocked to Jesus because of the miracles he performed. That was good and bad at the same time. Why?
2. Why did Jesus ask Philip where they could buy bread, especially since Jesus already had planned to do a miracle?
3. What would you have thought if you were one of the disciples passing out the bread or one of the people receiving it?
4. There were 5,000 men present. Perhaps there were as many as 15,000 or more people including women and children! After this huge group was fed, they decided to make Jesus a king. What prompted that decision?

Apply

5. Philip showed that his faith was weak, because he looked only to human solutions to solve the problem. Was it wrong for Philip to first look for a nonmiraculous way to supply the need? Is it wrong for us to do that?

Jesus displayed his power by feeding more than 5,000 people. The disciples learned to trust in their powerful Lord!

John 6:25-51

Jesus, the Bread of Life

(The People's Bible, John, pages 96-103)

Look

Verse 25 *"On the other side of the lake"*—The crowd who had been fed was looking for Jesus. They rented some boats from Tiberias (which had landed on the east side of the lake where Jesus had fed them) and crossed over to Capernaum.

Verse 31 *"Manna"*—The reference is to how God kept the Israelites fed during their time in the wilderness. Every morning the people found a seed-like substance on the ground, gathered it up, and ate it.

Discuss

1. What question did the people ask Jesus? How did Jesus quickly get to what was in their hearts?
2. The crowd's second question displays a remarkable lack of insight. What had they missed?
3. The crowd referred to "Moses' " miracle of manna in the wilderness. How did Jesus pick up on this reference?
4. What did Jesus call himself?
5. The Jews rejected Jesus, yet Jesus still had much work to do. How did Jesus define his work?

Apply

6. In verse 27 Jesus warned the people about working for food that spoils. How do people "work for food that spoils" today?

Jesus is the Bread of Life. He wants all to share in his blessings and promises and to lose none of those whom the Father has given him.

John 6:52-71

Jesus' hard teaching

(The People's Bible, John, pages 103-109)

Look

Verse 53 *“Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood”*—On the surface this might seem to refer to the Lord's Supper, but the context makes it clear that Jesus is referring to faith. Eating equals believing. Also, by making these words refer to the Lord's Supper, Jesus would have excluded from the kingdom anyone who did not partake of it.

Discuss

1. Why do you think many of Jesus' disciples (note: not his enemies) said that his statement about eating his flesh and drinking his blood was a “hard teaching”? (verse 60)
2. Contrast “flesh” and “spirit.” (verse 63)
3. Our source of life and our access to the Holy Spirit is found in Jesus. But it comes to us in a specific way. What is that? (verse 63)
4. What wonderful confession of faith did Peter make in the face of the mass desertion that was taking place around him?

Apply

5. The teaching of election is found throughout the gospels. Can you locate it in this section? How does it give us comfort?

God's will is for us to believe in Jesus, to “eat his flesh and drink his blood” by faith. This teaching offends many, but by God's grace we hold it as our dearest treasure.

John 7:1-24

Jesus goes to the Feast of Tabernacles

(The People's Bible, John, pages 110-115)

Look

The Feast of Tabernacles was a harvest festival celebrated between mid-September and mid-October. It commemorated God's guidance of the Israelites in the wilderness. During the festival, the Jews lived in temporary booths (tabernacles) to reenact the conditions during their years of wandering in the wilderness. This feast brought thousands of Jews to Jerusalem.

Discuss

1. Why did Jesus' brothers want him to go to the feast?
2. Why was it not the right time for Jesus to go up to the feast?
3. Why would choosing to do God's will enable a person to know whether Jesus' teaching was true?
4. How does Jesus point out the hypocrisy and ignorance of the Jewish leaders? (See John 5:16 for the account of the miracle Jesus is referring to.)

Apply

5. The Jewish religious leaders had incredible power over the people. No one spoke publicly about Jesus because they were afraid of the Jews. How does fear still cripple us when it comes to talking about Jesus?

Jesus went to the feast privately. Finally, he went into the courts and preached to the people. Once again Jesus faced criticism and confrontation from the Jewish leaders.

John 7:25-52

Is Jesus the Christ?

(The People's Bible, John, pages 115-121)

Look

Verse 27 The people dismissed Jesus as the Messiah because they knew where he was from. Many of the Jews mistakenly thought that the Messiah would come suddenly and that no one would know where he came from. On a contradictory note, the leaders said that he would come from David's line and town, Bethlehem. But in their minds Jesus fell short on both accounts.

Verse 39 "*The Spirit had not been given*"—John is talking about the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost. It is clear, however, that the Spirit was already at work among the disciples. Note Jesus' words to Nicodemus (John 3:8) and to his disciples (John 6:63).

Discuss

1. Confusion reigned that day at the temple. List the many confused opinions present that day.
 - Verses 25 and 26
 - Verse 27
 - Verse 35
 - Verse 41
 - Verse 47
 - Verse 52
2. Who, however, was not confused?
 - Verse 28
 - Verse 31
 - Verse 40
 - Verse 46
 - Verse 51

Apply

3. In verse 50 we hear Nicodemus speak. Earlier in John's gospel Nicodemus had come to Jesus at night and had asked him questions. Near the end of the gospel Nicodemus helped bury Jesus. How can this man's story comfort us if we have a friend or relative who has not come to faith yet?

Jesus declared himself to be the Messiah. Some continued their hostile rejection of Jesus, yet many believed.

John 7:53–8:11

A woman caught in adultery

(The People's Bible, John, pages 121-123)

Look

The NIV text note says, “The earliest manuscripts and many other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53–8:11.” However, many of the manuscripts that do not have these verses left space for them to be inserted. The number of manuscripts that contain these verses would lead us to conclude that the account should be included. It is rare that we are not completely certain of whether verses should be included or not. This is a comforting truth. No teaching of Scripture is ever put in question by these manuscript issues.

Discuss

1. The Pharisees laid a trap for Jesus. What were the two options they gave him?
2. How did Jesus avoid the trap and get to the heart of the issue at the same time?
3. Why did the older men go away first?
4. The law had failed. It should have been clear by now that demands to keep the law, and punishments for those who broke it, would not make people want to serve God. Nor would the law establish Israel as a God-fearing nation. How was Jesus' way different?
5. Did Jesus condone sin?

Apply

6. Jesus told the woman, “Neither do I condemn you.” How would you respond to someone who said, “It’s wrong for us to condemn sin. Jesus teaches us to be accepting of everyone and everything”?

Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the religious leaders and forgave a woman caught in adultery.

John 8:12-30

Jesus testifies about himself

(The People's Bible, John, pages 123-128)

Look

Verse 17 *“The testimony of two”*—Jesus was reminding the religious leaders of an Old Testament law: “One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses” (Deuteronomy 19:15).

Discuss

1. What does Jesus mean when he says he is “the light of the world”?
2. Why *can* Jesus testify on his own behalf? Why does Jesus *not need* to testify on his own behalf?
3. Why were the religious leaders incompetent to judge Jesus and provide light for the people? Why couldn't they follow Jesus to where he was going?
4. Even as the religious leaders were plotting to kill Jesus, what were Jesus' words doing in the hearts of many who heard him?

Apply

5. Without Jesus, people live in the darkness of sin. How does this affect the way we evaluate people?
6. What confidence do we, as redeemed children of God, get from following God's will?

Jesus taught that he was from God the Father. Only people who do not know God will fail to confess Jesus as the light of life.

John 8:31-59

Who is your Father?

(The People's Bible, John, pages 128-138)

Look

Verse 58 *"I AM!"* This was the name God gave himself in Exodus 3:14. Every Jew understood that Jesus was calling himself the Lord, Jehovah, by calling himself *"I AM."*

Discuss

1. Jesus' words of condemnation in this discourse are spoken to "the Jews who had believed him." Explain.
2. Who did the Jews consider their father? Who did Jesus say was their real father?
3. Abraham rejoiced in looking ahead to Jesus' day and was glad when he saw it by faith. Why did this make Abraham free?
4. Why did the Jews pick up stones to throw at Jesus?

Apply

5. The Jewish leaders thought that Abraham was their ticket to heaven. Today some people pin their hopes on confirmation or church membership. Why is that so dangerous?
6. Why do people in the world today trust in lies rather than in Jesus? And why do they call Christians religious fanatics or even demon-possessed?

Jesus, the Son of God, offered spiritual freedom to the Jews in Jerusalem. But they rejected it.

John 9

Jesus heals a man born blind

(The People's Bible, John, pages 138-148)

Discuss

1. Many people thought that disabilities were the result of the sin of the disabled person (or his parents). What did Jesus say was the cause of this man's illness?

2. Jesus healed the man and went away. Judging from what happened, why did Jesus do this?

3. Analyze the discussion between the healed man and the religious leaders. Who wins the debate?
 - Verse 17

 - Verses 24 and 25

 - Verses 26 and 27

 - Verses 28-34

 - Verse 34

Apply

4. How does verse 39 give definition and direction to our ministry?

Jesus healed a man born blind, gave him a chance to testify, and then helped him grow in faith.

John 10:1-21

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

(The People's Bible, John, pages 148-154)

Look

Verse 14 *"Shepherd"*—When Jesus called himself a shepherd, he was using a picture very familiar to the Jews. Many of the Jews were shepherds themselves; they knew that shepherds guarded and took care of their sheep. Furthermore they remembered Old Testament passages like Psalm 23: "The LORD is my shepherd" (Psalm 23:1), or Isaiah's description of the Lord, "He tends his flock like a shepherd" (Isaiah 40:11).

Discuss

1. Who are the sheep, the shepherd, and the robbers? (verses 1-5)
2. Jesus changed his picture a bit in verses 7-10. How is Jesus the gate for the sheep?
3. What does Jesus mean when he says that we will have life "to the full"? (verse 10)
4. Compare Ezekiel 34:11-16 and John 10:11-21. Pick out four parallels between these two readings.
5. Who are the other sheep Jesus will bring into his fold?
6. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. Relate this account to the last hours of Jesus' life.

Apply

7. Name some things your Good Shepherd has done for you.
8. How does verse 18 highlight the love that Jesus has for you?

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep.

John 10:22-42

A debate at the Feast of Dedication

(The People's Bible, John, pages 154-159)

Look

Verse 22 Two months passed between verses 21 and 22. It was the Feast of Dedication, or Hanukkah. This national holiday celebrated the purification of the temple by Judas Maccabaeus in December of 165 B.C. John reminded his Gentile readers that it was wintertime in Palestine. Solomon's Colonnade (so called because it was believed to be part of the original temple) offered some protection from the winter's cold.

Discuss

1. Were the Jewish leaders honestly asking Jesus if he was the Messiah, or were they trying to trap him? Explain.
2. Why didn't these Jews believe in Jesus?
3. Who believes in Jesus?
4. Even if the Jews did not want to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, what should have convinced them that he was?

Apply

5. Verse 28 records three promises. List them and explain why each is precious to Christians.
6. Reread verse 33 and explain this statement: The unbelieving Jews understood Jesus better than many "Christian" theologians today.

Jesus tried to show the Jews that he was the Son of God sent to save them.

John 11:1-32

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

(The People's Bible, John, pages 159-166)

Look

Verse 1 *“Bethany”*—Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived here. They were devout believers in Jesus, and Jesus had an especially close relationship with this family. Their home provided a base of operations for Jesus when he visited Jerusalem.

Discuss

1. When Jesus heard about Lazarus' sickness, he said this had happened so God might be glorified. What did he mean by that?
2. At this point in Jesus' life, what did it mean for him to walk in the day?
3. On an earlier occasion Mary had shown great trust in the Lord (when she sat at Jesus' feet and listened to him) while Martha had been distracted with serving. This time, however, the tables were turned. How did Martha's faith shine?
4. What does Jesus mean when he says in verse 25, “I am the resurrection and the life”?

Apply

5. Already in verse 4 of our reading Jesus knew that he was going to bring Lazarus back from the dead. If Mary and Martha had known, they wouldn't have had to go through all the heartache. Why does God sometimes make us wait before he blesses us?
6. Jesus said that Lazarus was asleep (verse 11). Many unbelievers use the same terminology today. Why do unbelievers sometimes call death sleep? Why does Jesus call death sleep?

Jesus delayed going to Bethany so God would be glorified. Jesus' timing is always perfect when doing his Father's will.

John 11:33-57

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, cont.

(The People's Bible, John, pages 165-170)

Look

Verse 51 *“High priest”*—The position of high priest should have been passed down from father to son. By this time in Jewish history, however, the position was mostly political. It could be bought, sold, or awarded. Yet the Lord still honored this position and put his words into Caiaphas' mouth.

Discuss

1. Martha had expressed a strong faith. Yet we see her faith severely tested. What command of Jesus did she object to?
2. Again we see Jesus' unity with the Father. Jesus knew the Father would allow him to perform this miracle, yet he made his request so everyone could hear it. Why?
3. What was the result of this miracle? (verses 45-47)
4. The Jews sped up their plans to kill Jesus after he raised Lazarus. Why?
5. Explain what Caiaphas meant by his statement in verse 50. Explain what the Holy Spirit meant by putting these words in Caiaphas' mouth.

Apply

6. Jesus knew he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead, yet when he approached the grave, he wept. What application does this have for our conduct and our attitudes at funerals of God's people?

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. This miracle led many people to believe in him but made the religious leaders even more intent on putting him to death.

John 12:1-19

Jesus enters Jerusalem

(The People's Bible, John, pages 171-176)

Look

Verse 2 *“Reclining”*—Jewish people reclined on their sides as they ate. This helps us understand the logistics of how Mary performed her humble act. It was not customary for respectable women to unbind their hair in public. Yet Mary wiped Jesus’ feet with her hair.

Verses 12-15 Everything the crowd said as they praised Jesus is drawn from the Old Testament, specifically from verses that looked forward to the Messiah. See Psalm 118:25,26 and Zechariah 9:9.

Discuss

1. Verses 4-8 present a powerful contrast and a testimony to both the hardness of men’s hearts and the power of the Holy Spirit. Compare Judas and Mary.

2. How far were the wicked religious leaders willing to go to secure their position as Israel’s leaders?

3. What were the people saying with each of these phrases?
 - “Hosanna”

 - “in the name of the Lord”

 - “King of Israel”

 - “your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt”

Apply

4. The disciples did not understand what Jesus was doing. What piece of insight were they missing? Do people fall short in this regard today?

Mary prepared Jesus for burial by washing his feet with expensive perfume. Jesus entered Jerusalem to carry out his battle with Satan.

John 12:20-50

The Greeks and the Pharisees

(The People's Bible, John, pages 176-185)

Look

Verse 20 *“Greeks”*—These were probably converts to Judaism who were in Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. They had heard about Jesus and wanted to know more about him. Perhaps the reason they asked Philip was because of his Greek name.

Discuss

1. Philip didn't quite know what to do with these Greeks, so he asked Andrew. Andrew did what Andrew did best: he brought them to Jesus (recall that Andrew brought Peter and the little boy with the bread and fish to Jesus as well). What did the Greeks learn from Jesus? (verses 23-26)
2. Explain Jesus' parable in verses 23 and 24.
3. How does a person hate his or her life?
4. God spoke words of “well done” over his Son. When would God glorify Jesus' name again?
5. How were the Jews of Jesus' day experiencing God's judgment in a special way? (verses 37-41)

Apply

6. Where are the gospel messages in the following phrases?
 - “Now is the time for judgment on this world.”
 - “Now the prince of this world will be driven out.”
 - “When I am lifted up from the earth . . .”
 - “[I] will draw all men to myself.”

Jesus preached the Word to the Greeks who came to see him. The Jewish leaders continued to reject him.

John 13:1-17

Jesus washes the disciples' feet

(The People's Bible, John, pages 185-189)

Look

Verse 5 Foot washing was a menial task normally only done by slaves. There were no slaves in the upper room and none of the disciples volunteered to wash feet. Jesus taught the disciples about humility in the best way possible—he modeled it.

Discuss

1. In verse 3, John reports that Jesus had received all power in heaven and on earth. Jesus knew he would soon return to heaven, from where he had come. But instead of holding a victory celebration, Jesus commenced to wash his disciples' feet. Why?
2. Why did Peter object to Jesus washing his feet?
3. Why will we have no part of Christ if we don't let him wash our feet?
4. Peter knew that no servant is greater than his master. How did his allowing Jesus to wash his feet set a course for the rest of his life?

Apply

5. We are tempted to become proud when we take leadership positions in the church. How does verse 16 keep us humble and focused on our task?
6. Why are we blessed when we do what our Savior wants?
7. What are some ways we can serve others as Christ has served us?

Jesus served us. The most important thing we can do is accept his service and find our lives in him. The next most important thing we can do is serve others as Christ has served us.

John 13:18-38

Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial

(The People's Bible, John, pages 189-195)

Look

Verse 27 *"Satan entered into him"*—Throughout this account we must realize that Judas had opened his heart to Satan. He was a thief (John 12:6) and had been stealing from the treasury for a long time. Everything that happened, happened because the Scriptures foretold it. God directed Judas to betray Jesus, yet the sin and guilt belonged to Judas because he willingly performed this act.

Discuss

1. Jesus had told the religious leaders that everyone who accepted the Father accepted him. What similar truth does he tell the disciples? (verse 20) Why would this be so comforting to the disciples (and to us) in the days ahead?
2. Jesus wanted to speak personal words of comfort and encouragement to his disciples, yet there was something he had to do before he could entrust himself to them. What was that?
3. When Judas left the group, John adds the comment "And it was night." There may be more here than just a time reference. How does this detail fit together with Judas' action?
4. How would God be glorified by Jesus' work? How would God glorify his Son?
5. How did Peter display a sense of pride—even arrogance—on this occasion?

Apply

6. Why can we carry out Jesus' new command?

Before he opened his heart to his true disciples, Jesus made Judas depart. Only then did he continue his ministry of training his disciples to work in the kingdom.

John 14:1-14

Jesus is the way to the Father

(The People's Bible, John, pages 195-199)

Look

Martin Luther wrote this about chapters 14–17 of John, “Indeed, here we find the best and most comforting sermon preached by Christ while on this earth” (*Luther's Works* [LW] Vol. 24, p. 7).

Discuss

1. Jesus literally said, “Stop letting your hearts be troubled.” Why were the disciples so troubled?
2. Throughout this section, Jesus gave reasons why it was good for him to “go away.” The first reason is found in verses 2 and 3. What is it?
3. Thomas and Philip each asked Jesus a question. What were the questions, and how did they show that these two disciples still had a long way to go in understanding Jesus? How did Jesus use these two questions as teaching opportunities?
4. Jesus called himself “the way and the truth and the life.” What does each picture teach us?
 - “the way”
 - “the truth”
 - “the life”
5. What is the second reason it was good for Jesus to leave this earth? (verse 12)

Apply

6. Comment on this thought from Luther: “In His concern for them He forgets His own anguish and anxiety, which must have filled His heart at this time . . .” (LW, Vol. 24, p. 7). How can we learn from Jesus' example?
7. Jesus addressed their grief by pointing them to the mansions prepared for them in heaven. What lesson is here for us?

Jesus comforted his disciples by telling them about heaven and his union with the Father.

John 14:15-31

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit

(The People's Bible, John, pages 199-205)

Look

Verse 16 Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be “*another Counselor.*” The Greek word for *counselor* literally means “someone called to a person’s side to help.” Up to this point Jesus had been the disciples’ counselor/helper. Now the Holy Spirit would assume that role.

Discuss

1. Throughout his ministry, Jesus had been confronted by people who did not know (that is, believe) him, like the religious leaders. Jesus told the disciples that they would face the same problem. Point to the ways Jesus expressed that truth in verses 15-21.
2. Judas (not Judas Iscariot) could not understand what Jesus was talking about. What should Judas have observed during his time with Jesus? (verses 23,24)
3. Jesus gave another reason why it was good for him to go back to the Father. What was that reason? (verse 28)
4. Jesus’ enemies thought they were attacking and overpowering Jesus. What was really happening? (verses 30,31)

Apply

5. The Spirit would remind the disciples of everything Jesus said to them. Why is this promise a great comfort for us?

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the disciples. The Spirit would be another Counselor/Helper for them. He also promised them the Father’s continued love and protection.

John 15:1-17

The vine and the branches

(The People's Bible, John, pages 205-210)

Look

Verse 5 *"Vine"*—There are many kinds of vines. The people of Jesus' day would have immediately thought of grapevines. They must be cut back severely if they are to grow properly the next year.

Discuss

1. The entire book of John has shown the contrast between the children of God and the children of Satan. What assures us that we will remain children of God?
2. Jesus says that if we remain in him, we will produce much fruit. In that context, he repeats his promise that he will give us whatever we ask in his name. (verse 7) He follows that promise with the statement that God will be glorified when our prayers are answered. Here's the question: What does this imply about the nature of our prayers?
3. Jesus tells us to obey his commands in order to remain in his love. This kind of statement sometimes grates on the ears of people who know they are saved by faith alone. Try and explain what Jesus is saying here. (verses 9,10)
4. What is the difference between a servant and a friend?

Apply

5. We may worry over becoming unfruitful branches and being cut off and burned. What assurance does Jesus give us in verse 16?

We are joined with Christ. From him we derive our strength for service in the kingdom.

John 15:18-27

The world hates Jesus' followers

(The People's Bible, John, pages 210-212)

Look

Verse 26 In the Nicene Creed we confess that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. While the word *proceeds* (“goes out from”) is not used here in regard to the Son, the idea is present. Jesus himself will send the Holy Spirit.

Discuss

1. The world hates Christians. What did Jesus mean by the “world”?
2. Jesus says that the world hates us because we don't belong to it. Why does the world persecute Christians?
3. Jesus used the phrase “No servant is greater than his master” twice in the last few chapters. What does he mean by that?
4. What should have convinced the unbelievers that Jesus had come to do his Father's will?

Apply

5. Jesus said that if the world had not seen his miracles, it would not be guilty of rejecting him. Is the same true today? How does this apply to our approach to evangelism?
6. Jesus prophesied that the world would hate Christians. Such hatred is painful, yet isn't there joy in being persecuted for Christ's name? Explain.

Jesus warned his disciples that the world would hate them as they shared the Word of God. At the same time, he promised to be with them and to guide them through the Holy Spirit.

John 16:1-15

The work of the Holy Spirit

(The People's Bible, John, pages 212-217)

Discuss

1. The disciples had been looking forward to the kingdom of God—a time when they would rule in happiness and joy along with Jesus. But in the days ahead, they would come to a rude awakening about the nature of the kingdom in this life. Of what painful reality did Jesus inform the disciples? Why did Jesus do this?
2. Jesus gave the disciples another reason why it would be good for him to visibly leave them. What reason was that? (verse 7)
3. Read verses 8-11. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of guilt in regard to
 - “sin”?
 - “righteousness”?
 - “judgment”?

Apply

4. The Catholic Church teaches that church traditions are as true and valid as the Bible. They use John 16:12 as a proof passage. They claim that Jesus promised the church continued revelations throughout its history. How would you respond?

Jesus promised to send his disciples the Holy Spirit to guide them into the truth.

John 16:16-33

Our grief will be turned into joy

(The People's Bible, John, pages 217-221)

Look

Verse 16 There is some debate about the meaning of “*a little while*.” It could refer to Jesus’ departure in death and his reappearance in the resurrection. It could also refer to Jesus’ departure at his ascension and his reappearance spiritually when he poured out the Holy Spirit or to his reappearance physically on judgment day. Any of these explanations would fit Jesus’ words.

Discuss

1. Jesus explains the reason for speaking about leaving them and coming back. What is that reason?

2. Up to this time, when the disciples needed something, they went to Jesus. In the future they would go directly to the Father. Explain this change by contrasting the disciples’ relationship with God through Jesus during his earthly ministry and their relationship with God after Jesus left.

3. How does Jesus further define the relationship between the Father and the disciples?

Apply

4. Do you see yourself as a member of God’s family, with God as your Father and Jesus as your brother? Can you envision yourself standing right now with Jesus and the Father at your side? If so, how does that give you peace?

Jesus told the disciples that they would have lives full of trouble while they waited to go to heaven. But at the same time they could rejoice because they were “in Christ.”

John 17

Jesus prays for his disciples

(The People's Bible, John, pages 221-231)

Look

This prayer has been called Jesus' High Priestly Prayer because as he prayed, Jesus functioned as our High Priest. (One of the responsibilities of Israel's high priest was to pray for the people.) Here Jesus prayed that God would be with him (verses 1-5), with his disciples (verses 6-19), and with all believers (verses 20-26).

Discuss

1. Describe the joy Jesus felt as he began his prayer.
2. In verse 10, Jesus says that his disciples had brought him glory. What did he mean by that? Do you and I bring glory to Jesus, and if so, how?
3. What dilemma would the disciples now face? For what did Jesus pray?
4. How would God keep the disciples safe in the days ahead?

Apply

5. For whom does Jesus pray as he continues his prayer? For what blessings does Jesus ask?
6. Do verses 20 and 21 support today's ecumenical movement?

Jesus prayed that his disciples would continue to hold on to their faith and that all the elect would become one in him.

John 18:1-11

Jesus is arrested

(The People's Bible, John, pages 233-235)

Look

Verse 1 *“Kidron Valley”*—As Jesus left Jerusalem, he crossed a shallow valley and took a path up the Mount of Olives, where a garden (the Garden of Gethsemane) was located.

Discuss

1. John doesn't tell us about Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane or Jesus' discussions with his disciples there. Why do you think he omitted that material? (Hint: Consider when John wrote his letter.)
2. Evaluate: That night it would have taken only one soldier to arrest Jesus.
3. With one short sentence (verse 6), Jesus flattened an entire detachment of soldiers. How does this underscore the point discussed in question 2?
4. Consider the misunderstandings the disciples had about the nature of Christ's kingdom. Now consider Peter's violent act in the garden. How were the two related?
5. Read verse 11 carefully. Compare Jesus' statement here with his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Apply

6. Verse 9 says that Jesus didn't lose one of those the Father gave him. How can modern Christians take comfort in how Jesus took care of his disciples in the garden?

Jesus allowed himself to be arrested so he could suffer and die for us. Even in the midst of his arrest, Jesus protected his disciples.

John 18:12-27

Trials before the religious leaders

(*The People's Bible, John, pages 235-239*)

Look

- Verse 13 Annas had been the high priest from 6–15 A.D. before he was deposed by the Roman governor. His son-in-law, Caiaphas, was his successor. However, Annas still had a considerable amount of power, and many thought of him as the real power behind the high priest.
- Verse 16 “*This disciple*”—This probably refers to John.
- Verse 19 “*Questioned*”—Annas’ trial was highly illegal. It was a night trial with no witnesses. The Jewish leaders no doubt first sent Jesus to Annas so Annas could think of some charges to bring against him. This trial would pave the way for the trial before the full Sanhedrin.

Discuss

1. In many ways there were two trials going on at the same time. Jesus was on trial as was Peter. Who was Jesus intent on saving? Who did Peter want to save?
2. Why did Jesus remain silent at this time?
3. Peter was put into a position where he denied Jesus. What should he have done when he realized his weakness and how vulnerable he was to further attacks?
4. When Jesus was in the garden, he asked his captors to allow his disciples to go free. He did this so he would not lose them. How do the events surrounding Peter’s denial underscore how vulnerable the disciples’ faith was at this time?

Apply

5. What tactic did Satan use to get Peter to fall into sin? How does the devil use the same tactic today?

Jesus resolutely stood before Annas in the face of false accusations and an illegal trial. Peter, on the other hand, caved in to temptation and took the easy way out.

John 18:28–19:16

Jesus before Pilate

(The People's Bible, John, pages 239-247)

Look

18:28 *“Ceremonially unclean”*—The Jewish leaders did not enter Pilate’s palace lest they become ceremonially unclean and thus not be able to celebrate the Passover. Entering the home of a Gentile made a Jew ceremonially unclean. What hypocrisy! They were willing to kill an innocent man, but they were careful not to become ceremonially unclean.

Discuss

1. The Romans were known for their system of justice. When Pilate asked about the charges against Jesus, what did the Jewish leaders tell him?
2. Pilate asked if Jesus was a king. What did Jesus testify?
3. Pilate was resolved to free Jesus, because he recognized Jesus as an innocent man. What two ploys did Pilate use to try to free Jesus?
4. The Jews were pressed to make charges. Finally they revealed the main reason why they had brought Jesus to Pilate: Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. How did Pilate react?

Apply

5. Christians in the United States feel they have a right to protection under the country’s legal system. Do we have that right? Can we always expect that blessing?

Pilate gave in to the pressure of the Jewish leaders. Those leaders incited the Jews to call for Jesus’ crucifixion. Jesus silently and resolutely received the death sentence.

John 19:17-42

Jesus' crucifixion and burial

(The People's Bible, John, pages 247-255)

Look

Verse 31 *"To have the legs broken"*—Breaking the legs of a crucified person would make it impossible for him to raise himself up in order to breathe. His body would hang limp, constricting his lungs, and he would suffocate. Jewish leaders asked Pilate to hurry the deaths of the three men on the crosses by breaking their legs so they would suffocate and be dead and buried before the Sabbath. Note the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders.

Discuss

1. John simply says that they "crucified" him. So much in one word! Crucifixion involved incredible amounts of pain—headaches from blood rushes, swelling of wounds, severe breathing troubles, etc. Yet this was only the beginning of Jesus' suffering. What might we miss if we simply dwelt on the physical horror of Jesus' crucifixion?
2. How many prophecies does John record as being fulfilled at Jesus' crucifixion?
3. While on the cross, Jesus cared for those around him. What did he do for his mother?
4. What did Jesus mean when he said, "It is finished"?
5. How had Nicodemus grown in faith? (Compare John 3, 7:50, and 19:39.)

Apply

6. To many, Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is completely at odds with his hanging on a cross with the sign over his head "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Can you reconcile these two events?

Jesus suffered, died, and was buried—that we might be forgiven.

John 20:1-18

The empty tomb

(The People's Bible, John, pages 257-261)

Look

Verse 17 The Greek literally says, “*don't keep holding on to me.*” Various explanations are given to these words. We can say for sure that Mary did not understand the new and glorious state in which Jesus existed now, and it was inappropriate for her to deal with Jesus now as she had when he was still in his humble state.

Discuss

1. What conclusion did Mary jump to when she went to the tomb early on Easter morning?
2. What convinced Peter and John (who often does not refer to himself by name) that Jesus had risen?
3. How could nearly everyone have forgotten about Jesus' prophecies about his resurrection?
4. Jesus sent Mary's fears away with a single word. When Mary saw Jesus she stopped asking questions and clung to him dearly. What love from both Mary and Jesus! What message was Mary to give to the disciples?

Apply

5. How do the disciples' findings at the tomb support our faith?
6. Mary's grief was intense, so intense that she seems to not have seen the angels for who they were and to have mistaken Jesus for a gardener. She kept repeating one question (see verses 2,13,15). Does our grief or the serious nature of some problems keep us from seeing obvious answers?

Jesus appeared to Mary to comfort her and to give her an important message. Peter and John saw the empty tomb and believed Jesus had risen when they saw the grave cloths.

John 20:19-31

Jesus appears to his disciples

(The People's Bible, John, pages 261-266)

Look

Verse 31 This verse gives us the theme of John's gospel. He wrote "*that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*"

Discuss

1. The disciples had quite a day! Reports came flooding in from Mary, the other women, Peter and John, and the two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus. The climax of the day came when Jesus appeared to them. He said, "Peace be with you!" Contrast this with what Jesus could have said. (Think back to what the disciples did on Good Friday).
2. Jesus gave the disciples and the church as a whole a tremendous right and responsibility. What was it?
3. How could the church ever carry out this work? (verse 22)
4. How did Jesus deal with doubting Thomas?

Apply

5. The hands, feet, and side of Jesus still bore signs of the wounds from Good Friday. Didn't Jesus have a glorified body? Why were those wounds still visible? How does this relate to our own glorified states?
6. How can people forgive sins? Isn't God the only one who can forgive sins?

Jesus appeared to his disciples to reassure them that he was alive and to give them their life's work: to preach the law and the gospel.

John 21

Jesus appears to his disciples in Galilee

(The People's Bible, John, pages 267-275)

Look

Verse 3 *"I'm going out to fish"*—Remember, the disciples were fishermen by trade. Jesus had told them to wait for him in Galilee. The natural thing for them to do was to go fishing (not recreational fishing) while they waited.

Discuss

1. Peter's desire to go fishing set up the miracle Jesus was about to perform. How did it do that?
2. Why do you suppose Peter jumped into the water to get to Jesus so quickly?
3. How did Jesus fixing breakfast for his disciples fit in with his overall way of dealing with them?
4. Peter had said that even if the other disciples fell away from Jesus, he would not. His love was greater than that of his fellow disciples. How did Jesus use this statement of Peter's as he spoke with him? How did Jesus use the fact that Peter had denied him three times?
5. Jesus prepared Peter for martyrdom. Peter objected, as he had done before. In fact, he was jealous of John. Why? Did Jesus really say that John would not die?

Apply

6. Some Christians have life easier than others. Some suffer for the gospel more than others. Use Jesus' words to Peter to help you deal with these facts.

Jesus tested Peter's humility and assured Peter that he would continue to take part in the work of feeding Jesus' lambs and sheep.