

Jesus, the Glory of God

A Complete Introduction to St. John's Writings



Dr. Steven Smith

DR. STEVEN SMITH “A COMPLETE INTRODUCTION TO SAINT JOHN’S WRITINGS”

JESUS, THE GLORY OF GOD: A COMPLETE INTRODUCTION TO SAINT JOHN’S WRITINGS

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WELCOME / HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

Dear friends,

Welcome to *Jesus, the Glory of God: A Complete Introduction to Saint John’s Writings!* We’re about to go on an amazing journey together – through five entire books of the New Testament. Specifically, we will explore the depths of the inspired and sacred writings of one of the Lord’s own Apostles ... St. John the Apostle! This CD-series is a “complete” introduction to the Johannine writings of the New Testament:

- *The Gospel According to Saint John*
- *I, II and III John*
- *The Book of Revelation*

It is hoped that this Study Guide will accompany you on the journey and help you to better follow along with the material presented on each CD. To help orient you, and to get started, there are a few things you should know.

- 1) This Study Guide is intended to walk you through each of the CD’s of the study. It is recommended that you review it before you begin the CD-series, and become acquainted with its main features.
- 2) The “Contents” page will help you find where we’re at in the study. Turn to the appropriate section of the Study Guide that corresponds to the specific CD you are listening to.
- 3) At the beginning of each new section, you will find its title, followed by Objectives. Take a moment and review the objectives, to see what the big idea is before you begin.
- 4) Following the objectives is generally an Outline of the Scripture texts being studied.
- 5) Please note: the Study Guide does not correspond to the CD’s in a “line-by-line” fashion. Yet, you will find it to closely approximate the content of each CD.
- 6) At the end of each section are Study Questions. These will help you to review the lesson. You may wish to use some of these for review, for further study, for personal meditation or possibly for a group study. Enjoy!
- 7) In addition to these helps are a number of Appendices.
 - a. Since the books of *John* and *Revelation* are extensive, a *complete outline* of these books in their entirety. These are found in the Appendix.
 - b. Also located in the Appendix are units covering Catholic teaching on the Four Gospels’ plus some additional helps for interpreting the *Book of Revelation* from a wholly Catholic perspective.

On this last point, may I also recommend my new book, *The Word of the Lord: 7 Essential Principles for Catholic Scripture Study*. It is a good place to begin getting a grasp on a fully Catholic approach to Scripture study.

I truly hope you enjoy this study. Please help us “spread the word” and tells others about this series ... and our other Catholic biblical resources at my website (www.TheGodWhoSpeaks.com). This and other CD’s, as well as my book, are available at www.catholicproductions.com.

God bless you!

Dr. Steven Smith

INTRODUCTION: THE THEOLOGY OF SAINT JOHN

Lesson Objectives:

1. To better appreciate the grand theological vision of Saint John
... especially about our Lord Jesus, who John recognizes as “the glory of God” in the flesh.
 2. To become familiar with 7 terms central to John’s Theological Vision
 3. To become familiar with 7 essential, recurring themes in Saint John’s writings
 4. Finally ... to examine our own conscience using Scripture from Saint John’s inspired writings (e.g. Prayer of Examen, Daily examination of conscience, Preparation for Confession)
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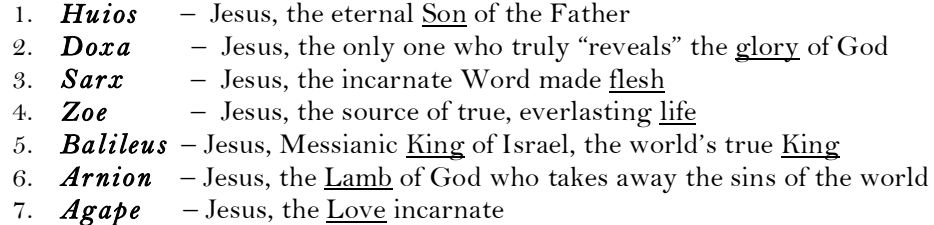
Note: Please look of “Study Questions” at the end of this lesson and all lessons!

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.” (*John 20:30-31*)

- *Signs*
- *Disciples*
- *Believe*
- *The Christ*
- *Son of God*
- *(Eternal) Life*
- *In His name*

II. SEVEN GREEK TERMS CENTRAL TO JOHN’S THEOLOGICAL VISION

- 
1. **Huios** – Jesus, the eternal Son of the Father
 2. **Doxa** – Jesus, the only one who truly “reveals” the glory of God
 3. **Sarx** – Jesus, the incarnate Word made flesh
 4. **Zoe** – Jesus, the source of true, everlasting life
 5. **Balileus** – Jesus, Messianic King of Israel, the world’s true King
 6. **Arnion** – Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world
 7. **Agape** – Jesus, the Love incarnate

1) **Huios – Jesus, the eternal Son of God**

a. **Jesus, the eternal, preexistent *Logos* of the Father.**

[1:1-3] *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.*

[10:30] *“I and the Father are one.”*

[*I John* 1:1-3]¹

b. **Jesus, the only begotten (*monogenes*) “son”**

[1:14d] *“...the only Son from the Father”*

[1:18] *“...the only Son in the bosom of the Father”*

[3:16] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son ...”*

c. **Jesus, the Divine Shaliach of the Father (“sent one”)**

[4:34] *“My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work”*

[5:30] *“I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.*

[7:33] *“Jesus said, “I shall be with you a little longer, and then I go to him who sent me.”*

[12:44-45] *“And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And he who sees me sees him who sent me.”*

2) ***Doxa* – Jesus, the only one who truly “reveals” the glory of God**

[1:14] *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.”*

[1:18] *“No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.”*

[2:11] *“This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.”*

[8:54, 57] *“Jesus answered, ‘If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say that he is your God ... Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad.’”*

[11:4-5] *“But when Jesus heard it he said, “This illness is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it.”*

[12:27-29] *“... For this purpose I have come to this hour [see below]. Father, glorify thy name.’ Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’”*

[17:1-5]²

[*Rev* 21:22-27]³

¹ “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you ...” (*I John* 1:1-3)

² “When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made.’” (*John* 17:1-5; see also: 1:1-2)

EXCURSUS: THE ‘HOUR’ OF JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN⁴

[3:13-15] “No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, *so must the Son of man be lifted up*, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”

[2:4] “And Jesus said to her, ‘O woman, what have you to do with me? *My hour has not yet come.*”

[17:1-2] “When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, *the hour has come*; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him.”

[* On “the hour” of Jesus, see also: 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1]

3) *Sarx* – Jesus, the incarnate Word made flesh

[1:14a] “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*, full of grace and truth;”

[6:51-52] “I am the *living bread* which came down from heaven; if any one eats of *this bread*, he will live forever; and *the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.*”

[6:53-55] “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat *the flesh of the Son of man* and drink his blood, you have no life in you; *he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood* has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

[17:1-3] “Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him *power over all flesh*, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. *And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*”

[I John 4:2-3] “By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that *Jesus Christ has come in the flesh* is of God ...”

[II John 2-7]⁵

4) *Zoe* – Jesus, the source of true, everlasting life for the world

[1:4] “In him was *life*, and the *life* was the light of men.”

[3:16] “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

³ “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, *for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb*. By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall *bring their glory into it*, and its gates shall never be shut by day—and there shall be no night there ... But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (*Rev. 21:22-27*)

⁴ The “hour” of Jesus is a key theme that runs throughout the Gospel of John. In sum, the “hour” of John refers to the coming hour of his “glorification” of His crucifixion, i.e. the “hour” is when Jesus pours out His love for His disciples on the cross, when Jesus is ‘*lifted up*’. In contrast, in the Synoptic Gospels, the idea of Jesus’ glorification is represented in His *Resurrection*.)

⁵ “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, *men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh*; such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, that you may not lose what you have worked for, but may win a full reward. Anyone who goes ahead and *does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the Son*. If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work.” (*II John 2-7*)

[3:36] “He who believes in the Son has *eternal life*; he who does not obey the Son shall not see *life*, but the wrath of God rests upon him.”

[4:14] “...but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to *eternal life*.”

[5:26-29]⁶

[6:47-51] “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has *eternal life*. I am *the bread of life*. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, *that a man may eat of it and not die*. I am *the living bread* which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will *live forever*; and the bread which I shall give for *the life of the world* is my flesh.” (See also: 6:33)

[6:68] “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have *the words of eternal life* ...”

[10:10-11] “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have *life*, and have it *abundantly*. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd *lays down his life* for the sheep.”

[12:25] “He who loves his *life* loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for *eternal life*.”

[I John 5:12-13] “He who has the Son has *life*; he who has not the Son of God has not *life*. I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have *eternal life*.”

5) **Balileus – Jesus, Messianic King of Israel & the world’s true King**

[1:49] “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are *the King of Israel!*”

[12:13-15] “So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, ‘*Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!*’ And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as it is written, “*Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass’s colt!*”

[18:33-37] “Pilate entered the *praetorium* again and called Jesus, and said to him, ‘Are you *the King of the Jews?*’ Jesus answered, ‘Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me? ... *My kingship* is not of this world; if *my kingship* were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but *my kingship* is not from the world.’ Pilate said to him, ‘*So you are a king?*’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a *king*. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.’”

[19:14-15] “Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, ‘*Behold your King!*’ They cried out, ‘Away with him, away with him, crucify him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify *your King?*’ The chief priests answered, ‘*We have no king but Caesar.*’”

[19:18-19] “There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, “Jesus of Nazareth, *the King of the Jews.*”

⁶ “For as the Father has *life in himself*; so he has granted the Son also to have *life in himself*; and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the *resurrection of life*, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:26-29).

[*Rev. 1:6*] “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.”

[*Rev. 19:11-16*]⁷

6) ***Arnion – Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world***

[*1:29, 36*] “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

[*13:1*] “Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

[*19:14*] “Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about the sixth hour.”

[*Rev. 5:6-14*] “And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain ... And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; and they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth.” Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, “To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!” And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.”

7) ***Agape – Jesus, the Love Incarnate***

[*3:16-17, 19*] “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him ... And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

[*13:1*] “...having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

[*13:34, 35*] “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

⁷ “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed which no one knows but himself. He is clad in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, followed him on white horses. From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords” (*Rev. 19:11-16*).

[15:9-11] “As the Father has *loved* me, so have I *loved* you; *abide in my love*. If you keep my commandments, you will *abide in my love*, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and *abide in his love*.”

[15:13] “*Greater love* has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

[21:15-17] “When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, *do you love me more than these?*’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; *you know that I love you*.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ A second time he said to him, ‘Simon, son of John, *do you love me?*’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; *you know that I love you*.’ He said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, *do you love me?*’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘*Do you love me?*’ And he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; *you know that I love you*.’ Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”

[1 John 4:7-12] “Beloved, *let us love one another*; for *love is of God*, and *he who loves is born of God and knows God*. He who *does not love* does not know God; *for God is love*. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. *In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us* and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God *so loved us*, we also ought to *love one another*. No man has ever seen God; *if we love one another*, God abides in us and *his love is perfected in us*.”

III. DECIPHERING JOHN: SEVEN ESSENTIAL THEMES

1) THE NEW MANNA OF THE NEW MOSES

- New Law [John 1:17]
 - Moses: “Law”
 - Jesus: “Grace and truth”
- Who reveals God?
 - Moses: “Moses said, ‘I pray thee, *show me thy glory*’ ... [But God] said, ‘you cannot see my face; *for man shall not see me and live*.’” [Exod. 33:18, 30]
 - “No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.” [John 1:18]
- “The Prophet”
 - [1:21; see: Deut .18:15-18] “Are you *The Prophet*”?
 - [1:45] “We have found him of whom *Moses in the law* and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”
- First sign = [2:1-11; see Exod. 7:8-25]
 - Moses: Water / blood
 - Jesus: Water / wine → blood)
- Multiplication of the Loaves: [6:1-14]
- Manna / new Manna = [6:30-33; See Exod. 12:1ff, 16:4-36]

2) ‘I AM’ – THE DIVINITY OF JESUS

[6:51] “*I am the living bread* which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever...”

[8:12] “*I am the light of the world*. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

[8:58] “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, *I am*.”

[10:9] “*I am the door*. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”

[10:11] “*I am the good shepherd*. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

[11:25] “*I am the resurrection and the life*. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”

[14:6] “*I am the way, the truth, and the life*. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

3) THE NEW CREATION & NEW TEMPLE

[1:1] “*In the beginning was the Word ...*” (see: *Gen. 1:1-2*)

[1:51] “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

[2:19-23] “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build *this temple*, and will you raise it up in three days?’ *But he spoke of the temple of his body*. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.”

[19:26-28] “When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, ‘*Woman, behold, your son!*’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘*Behold, your mother!*’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.”

[*John 20:30-31; 21:25*] Resurrection of Jesus

[*Rev. 3:12*] “He who conquers, I will make him *a pillar in the temple of my God*; never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.*”

[*Rev. 21:1:4*] “Then I saw *a new heaven and a new earth*; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw *the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God*, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.’”

[*Rev. 21:5*] “Behold, I make *all things new.*”

4) THE NECESSITY OF “BELIEF” (*Believing in Jesus; Having a not-seeing-yet-believing faith*)

[1:12-13] But to all who received him, *who believed in his name*, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

[1:50] “Jesus answered him, ‘Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you *believe?* You shall see greater things than these.’”

[3:12] “If I have told you earthly things and you do not *believe*, how can you *believe* if I tell you heavenly things?”

[3:16] “For God so loved the world that he gave *his only (monogenes) Son*, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

[4:48] “Jesus therefore said to him, ‘*Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.*’”

[4:50-51] “Jesus said to him, ‘Go; your son will live.’ *The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went his way.* As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was living.”

[9:36-38] “‘And who is he, sir, *that I may believe in him?*’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you.’ He said, ‘*Lord, I believe*’; and he worshiped him.”

[14:1] “Let not your hearts be troubled; *believe in God, believe also in me.*”

[20:29] “Jesus said to him, ‘Have you *believed* because you have seen me? Blessed are those *who have not seen and yet believe.*’”

5) THE COMING HOLY SPIRIT (*The Comforter; Spirit and Truth, Water and Spirit, etc.*)

[3:3] “Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is *born from above*, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

[3:5-6] “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of *water and the Spirit*, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of *the Spirit is spirit.*”

[4:24] “God is *spirit*, and those who worship him must worship in *spirit and truth.*”

[7:37-39] “If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow *rivers of living water.*’ Now this he said about the *Spirit*, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the *Spirit* had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

[14:26] “But the *Counselor*, the *Holy Spirit*, whom the Father will send in my name, *he will teach you all things*, and bring to your remembrance *all that I have said to you.*”

[16:13-14] “When the *Spirit of truth* comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

[*I John 5:7-9*] “And the *Spirit is the witness*, because the *Spirit is the truth*. There are three witnesses, *the Spirit, the water, and the blood*; and these three agree.”

[*Rev. 1:10-11*] “I was *in the Spirit on the Lord’s day*, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, “Write what you see in a book ...”

[*Rev. 4:2*] “At once I was *in the Spirit*, and lo, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne!”

[Rev. 22:17] “*The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let him who hears say, “Come.” And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price.*”

6) THE TRUTH (*The truth, true light, grace and truth, truth vs. lies, etc.*)

[1:9] “The *true light* that enlightens every man was coming into the world.”

[3:21] “But he who *does what is true* comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God”

[17:17-19] “*Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth.* As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be *consecrated in truth.*”

[8:32] “You will know *the truth*, and the truth will set you free.”

[14:6] “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father, but by me.*”

[18:37-38] “For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, *to bear witness to the truth.* Everyone who is *of the truth* hears my voice.” Pilate said to him, “*What is truth?*”

[I John 1:6-7] “If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, *we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

[Rev. 15:3] “*And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,*

“Great and wonderful are thy deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are thy ways,
O King of the ages!”

7) WITNESSES OF GLORY (*Bear witness to Jesus, testimony, testify, etc.*)

• **John the Baptist**

○ [1:7] “He came for *testimony*, to *bear witness* to the light, that all might believe through him.”

○ [1:34] “And I have seen and have *borne witness* that this is the Son of God.”

○ [3:32-33] “He *bears witness* to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his *testimony*; he who receives his *testimony* sets his seal to this, *that God is true.*”

○ [5:31-33] “If I *bear witness* to myself, my *testimony* is not true; there is another who *bears witness* to me, and I know that the *testimony* which he *bears* to me is true. You sent to John, and he has *borne witness* to the truth.”

• **Samaritan woman**

○ [4:39] “Many Samaritans ... *believed in him because of the woman’s testimony.*”

• **Jesus’ Miracles**

- [5:36] “But the *testimony* which I have is greater than that of John; for the *works* which the Father has granted me to accomplish, *these very works which I am doing, bear me witness* that the Father has sent me.” (See also: 10:25)
- **The Father**
 - [5:37] “And the Father who sent me *has himself borne witness* to me.”
- **The Disciples**
 - [15:27] “...and you also are *witnesses*, because you have been with me from the beginning.”
- **St. John the Apostle**
 - [21:24] “This is the disciple who is *bearing witness* to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that *his testimony* is true.”
 - [Rev. 1:1-2] “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant *John, who bore witness* to the word of God and to the *testimony* of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.”
- **The Spirit**
 - [15:26] “But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, *he will bear witness to me ...*”
 - [I John 5:6-8] “This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the *Spirit* is the witness, because the *Spirit* is the truth. There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree.”
- **The Martyrs**
 - [Rev. 6:9-10] “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 witness they had borne*; they cried out with a loud voice, ‘O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?’”

A JOHANNINE “EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE”⁸

1) “*It is for their sakes that I sanctify myself, so that they, too, may be sanctified by the truth*” (John 17:19)

⁸ Adapted from: “The Priest, Minister of Divine Mercy. An Aid for Confessors and Spiritual Directors.” (Congregation for the Clergy, 2013). The document draws on a number of passages from all Four Gospels in expositing this examination of conscience.

- *Do I really take holiness seriously in my priesthood? Am I convinced that the success of my priestly ministry comes from God and that, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, I have to identify myself with Christ and give my life for the salvation of the world?*

2) “Zeal for your house consumes me” (John 2:17).

- *Do I celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass according to the rites and rubrics established by the Church? Do I celebrate Holy Mass with a right intention and according to the approved liturgical books? Am I attentive to the sacred species conserved in the tabernacle and careful to renew it periodically? Do I pay due attention to the sacred vessels and ensure their conservation? Do I wear in a dignified fashion all of the sacred vestments prescribed by the Church? Am I conscious that I act in persona Christi?*

3) “Remain in my love” (John 15:9).

- *Do I enjoy being in the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, in meditation and in silent adoration? Am I faithful to the daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament? Is the tabernacle my true treasure?*

4) “Who are you?” (John 1:20).

In my daily life, am I weak, lazy or indolent? Do my conversations conform to a sense of the natural and supernatural that a priest should have? Am I careful to ensure that there are no elements of vanity or superficiality in my life? Are all my actions consistent with my priestly state?

5) “And there flowed out blood and water” (John 19:34).

- *Am I convinced that when I act “in the person of Christ” that I am directly involved with the same Body of Christ, the Church? Can I sincerely say that I love the Church? Can I sincerely say that I strive with joy for her growth? Am I concerned for her interests, those of all her members and for the whole human race?*

6) “Love one another” (John 13:34).

- *Have I been charitable in dealing with my brother priests? Does my egoism leave me indifferent to them? Have I criticized my brother priests? Have I supported those who are morally or physically ill? Am I committed to fraternal action so that no one is ever left alone? Do I treat all my brother priests and all of the laity with the charity and patience of Christ?*

7) “I am the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

- *Is my knowledge of the teaching of the Church as comprehensive as it should be? Do I assimilate and transmit her teachings? Am I conscious that to teach something contrary to the Magisterium, solemn or ordinary, is gravely abusive and causes damage to the faithful?*

8) “Go and sin no more” (John 8:11).

- *Proclamation of the Word leads the faithful to the Sacraments. Do I regularly go to Confession? Do I frequently go to Confession in accordance with my state of life and because of the sacred things with which I am involved? Do I generously celebrate the Sacrament of Penance? Am I reasonably available to the faithful for spiritual direction and do I set particular times aside for this purpose? Do I carefully prepare to instruct in catechesis? Do I preach with zeal and with the love of God?*

9) “I thirst” (John 19:28).

- *Have I prayed and generously made sacrifices for the good of the souls entrusted to my care by God? Do I discharge my pastoral duties? Am I solicitous for the Holy Souls.*

10) "Behold your son. Behold your mother (John 19: 26-27).

- *Do I entrust myself, full of hope, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Priests, through love and to love all the more her son Jesus Christ? Do I practice Marian devotion? Do I say the Rosary every day? Do I have recourse to her maternal intercession in my struggles with the devil, concupiscence, and the world?*

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 1:

1. For Review / further study

- a. Why is John 20:31 crucial to any study of *John’s Gospel*? What are the key terms and the big idea of this verse that can help us unlock the “purpose” of the Gospel as a whole?
- b. State the seven (Greek) terms that are central to John’s theological vision?

2. For prayer / meditation

Review the “Johannine Examination of Conscience” above Spend some time in quiet meditation, asking God to reveal the places in your life where He wants to teach you, heal you, love you with the inspired words of Saint John.

3. For group discussion

- a. The theme of “glory,” i.e., the glory of God as revealed and reflected in Jesus is a really big idea of this lesson – and of this entire study.
- b. What are some ways that the “glory of God” are most evident to me / us ... in the Church? In Scripture? In the Sacraments? In my life ... marriage ... children ... family?

JOHN 1:1-18 THE REVELATION OF THE WORD MADE FLESH

Lesson Objectives:

1. To reflect on the eternal nature of Jesus, God's only begotten Son -- and His relationship with the Father
2. To recognize what makes Jesus truly special – and why He and He alone is "qualified" to truly teach us about God
3. To consider the evidence for the question, 'Who wrote the Fourth Gospel?' – and to deepen our trust in the truth and history of ALL Four Gospels

CCC 463 Belief in the true Incarnation of the Son of God is the distinctive sign of Christian faith: "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God."

CCC 464 The unique and altogether singular event of the Incarnation of the Son of God does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man, nor does it imply that he is the result of a confused mixture of the divine and the human. He became truly man while remaining truly God. Jesus Christ is true God and true man.

CCC 470 ...The Son of God. . . worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.

CCC 478 Jesus knew and loved us each and all during his life, his agony and his Passion, and gave himself up for each one of us: "The Son of God. . . loved me and gave himself for me." He has loved us all with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by our sins and for our salvation, "is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that. . . love with which the divine Redeemer continually loves the eternal Father and all human beings" without exception.

I. THE REVELATION OF THE WORD MADE FLESH (1:1-18)

The Johannine Prologue makes us realize that the Logos is truly eternal, and from eternity is himself God. *God was never without his Logos.* The Word exists before creation. Consequently at the heart of the divine life there is communion, there is absolute gift. "God is love" (1 John 4:16), as the same Apostle tells us elsewhere, thus pointing to "the Christian image of God and the resulting image of mankind and its destiny". God makes himself known to us as a mystery of infinite love in which the Father eternally utters his Word in the Holy Spirit. Consequently the Word, who from the beginning is with God and is God, reveals God himself in the dialogue of love between the divine persons, and invites us to share in that love. Created in the image and likeness of the God who is love, we can thus understand ourselves only in accepting the Word and in docility to the work of the Holy Spirit. In the light of the revelation made by God's Word, the enigma of the human condition is definitively clarified. (VD 6)

1:1-3	The Word is "with" God in the Beginning
1:4-5, 9	The Word is Light and is Coming into the World
--	[1:6-8, 15 Witness of John the Baptist (see: 1:19-34)]
1:10-13	The Word Gives Life to the World, to Become Children Born of God
1:14a	The Word Became Flesh
1:14b	The Word <i>Reveals the Glory</i> of the Father to the Apostles
1:16-18	The Only Begotten Son Reveals " <i>Grace and Truth</i> ", the Father Himself

LESSON 1 CONTINUED: WHO WROTE THE FOURTH GOSPEL?

A. THE FOURTH GOSPEL: AN EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT

- ❖ **John 1:14b** *We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.*
- ❖ **John 19:26-27** *When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.*
- ❖ **John 19:35** *He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth—that you also may believe.*
- ❖ **John 21:24** *This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true.*
- ❖ **I John 1:1-3** *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

RICHARD BAUCKHAM, JESUS AND THE EYEWITNESSES

- “The church did not ‘remember’ Jesus in the same sense as, for example, Peter did, *but in a secondary sense that could not be real were it not rooted in the recollective memories of Peter and others.*” (*Eyewitnesses*, p. 315)
- “*The past has a voice that has to be heard. It cannot be freely invented ... One of the roles of the eyewitnesses in earliest Christianity was to articulate this past in a social context in which the group was strongly committed to hearing the past’s own voice, not the past for its own sake, but in order to understand the relationship of the group’s present to the decisive events that constituted ... not only the basis of its identity, but also God’s acts for the salvation of the world.*” (p. 317)

“The incorporation of the testimony of the eyewitnesses into the Gospels insured the permanence of that identity. Christianity’s continual fresh discovery of the relevance of the story of Jesus to new circumstances has always taken the form of negotiating past and present. All such negotiation has had to account for itself with reference to the Jesus represented in the four Gospels, the Jesus of eyewitness testimony.” (p. 318)

B. INDISUTABLE FACTS ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

1. The author was a Jew, who writes in Greek, but thinks like and writes from a decidedly Jewish perspective. As a first-century Jew, he is steeped in the Temple cult and in the thought-world of the Hebrew Scriptures, i.e., the OT. Like many of his day, he lived in anticipation of the messianic fulfillment of the Scriptures (1:21; 4:25; 6:14-15; 7:40-42; 12:34, etc.)
2. The author is conversant with Jewish traditions and expresses them freely and confidently (see: 2:6; 5:1; 10:22, etc.)
3. The author is an inhabitant of Palestine (1:44; 2:1; 4:46; 5:2; 9:7; 10:22; 11:1, etc.)
4. The author presents himself as an eyewitness of the events he recorded (1:29, 35, 43; 2:6; 4:40, 43; 5:5; 12:1, 6, 12; 19:35, etc.) See above.
5. The author is referenced in the text as not just “a disciple,” but as “the disciple Jesus loved” (21:20, 24, etc. Beloved Disciple, “BD”).
 - a. This disciple “leaned on his breast” at the Last Supper (13:23; 20:2:21:7)
 - b. Moreover, he has a certain access to Jesus that the other disciples do not clearly have. On the one hand he is well attuned to the disciples responses to Jesus (2:11, 17, 22; 4:27; 6:19, 60; 12:16; 13:22, 28; 21:22) ... On the other hand, he has a knowledge of Jesus more personal statements, dispositions, prayers, etc. (6:6, 61, 64; 13:1, 3, 11; 18:4; 19:28).
6. Given that the Synoptic Gospels name “the Twelve” (*Matt.* 10:1-3, par.), and elsewhere distinguishes the Twelve from a select few, i.e., his inner circle – and names them as Peter, James and John, the likeliest candidate is one of these three “inner circle” disciples. However, Peter appears in this Gospel, named *alongside the ‘disciple Jesus loved’* (21:7), therefore he must be ruled out. Additionally, James had been martyred by the time that the Gospel was committed to writing (see: *Acts* 12:1-5),

* Hence, the likeliest individual of all of Jesus’ disciples is John, son of Zebedee (*John* 13:23, 24; 20:2-10; 21:2, 7, 20).

C. EXTERNAL (PATRISTIC) EVIDENCE

Eusebius, Early Church historian

One of the most informative and compelling quotes on the authorship of the Four Gospels:

- “Nevertheless, of all the disciples of the Lord, only Matthew and John have left us written memorials, and they, tradition says, were led to write only under the pressure of necessity. For Matthew, who had at first preached to the Hebrews, when he was about to go to the other peoples, committed his Gospel to writing in his native tongue, and thus compensated for those whom he was obliged to leave for the loss of his presence. And when Mark and Luke had already published their Gospels, they say that John, who had employed all his time in proclaiming the Gospel orally, finally proceeded to write for the following reason. The three Gospels already mentioned having come into the hands of all and into his own too, they say that he accepted them and bore witness to their truthfulness; but that there was lacking in them an account of the deeds done by Christ at the beginning of his ministry. And this indeed is true ... [Gives examples] They say, therefore, that the apostle John, being asked to do it

*for this reason, gave in his Gospel an account of the period which had been omitted by the earlier evangelists, and of the deeds done by the Savior during that period; that is, of those which were done before the imprisonment of the Baptist... [Gives Examples] ... One who understands this can no longer think that the Gospels are at variance with one another, inasmuch as the Gospel according to John contains the first acts of Christ, while the others give an account of the latter part of his life..." "As for Luke, in the beginning of his Gospel, he states himself the reasons which led him to write it. He states that since many others had more rashly undertaken to compose a narrative of events of which he had acquired perfect knowledge, he himself, feeling the necessity of free us from their uncertain opinions, delivered in his own Gospel an accurate account of those events in regard to which he had learned the full truth, being aided by his intimacy and his stay with Paul and by his acquaintance with the rest of the apostles." (Eusebius, *Ecc Hist*, 3.24)*

- **St. Irenaeus: *Against Heresies* 3.1.1**

"After our Lord rose from the dead, [the apostles] were invested with power from on high when the Holy Spirit came down, were filled from all [His gifts], and had perfect knowledge; they departed to the ends of the earth, preaching the glad tidings of the good things [sent] from God to us, and proclaiming the peace of heaven to men, who indeed do all equally and individually possess the Gospel of God. Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church (ca. 55-60 A.D.). After their departure (ca. 62-66 A.D.), Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. *Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast* [the "Beloved Disciple"], *did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.*" (*Against Heresies* 3.1.1)

- **St. Clement, *Hypostases***

'The Gospels containing the genealogies [i.e. Matthew and Luke]', he says, 'were written first. The Gospel according to Mark had this occasion. As Peter had preached the Word publicly at Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, many who were present requested that Mark, who had followed him for a long time and remembered his sayings, should write them out. And having composed the Gospel he gave it to those who had requested it. When Peter learned of this, he neither directly forbade nor encouraged it. *But, last of all, John, perceiving that the external facts had been made plain in the Gospel, being urged by his friends, and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel.*"

- **Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.24**

"Nevertheless, of all the disciples of the Lord, only Matthew and John have left us written memorials, and they, tradition says, were led to write only under the pressure of necessity. For Matthew, who had at first preached to the Hebrews, when he was about to go to the other peoples, committed his Gospel to writing in his native tongue, and thus compensated for those whom he was obliged to leave for the loss of his presence. And when Mark and Luke had already published their Gospels, they say that John, who had employed all his time in proclaiming the Gospel orally, finally proceeded to write for the following reason. The three Gospels already mentioned

having come into the hands of all and into his own too, they say that *he accepted them and bore witness to their truthfulness; but that there was lacking in them an account of the deeds done by Christ at the beginning of his ministry.* And this indeed is true ... [Gives examples] They say, therefore, that *the apostle John, being asked to do it for this reason, gave in his Gospel an account of the period which had been omitted by the earlier evangelists, and of the deeds done by the Savior during that period; that is, of those which were done before the imprisonment of the Baptist...* [Gives Examples] ... One who understands this can no longer think that the Gospels are at variance with one another, inasmuch as the Gospel according to John contains the first acts of Christ, while the others give an account of the latter part of his life...” “*As for Luke, in the beginning of his Gospel, he states himself the reasons which led him to write it. He states that since many others had more rashly undertaken to compose a narrative of events of which he had acquired perfect knowledge, he himself, feeling the necessity of free us from their uncertain opinions, delivered in his own Gospel an accurate account of those events in regard to which he had learned the full truth, being aided by his intimacy and his stay with Paul and by his acquaintance with the rest of the apostles.*”

- ***Muratorian Fragment, 3 (155-200 A.D.)***

“The third book of the gospel is that according to Luke, the well-known physician, which, after the ascension of the Lord, Luke wrote in his own name from what he had learned when Paul associated [Luke] with himself as a companion of his journey. Nor did he himself see the Lord in the flesh, but inasmuch as he was thus enabled to proceed, he began his account with the birth of John. *The Fourth Gospel is by John, one of his disciples. When his fellow disciples and bishops were urging him, he said, ‘Fast with me three days beginning today, and whatever will be revealed to us, let us recount it with one another.’ On that very night, it was revealed to the Apostle Andrew that all the things they had recalled to mind, John should write them in his own name. And therefore, while various points are taught in the different books of the gospels, there is no difference to the faith of believers, for in all of them all things are spoken under the one guiding Spirit [inspiration], whether concerning the nativity, the passion, the resurrection, conversation with his disciples, or his two advents, the first of which was in the humiliation of rejection already past, and the second in the glory of royal power, which is yet to be. It is no wonder, then, that John constantly returns to these things even in his epistles, saying of himself, ‘What we have seen with our eyes and have heard with our ears and what our hands have touched, these things we have written to you. And thus he professes that he is not only eye-witness but also the hearer, and moreover the writer of all the marvels of the Lord as they happened.’*”

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 2:

1. For Review / further study

- a. What is revealed about Jesus in John 1:3 about His divinity?
- b. What deep mystery is revealed in John’s expression, “*The Word was with God?*”
- c. Who has “seen the face of God” (or was said to) in the OT? Did they really see the face of God? What then is being said about these OT figures?
- d. Who are the two “We’s” of John?
 - i. *We beheld his glory*
 - ii. *We all received grace upon grace*
- e. Authorship of John:
 - i. What is the primary “external” (patristic) evidence that John, son of Zebedee is the author of the Fourth Gospel?
 - ii. What is the primary “internal” (literary) evidence that John, son of Zebedee is the author of the Fourth Gospel?
 - iii. What is the problem with using only internal evidence?

2. For prayer / meditation

Consider spending an hour in Eucharistic Adoration -- spending time contemplating the face of Him who reveals the glory of God. (If this is not possible, consider praying the Joyful Mysteries with emphasis on these same truths.)

3. For group discussion

- a. *How does John’s Prologue deepen our understanding of Jesus?*
- b. *What aspect of God do I most need “revealed” to me these days (mercy, forgiveness, truth, etc.)?*
- c. *How might the truths of John’s Prologue deepen our relationship with Jesus?*
- d. *How might I share these truths with others? What would I want them to know?*

JOHN 1:19-51 THE FIRST ‘DAYS’ OF THE NEW MOSES

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the “call of the first disciples (apostles)” of Jesus in John’s Gospel
 2. To contemplate the mystery, gift and responsibility of being Jesus’ disciples today
 3. To contemplate the deeper identity of Jesus, as revealed in Christological titles (e.g. Lamb of God, King of Israel, Son of Man)
-

B. 1:35-51 THE NEW MOSES BECKONS THE NEW ISRAEL (CALL OF THE DISCIPLES)

- 1:35-37 Two of John’s disciples [Andrew & John] acknowledge Jesus as ‘*Lamb of God*’
- 1:38-40 The same two disciples acknowledge Jesus as ‘*Rabbi*’
- 1:40-42 Andrew, the “first disciple” (*protokletos*) finds Simon Peter, his brother
- a. Andrew is identified as the disciple –and brother of Peter [v. 40]
[* *Implicit in the text but replete in Tradition is that St. John is the other “disciple” called beloved elsewhere: (13:23-25; 19:26-27; 20:1-10; 21:21-25)*]
 - b. Andrew acknowledge Jesus as ‘*Messiah*’ / ‘*Christ*’ [v. 41]
 - c. Jesus re-names Simon ‘*Cephas*’ (Peter) [v. 42]
- 1:43-51
- a. Philip—Jesus as fulfillment of Law and Prophets
 - b. Nathanael—Jesus as ‘*Son of God*’ and ‘*King of Israel*’
—*The Son of Man* (angels “ascending and descending”
(see: *Gen. 28:12*))
-

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 3:

1. For Review / further study

- a. How does the OT prophecy about “the Prophet like Moses” point forward to Jesus (see: *Deut.* 18:15-18)?
- b. What is the deeper sacramental significance of John the Baptist’s statement, “Behold, the Lamb of God” (1:29, 36)?
- c. How is John the Baptist the first of many “witnesses” in *John’s Gospel*?
- d. What is the meaning of Jesus’ conversation with Nathanael (1:43-51)

2. For prayer / meditation

St. Andrew is known as *Protokletos* (“first called”). In being called, he also led people to Christ: first Peter (1:41) and later, with Phillip, “the Greeks” (see: 12:20-22). Ask God to give you a heart to want to tell people about Jesus. Pray for those who are dear to you, who yet do not know Christ – or need to know Him more fully ...

3. For group discussion

- a. *How does Jesus’ own baptism help us understand ... who He is? How we are supposed to live?*
- b. *What is “revealed” in Jesus’ baptism?*
- c. *Discuss Jesus’ response to the disciples, “Come and see” (1:39). What does this reveal about the Catholic journey of faith / the spiritual life?*

JOHN 2:1-11 THE FIRST SIGN OF THE NEW MOSES

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the meaning of Jesus’ first miracle – as the first “sign” of His glory
 2. To deepen our understanding and love for the “Woman” of Cana – Mary
 3. To learn about the “Three R’s” of studying the Gospels
-

PART TWO: THE NEW MOSES SEEKS THE LOST CHILDREN OF ISRAEL – AND THE WORLD (2:1-4:46)

A. 2:1–11 THE FIRST SIGN OF THE NEW MOSES —JESUS CHANGES WATER TO WINE AT CANA IN GALILEE

- 2:1-2 a. Jesus goes to the Wedding in Cana – on the “third” and “seventh” day
 - 2:3-4 b. The Woman (“*They have no more wine ... My hour has not yet come*”)
 - 2:5 c. “Do whatever he tells you”
 - 2:6 d. Jewish purification – six stone jars
 - 2:7-8 e. The servants obey Jesus
 - 2:9-10 f. “You have kept the good wine until now”
 - 2:11 g. Jesus’ “glory” first revealed at Cana – in the sign of the wine
- 2:12 Transition—Jesus goes to Capernaum
-

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 4:

1. For Review / further study

- a. What is the significance of the “days” (1:29, 35, 43. 2:1)? How is it that the wedding takes place on the “third” day AND the seventh day? What two mysteries does this point to: 3rd day: _____? 7th day: _____?
- b. How are we to understand the dialogue between Jesus and His Mother?
 - i. To whom does the title “Woman” point (2:4)? What does this tell us about Mary?
 - ii. Is Jesus “putting Mary in her place” (i.e. “What have you to do with me?” (2:4)?
 - iii. What / when is Jesus’ “hour” (2:4)?
- c. What is interesting about Mary’s statement to the servants?
- d. What is the deeper purpose of the sign (2:11)?

2. For prayer / meditation

- Spend some time in *Lectio Divina* ... place yourself at the outskirts of the wedding, coming closer, closer to Jesus and Mary.
- Pray for “marriage” your marriage, those of your loved ones. Pray for engaged couples, and couples who are in the challenging first years of marriage. Pray for those couples experiencing various challenges, i.e. infertility, marital stresses. Pray for those who are contemplating separation / divorce, or who have experienced these hardships. Pray for children of such marriages, that God would heal and strengthen them. Pray for those who lost a spouse ...

- Ask the “Woman” to intercede for all such marriages...

3. For group discussion

- a. *How is the love of God revealed in this passage? How does Cana prepare us for Calvary? In what ways is this entire passage / gospel ‘Eucharistic’?*
- b. *What does this passage tell us about Jesus’ abundant love?*
- c. *What is the deeper significance that all of this happens at a “marriage?”*
- d. *How can we deepen our relationship with Jesus through Mary? In what ways do we need her intercession?*

* For consideration: Dr. Smith has an 18-CD series called *The Biblical Mysteries of the Rosary* in which he explores the mystery of

the Blessed Virgin Mary in all twenty mysteries of the Rosary in Scripture. More information at: www.TheGodWhoSpeaks.com.

**TOPIC 1: JOHN 2:13-25 THE PROPHECY OF THE NEW MOSES:
THE CESSATION OF TEMPLE SACRIFICES**

TOPIC 2: JOHN 3:1:36 THE LIFTING UP OF THE NEW MOSES

Lesson Objectives:

1. To grasp the deeper meaning of Jesus in the Temple – as a sign of His Resurrection glory – and how He is our New Temple and our eternal sacrifice, in the Holy Eucharist
 2. To understand that Jesus does not abolish Judaism – but fulfills it
 3. To learn, from a Catholic perspective, what it means to be “born again” in baptism
 4. To recognize how OT “typology” points forward to Jesus in the NT
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**TOPIC 1: JOHN 2:13-25 THE PROPHECY OF THE NEW MOSES: THE
CESSATION OF TEMPLE SACRIFICES**

**B. 2:13–22 THE PROPHECY OF THE NEW MOSES: THE CESSATION OF
TEMPLE SACRIFICES (CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE)**

[Note: This is the first of three Passovers in John: 2:13; 6:4; 11:55 +13:1]

- 2:13 a. (First) Passover at hand; Jesus “went up” to Jerusalem
- 2:14-17 b. The Prophecy of the New Moses: Cessation of Temple Sacrifices
- v. 14 Jesus finds the moneychangers in the Temple
 - v. 15 Jesus drives the animals out of the Temple
 - v. 16 Jesus quotes Scripture (Possibly: *Zech. 14:21*).
 - v. 17 Jesus’ disciples remember *another* Scripture: (“Zeal for your house will consume me” (*Psa 69:10*).
- 2:18 c. “The Jews” (Temple authorities) confront Jesus, “By what *sign* ...?”
- 2:19-20 d. Destroy *this temple* and in *three days* I will raise it up
- 2:21 e. St. John: Jesus meant the *temple of His body*
- 2:22 f. Jesus’ disciples “remember” Jesus’ words, and believe the *Scriptures* (OT) and the Word He had spoken (Kerygma / Gospel)
- 2:23–25 Transition—Many “believe” in Jesus in Jerusalem

LESSON 5 (CONTINUED)

THE CATECHSIM ON “JESUS AND THE TEMPLE”

CCC583 Like the prophets before him Jesus expressed the deepest respect for the Temple in Jerusalem. It was in the Temple that Joseph and Mary presented him forty days after his birth. At the age of twelve he decided to remain in the Temple to remind his parents that he must be about his Father’s business. He went there each year during his hidden life at least for Passover. His public ministry itself was patterned by his pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the great Jewish feasts.

CCC 584 Jesus went up to the Temple as the privileged place of encounter with God. For him, the Temple was the dwelling of his Father, a house of prayer, and he was angered that its outer court had become a place of commerce. He drove merchants out of it because of jealous love for his Father: “You shall not make my Father’s house a house of trade. His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’” After his Resurrection his apostles retained their reverence for the Temple.

CCC 585 On the threshold of his Passion Jesus announced the coming destruction of this splendid building, of which there would not remain “one stone upon another.” By doing so, he announced a sign of the last days, which were to begin with his own Passover. But this prophecy would be distorted in its telling by false witnesses during his interrogation at the high priest’s house and would be thrown back at him as an insult when he was nailed to the cross.

CCC 586 Far from having been hostile to the Temple, where he gave the essential part of his teaching, Jesus was willing to pay the temple-tax, associating with him Peter, whom he had just made the foundation of his future Church. He even identified himself with the Temple by presenting himself as God’s definitive dwelling-place among men. Therefore his being put to bodily death presaged the destruction of the Temple, which would manifest the dawning of a new age in the history of salvation: “The hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”

TOPIC 2: JOHN 3:1:36 THE LIFTING UP OF THE NEW MOSES

- C. 3:1–21 THE ‘LIFTING UP’ OF THE NEW MOSES (DISCOURSE WITH NICODEMUS)**
- 3:1-12 Born Again / From Above (Water and Spirit)
 - v. 1-2 Nicodemus’ Night Visit
 - vv. 3-4 Jesus tells Nicodemus one must be “born anew” (*anōthen*)
 - vv. 5-6 Born of “water and Spirit” (to enter the Kingdom of God)
 - vv. 7-8 Jesus reiterates the need to be born “from above”
 - vv. 9-12 Nicodemus grasps a “earthly” (fleshly, natural) meaning – but fails to perceive the “spiritual” (heavenly, supernatural,) meaning
 - 3:13-15 The New Moses / Son of Man is “Lifted Up” (see: *Num* 21:8-9)
 - 3:16-21 Life for the World, in the Son of God

3:22–36 The Final Witness of the Baptist

- a. John Baptizes, Jesus and the Disciples Baptize (but see: 4:2)
- b. The ‘Friend’ and the ‘Bridegroom’ (vv. 25–30)
- c. “He who is from above is above all” (vv 31–36)

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 5:

1. For Review / further study

- e. How many “Passovers” are there in *John’s Gospel*? In the Synoptic Gospels? Where are they indicated in John? What does this tell us about the extent of Jesus’ ministry in *John’s Gospel*?
- f. What is the “typical” interpretation of *John 2:13–22*? What deeper meaning is suggested for the passage – and why? What does the “cessation” of sacrifices point to ... historically in the first century? ... Theologically / Sacramentally?
- g. When did “the disciples” (i.e. the Apostles) understand the deeper meaning of Jesus’ statement (see: 2:22)?
- h. Why does Nicodemus come to Jesus at “night”?
- i. What is the “double meaning” in 3:3? What deeper meaning does Nicodemus miss – and Saint John want his hearers/ readers to NOT miss?
- j. What is “biblical typology”? What is the “type” and “antitype” in 3:13–15?
- k. Why does John refer to himself as the “friend of the Bridegroom” (3:29)?

2. For prayer / meditation

- If Jesus looked deeply into my life, what obstacles might He see that need to be removed, that I might love Him more deeply?
- In what regard do I need to renew my own Baptism most especially these days?

- Ask Mary to remind you of her Son’s kindness and grace ...

3. For group discussion

- a. *How does John 2:20–22 help us understand Jesus in the Holy Eucharist?*
- b. *How does John 3:1–7 help us to comprehend the deeper meaning of our baptism?*
- c. *Discuss John 3:16–17 ... Specifically, how can we help others see Jesus’ deep love for them? Who do we want / need to share the love of Jesus with? What’s holding me / us back? Who do we know that feels “condemned already” under the brokenness of their life? How might we minister to them?*

JOHN 4:1-6:71 THE NEW MANNA OF THE NEW MOSES

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand how Jesus is the Messiah of “all Israel”
 2. To be reminded of Jesus’ love for the lost
 3. To understand the “Shaliach” concept (Jesus is the one “sent” by the Father)
 4. Above all – to understand the Bread of Life Discourse – and what Saint John reveals about Jesus
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D. 4:4–42 THE NEW MOSES SEEKS THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL (DISCOURSE WITH THE SAMARITAN WOMAN AT JACOB’S WELL)

- 4:4 a. Jesus “had” to pass through Samaria
- 4:5-6: b. Jesus at Jacob's well
- 4:7-15 c. The Offer of “Living Water” (See: *Zech.* 14)
- 4:16-19 d. “Five husbands
- 4:20-26 f. Spirit and Truth
- 4:27 g. Jesus’ disciples return - wonder why he is speaking with Samaritan woman
- 4:28-30: h. The Samaritan evangelist
- 4:31-38 i. “My food is to do the will of *Him who sent me*”
- 4:40-42 j. “Belief” – many Samaritans believe in Jesus
- 4:43-45 Transition—Jesus enters Galilee (a prophet has no honor in his own country)

E. 4:46-54 THE NEW MOSES SEEKS THE LOST PEOPLES OF THE WORLD (JESUS HEALS THE ROMAN OFFICIAL’S SON)

- 4:46 a. Jesus arrives in Cana for a second time
- 4:47 b. Royal Official (Roman?)
- 4:48 c. “Unless you see *signs and wonders ...*”
- 4:49 d. “Belief” – Come before my little boy dies
- 4:50-51 e. Sign: “Go, your son will live”
- 4:53 f. “Belief” – Son lives; man’s “household believes in Jesus
- 4:45 g. “Second sign” (see: 2:11)

PART THREE: THE NEW MOSES RECAPITULATES

THE GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL (5:10-10:42)

A. 5:1-47 THE MERCY OF NEW MOSES—JESUS RECAPITULATES THE MEANING OF THE SABBATH

5:1-15 Healing on the Sabbath at the *Bethzatha* pool (‘House of Mercy’)

5:16-47 The *Shaliach Discourse* — Jesus explains his “work” on the Sabbath

NOTE: The above is referred to as the *Shaliach Discourse* in that it transcends a simple explanation of His work on the Sabbath; in fact, it functions as a Christological treatise of the of the relation between the Son, and the Father who “*sent*” him.

B. 6:1-71 THE NEW PASSOVER OF THE NEW MOSES —JESUS RECAPITULATES THE MANNA OF THE EXODUS

6:1-21 The New Moses: Multiplying the loaves; Walking on the sea

6:22-24 Transition—The crowd comes to Jesus

6:25-71 [A MATTER OF SPECIAL FOCUS: SEE BELOW!]

6:25-71 THE BREAD OF LIFE DISCOURSE

(Given at Capernaum Synagogue)

PART ONE (vv. 25-51): RABBINIC HOMILY IN THREEFOLD MOVEMENT:

(I. Quote from Law; II. 2nd quote from Prophets; III. Explanation Based Upon texts of Law & Prophets)

I. Law (see: *Exod.* 16:4, *Psa.* 78:24)

- b. Do not Labor for Bread (Manna) that Perishes (vv 25-26)
- c. Labor for Food that Gives ‘*Eternal Life*’ [see: *Exod.* 16:4, *Psa.* 78:24] (v 27)
 - a. It was *not Moses* – but *my Father* (vv. 28-33)
 - b. Lord, give us this bread *always* (v. 34)
- d. *I AM the Bread of Life* (vv. 35-40)
{1st PROCLAMATION OF NEW TEACHING}
- e. ‘The Jews’ murmur / *The Father who sent me* draws the one who comes (vv. 41-44)

II. Prophets (see: *Isa* 54:13)

- a. ‘*They shall be taught by God*’ [quote of *Isa* 54:13] (v 45-46)

III. Explanation Based Upon Law & Prophets

- a. He who *believes* has eternal life (v. 47)
- b. ‘*I AM the Bread of Life from Heaven*’ (vv 48-51)
{2nd PROCLAMATION OF NEW TEACHING}

PART TWO (vv 52-59) TRUE FOOD AND TRUE DRINK

- a. ‘The Jews’ Dispute Among themselves (vv. 52; see vv. 41-44)
- b. *Unless you eat ... and drink* (vv 53-54)
{3rd PROCLAMATION OF NEW TEACHING}
- c. *Food indeed ... and drink indeed* (vv. 55-58)
- d. Explanatory comment by John [Capernaum synagogue] (v. 59)

PART THREE (vv 60-71) ‘YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE’

(* This third panel completes the saying of vv. 45-46 [‘*taught by God*’])

- a. **Many Disciples Disbelieve (vv. 60-65)**
 - i. Disciples murmur (v. 60; see vv. 41-44)
 - ii. *Do you take offense?* / *Ascending Son of Man* (vv. 61-62)
 - iii. Explanatory comment by John, i.e., *those who do not believe* prefigure the *Betrayer*, Judas (vv 64)
 - iv. *No one can come to me unless granted by the Father* (v. 65)
- b. **Peter and the Disciples Believe (vv. 66-71)**
 - i. Many disciples leave (v. 66)
 - ii. Jesus: Will you also leave (v 67)
 - iii. Peter: You have the words of eternal life (vv. 68-69; see: 45-46!)

- iv. Jesus indicates his betrayal (v.70)
- v. John explains that it was Judas (v. 71)

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 6:

1. For Review / further study

- a. The Woman at the Well (*John 4:4-42*)
 - i. What is the significance of Jesus speaking with a “Samaritan” woman?
 - ii. How, in some sense, does this woman embody / symbolize the “lost tribes” of Israel? *How is Jesus’ “reclaiming” the lost tribes of Israel?*
 - iii. In what ways is this John 4:4-42 “spousal scene?”
- b. “Him Who Sends Me” (*John 5:19-30*)
 - i. In ancient Judaism, what is a “Shaliach”? What are their privileges, responsibilities? How does this help us understand Jesus’ being “sent” by the Father?
 - ii. Ultimately, what is the “payoff” of understanding this “Shaliach” Christology? (E.g. If we understand Jesus as the one “sent to do the will of the Father?”)
 - iii. In this passage, who bears “witness” to Jesus?
- c. The Bread of Life Discourse (*John 6:25-71*)
 - i. What are the two “signs” Jesus does in this chapter? How does each show Jesus to be a “recapitulation” of Moses ... and greater than Moses?
 - ii. Why did the “ancestors” in the wilderness die (v. 31) How is Jesus the “bread come down from heaven?” (v. 42)
 - iii. How, according to Dr. Smith, might this entire passage be modeled after an ancient Jewish model of homily?
 - iv. If it is – what is especially revealing about Peter’s statement in v. 69? (See v. 45!)

2. For prayer / meditation

- Consider spending an hour in Eucharist Adoration (or if not possible, *Lectio Divina*) contemplating the mysteries of the Bread of Life Discourse ...

- Ask Mary to deepen your love for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist... Pray for Christians who know and love Jesus ... but do not have a “Eucharistic relationship” with Him ...

(STUDY QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 6 – CONTINUED)

3. For group discussion

- a. What is the significance of “well scenes” in ... the OT? In John 4?
- b. What are ways that we “murmur” (see. V. 61)?
- c. What does it mean for us as a body that Jesus is the “Bread of Life?” How can we participate in that more fully?

JOHN 7:1-10:42 THE NEW MOSES RECAPITULATES THE GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand how Jesus fulfills the great feasts of Judaism.
 2. To contemplate the “face of forgiveness” in Jesus.
 3. To deepen our understanding as Jesus – *the Messiah of Israel* and *Savior of the world*
-

C. 7:1–8:59 THE NEW MOSES AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES—JESUS RECAPITULATES THE SYMBOLS OF WATER & LIGHT

- 7: 1–13 Introduction: Will Jesus go up to the feast?
7:14–36 The New Moses is Greater than the First (*Discourse in the middle of the feast*)
7:37–52 *Rivers of Living Water* (Discourse on the final, i.e. “great” day of the feast)

[7:53–8:11 JESUS & THE ADULTERESS: YAHWEH AND ISRAEL?]

- 8:12–20 *I AM the Light of the World*
8:21–30 *He who sent me is with me*
8:31–59 *Before Abraham was, I AM*
9:1–41 Jesus heals the man born blind (Jesus is the *Light*; see: 1:4–5)
10: 1–21 Jesus is *The Good Shepherd*

E. 9:1–10:22 THE NEW MOSES ILLUMINATES THE BLIND

- 9:1–41 *Jesus heals the man born blind (Jesus is the Light; see: 1:4–5)*
10:1–21 *Jesus is the Good Shepherd*

F. 10:22–39 THE NEW MOSES AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION — JESUS, RECAPITULATES THE MEANING OF THE TEMPLE (HIMSELF IN PLACE OF THE TEMPLE ALTAR)

- 10:22–30 *I and the Father are one*
10:31–42 Jesus is *the Son of God*.

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 7:

1. For Review / further study

- a. What was the "Feast of Tabernacles?" What did it commemorate in ancient Israel? What two symbols were associated with this feast? (See: 7:37-39; 8:12)
- b. How did Jesus "use" these symbols ... to "recapitulate" this feast ... what do we learn about Jesus' true identity as a result?
- c. What is remarkable about the blind man's response in 9:9?
- d. What have people said about "John's historicity" in the past century? How does the archeological evidence of the Pool of Siloam only underscore the veracity of *John's Gospel*?

2. For prayer / meditation

- Spend some time in *Lectio Divina* with 7:53-8:11.
- Pray for a great sense of charity to the outcast of our day. Consider reading some of Pope Francis' powerful homilies on reaching out to the lost...

3. For group discussion

- a. In what ways was Jesus "living water" in ancient Israel? How is He "living water" to the Church today?
- b. How is Jesus our "Good Shepherd?" In what ways does the Church listen to the "voice" of the Shepherd today?
- c. Discuss the scene of *John* 7:53-8:11. What is most remarkable about this scene?
- d. What do the blind man's parents fear (see: 9:22)? In what ways are we aware / unaware of religious persecution today? What do we need to pray for with regard to religious freedom? (Perseverance? Courage? Motivation? Etc.)

**TOPIC 1: JOHN 11:1-12:50 THE NEW MOSES MOVES
TOWARD THE HOUR OF GLORY**

TOPIC 2: JOHN 13:1-16:33 THE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (PART I)

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the deeper mystery and meaning of Jesus’ final sign – raising Lazarus
 2. To see how Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem is part of His “kingship”
 3. To understand what it means that Jesus loves His disciples “to the end” – and how his “departure” is not an absence from His disciples
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**TOPIC 1: JOHN 11:1-12:50 THE NEW MOSES MOVES
TOWARD THE HOUR OF GLORY**

A. 11:1–54 JESUS GIVES LIFE TO MEN; MEN CONDEMN JESUS TO DEATH

- 11:1-44 *Jesus raises Lazarus to life*
- 11:1-6 a. Jesus hears from Martha and Mary
- 11:7-16 b. “Lazarus is dead”
- 11:17-27 c. “Belief” – “I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God”
- 11:28-37 d. “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died”
- 11:38-44 e. The “raising” of Lazarus
- 11:45-54 f. Sanhedrin condemns Jesus to die; withdrawal to Ephraim
- 11:55-57 Transition—Will Jesus come to Jerusalem for Passover?

**B. 12:1–50 BETHANY & THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM:
(PREPARATORY SCENES TO JESUS’ PASSOVER AND DEATH)**

- 12:1-8 At Bethany, Mary anoints Jesus for death
- 12:9-19 *Hosanna!* The welcome the Messiah into Jerusalem
- 12:20-36 The coming of the Greeks marks the ‘hour’ of Jesus
Andrew brings “the Jews,” i.e. Simon Peter (see: *John* 1:40)

- Andrew, with Phillip bring “the Greeks” (12:20-22)
12:37-43 An evaluation of Jesus’ ministry to “his own”
12:44-50 *Not judgment but salvation*: Summary of Jesus Ministry to “the world”

TOPIC 2: JOHN 13:1-16:33 THE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (PART I)

PART ONE: THE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (13:1-17:26)

A. 13:31-14:31 THE *EXITUS* AND *REDITUS* OF THE LAMB

13:31-38: Jesus’ departure and the commandment to love; Peter’s threefold denial.

13:1 The *Telos* of Jesus: He loved them “*to the end*”

13:2-17 The Foot-washing: “*You are all clean*”

13:18-20 “I Know whom I have

chosen”

13:21-38 The Morsel “Lord, who is it?”

14:1-14: Jesus is the way to the Father

14:1-4: Jesus’ *Exitus* and *Reditus*

14:5: *How can we know the way?*

14:6-11: *I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life*

14:12-14: Greater works than these

14:15-24: The Paraclete

14:15-17: Coming of the Paraclete (to the disciples, not to the world)

14:18-21: *You in Me and I in you*

14:22: Judas’ question

14:23-24: The coming of the Father (with Jesus)

14:25-31: *Rise, Lets us Go*

14:25-26: Sending the Paraclete to teach.

14:27ab: *Peace I leave you*

14:27c-29: Jesus’ *exitus*

14:30-31: Struggle with the Ruler of the World

“The hour of Jesus is the hour of the great stepping-beyond, the hour of transformation, and this metamorphosis of being is brought about through *agápē*. It is *agápē* “to the end”—and here John anticipates the final word of the dying Jesus: *tetélestai*—“it is finished” (19:30).

This end (*télos*), this totality of self-giving, of remolding the whole of being—this is what it means to give oneself even unto death.”

Pope Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: vol. ii: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2011), 55.

B. 15:1–16:33 JESUS, THE TRUE VINE

15:1–17: Abiding in Jesus

1–9: The Vine and the Branches

15:10-17: The Commandment to Love

15:10-11 Abiding in Jesus and his love.

15:12-17: *Love one another*

15:18–16:4a: The world's hatred for Jesus and his disciples (§54)

15:18–21: The world hates and persecutes the disciples

15:22–25: The guilt of the world

15:26–27: The witness of the Paraclete

16:1–4a: The persecution of the disciples

16:4b–33: The Gift of the Paraclete

16:4b–15: Jesus' departure and the coming of the Paraclete.

16:5-7: Jesus' departure and the disciples' sadness

16:8-11: The Paraclete against the world

16:12-15: The Paraclete as guide of the disciples

16:16-33: Jesus' return will bring the disciples peace

16:16-23a: The disciples will see Jesus again and rejoice

16:23b-33: *I have overcome the world*

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 8:

1. For Review / further study

- a. How is Jesus’ “raising of Lazarus” a sign of His resurrection? *How is Jesus’ resurrection essentially different from His miracles of raising others from the dead?*
- b. What are the messianic / OT roots of His Triumphal entry?
- c. When specifically does Jesus say “The hour has come?” What is the significance of this?
- d. What does it mean that Jesus loves His disciples “to the end” (13:1)?
- e. How is Jesus more – much more – than merely a “good example” (13:15)?

2. For prayer / meditation

- How is my own spiritual life more like ... Mary (or) Martha? What are the implications of this for me?
- Spend some time in *Lectio Divina* with the image of Jesus washing your feet ...

3. For group discussion

- a. Why does Jesus delay going to Bethany (11:14; 17-23)?
- b. Why does Peter refuse to have Jesus wash his feet (13:6-11)?
- c. What is the “love commandment” of Jesus (13:34)? Why is it that this – above all – must define us as Christians?
- d. What is the deeper meaning of Jesus’ metaphor in 15:1-11?

TOPIC 1: JOHN 17:1-26 THE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (PART II)

TOPIC 2: JOHN 18:1-40 THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST (PART I)

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the mystery of Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer – and its deeper connection to the Lord’s Prayer
 2. To contemplate the meaning of Jesus’ arrest in Gethsemane – and his trials .. and to understand the meaning of Judas’ betrayal ... and the mystery of Jesus’ being *handed over* to “the Jews”
 3. To make sense of Peter’s denials – in light of his Petrine ministry in the Gospels
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CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA:

The place was a garden, typifying the paradise of old. For in this place, as it were, all places were recapitulated and our return to humanity’s ancient condition was consummated. For the troubles of humanity began in paradise, while Christ’s suffering, which brought us deliverance from all the evil that happened to us in times past, began in [this] garden.

(COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 11.12)

TOPIC 1: JOHN 17:1-26 THE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (PART II)

CCC 2748 *In this Paschal and sacrificial prayer, everything is recapitulated in Christ:* God and the world; the Word and the flesh; eternal life and time; the love that hands itself over and the sin that betrays it; the disciples present and those who will believe in him by their word; humiliation and glory. It is the prayer of unity.

C. 17:1-26 JESUS’ HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER

(‘The Recapitulation of Everything’ – CCC 2748)

17:1–8: Father, Glorify Thy Son

17:1-5: Glory from ‘*before the world was made*’ (see 1:18)

17:6-8: Jesus’ work of revelation among the disciples

17:9–19: Jesus prays for those whom the Father has given him

17:9-16: The disciples and the world

17:17-19: The *consecration* of the disciples and of Jesus

17:20-26: Jesus prays for those who believe through the disciples’ word

17:20-23: The unity of those who believe in Jesus

17:24-26: ‘*To behold my glory*’ -- Jesus prays for all believers to be with him and the Father

CCC 2746 When “his hour” came, Jesus prayed to the Father. His prayer, the longest transmitted by the Gospel, embraces the whole economy of creation and salvation, as well as his death and Resurrection. The prayer of the Hour of Jesus always remains his own, just as his Passover “once for all” remains ever present in the liturgy of his Church.

CCC 2747 Christian Tradition rightly calls this prayer the “priestly” prayer of Jesus. It is the prayer of our high priest, inseparable from his sacrifice, from his passing over (Passover) to the Father to whom he is wholly “consecrated.”

CCC 2748 *In this Paschal and sacrificial prayer, everything is recapitulated in Christ: God and the world; the Word and the flesh; eternal life and time; the love that hands itself over and the sin that betrays it; the disciples present and those who will believe in him by their word; humiliation and glory.* It is the prayer of unity.

CCC 2749 Jesus fulfilled the work of the Father completely; his prayer, like his sacrifice, extends until the end of time. The prayer of this hour fills the end-times and carries them toward their consummation. Jesus, the Son to whom the Father has given all things, has given himself wholly back to the Father, yet expresses himself with a sovereign freedom by virtue of the power the Father has given him over all flesh. The Son, who made himself Servant, is Lord, the *Pantocrator*. Our high priest who prays for us is also the one who prays in us and the God who hears our prayer.

CCC 2750 By entering into the holy name of the Lord Jesus we can accept, from within, the prayer he teaches us: “*Our Father!*” *His priestly prayer fulfills, from within, the great petitions of the Lord’s Prayer: concern for the Father’s name; passionate zeal for his kingdom (glory); the accomplishment of the will of the Father, of his plan of salvation; and deliverance from evil.*

2751 Finally, in this prayer Jesus reveals and gives to us the “knowledge,” inseparably one, of the Father and of the Son, which is the very mystery of the life of prayer.

TOPIC 2: JOHN 18:1-40 THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST (PART I)

A. 18:1-27 THE ARREST AND INTERROGATION OF JESUS

18:1-11 The Arrest of Jesus

18:1-3: Judas, the Betrayer, enters the Garden of Gethsemane with the band of soldiers

18:4-8: Jesus meets the arresting party and *reveals* His power.

18:9: *I have not lost one*

18:10-11: Peter reacts to the arrest by striking at the servant

18:12-13 [Change of scene] Jesus is taken from Gethsemane to Annas

18:14-27 The interrogation of Jesus

18:14: Expedient that one man should die

18:15-18: Introduction of Peter into high priest’s palace; *first* denial

18:19-23: Annas interrogates Jesus who protests his innocence

18:24: Jesus sent bound, from Annas to Caiaphas

18:25-27: Peter’s *second* and *third* denials

CCC 599 Jesus’ violent death was not the result of chance in an unfortunate coincidence of circumstances, but is part of the mystery of God’s plan, as St. Peter explains to the Jews of Jerusalem in his first sermon on Pentecost: “*This Jesus [was] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.*” This Biblical language does not mean that those who handed him over were merely passive players in a scenario written in advance by God.

CCC 600 To God, all moments of time are present in their immediacy. When therefore he establishes his eternal plan of “predestination, he includes in it each person’s free response to his grace: “*In this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.*” For the sake of accomplishing his plan of salvation, God permitted the acts that flowed from their blindness.

“He died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures”

CCC 601 The Scriptures had foretold this divine plan of salvation through the putting to death of “the righteous one, my Servant” as a mystery of universal redemption, that is, as the ransom that would free men from the slavery of sin. Citing a confession of faith that he himself had “received,” St. Paul professes that “*Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures.*” In particular Jesus’ redemptive death fulfills Isaiah’s prophecy of the suffering Servant. Indeed Jesus himself explained the meaning of his life and death in the light of God’s suffering Servant. After his Resurrection he gave this interpretation of the Scriptures to the disciples at Emmaus, and then to the apostles.

“For our sake God made him to be sin”

CCC 602 Consequently, St. Peter can formulate the apostolic faith in the divine plan of salvation in this way: “*You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers ... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake.*” Man’s sins, following on original sin, are punishable by death. By sending his own Son in the form of a slave, in the form of a fallen humanity, on account of sin, God “*made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*”

CCC 603 Jesus did not experience reprobation as if he himself had sinned. But in the redeeming love that always united him to the Father, he assumed us in the state of our waywardness of sin, to the point that he could say in our name from the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Having thus established him in solidarity with us sinners, God “*did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all,*” so that we might be “*reconciled to God by the death of his Son.*”

God takes the initiative of universal redeeming love

CCC 604 By giving up his own Son for our sins, God manifests that his plan for us is one of benevolent love, prior to any merit on our part: “*In this is love, not that we loved God but that he*

loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins.” God “shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

CCC 605 At the end of the parable of the lost sheep Jesus recalled that God’s love excludes no one: “*So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.*” He affirms that he came “*to give his life as a ransom for many*”; this last term ... contrasts the whole of humanity with *the unique person of the redeemer who hands himself over to save us.* The Church, following the apostles, teaches that Christ died for all men without exception: “*There is not, never has been, and never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer.*”

Christ’s whole life is an offering to the Father

CCC 606 The Son of God, who came down “*from heaven, not to do [his] own will, but the will of him who sent [him],*” said on coming into the world, “*Lo, I have come to do your will, O God.*” “*And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*” From the first moment of his Incarnation the Son embraces the Father’s plan of divine salvation in his redemptive mission: “*My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work.*” The sacrifice of Jesus “for the sins of the whole world” expresses his loving communion with the Father. “*The Father loves me, because I lay down my life,*” said the Lord, “[*for*] *I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.*”

CCC 607 The desire to embrace his Father’s plan of redeeming love inspired Jesus’ whole life, for his redemptive passion was the very reason for his Incarnation. And so he asked, “*And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour.*” And again, “*Shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?*” From the cross, just before “*It is finished,*” he said, “*I thirst.*”

“The Lamb who takes away the sin of the world”

CCC 608 After agreeing to baptize him along with the sinners, John the Baptist looked at Jesus and pointed him out as the “*Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.*” By doing so, he reveals that Jesus is at the same time the suffering Servant who silently allows himself to be led to the slaughter and who bears the sin of the multitudes, and also the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel’s redemption at the first Passover. Christ’s whole life expresses his mission: “*to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.*”

Jesus freely embraced the Father’s redeeming love

CCC 609 By embracing in his human heart the Father’s love for men, Jesus “*loved them to the end,*” for “*greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*” In suffering and death his humanity became the free and perfect instrument of his divine love which desires the salvation of men. Indeed, out of love for his Father and for men, whom the Father wants to save, Jesus freely accepted his Passion and death: “*No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.*” Hence the sovereign freedom of God’s Son as he went out to his death.

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 9:

1. For Review / further study

- a. The *Catechism* calls Jesus’ “High Priestly Prayer” (*John 17*) the “Recapitulation of all things.” Describe what is meant.
- b. In discussing the arrest of Jesus (18:1ff), many fresh details were detailed here. Describe some of the details that, however familiar they are to you, are the most striking to you from this particular study.
- c. What is the symbolism of the “garden” and why is it significant (18:1)?
- d. What do we learn about Saint John’s family which might explain how he was able to gain access to the arrest of Jesus (18:16)?

2. For prayer / meditation

- Spend time contemplating the “deep connection” that was discussed in this lesson, between Jesus’ “High Priestly Prayer” (*John 17*) and the Lord’s Prayer (*Matt. 6:9-13*). Ask God to give you a deeper love for Jesus, and all He has done for you and is doing for you, as your / our Eternal High Priest ... as you pray the Lord’s Prayer.

3. For group discussion

- a. How is *John 17* a prayer of unity for: “all Israel” ... for all Christians?
- b. The episode with Peter striking the slave is instructive for understanding the “contrast” between the kingdom of this world ... and the Kingdom of God (18:10-11; see vv. 36-38). *Explain.*
- c. How are we to understand Peter’s threefold denial? What is the significance of the charcoal fire (see: 18:18).

JOHN 18:28-19:42 THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST (PART II)

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the deeper mystery of Jesus’ kingship – and His *coronation* as “King of the Jews”
 2. To come to a greater understanding of Jesus’ crucifixion: its meaning in history and theology, its place in the center of our faith
 3. To embrace the sacramental meaning of the Cross – in recognizing Baptism and Eucharist in the “blood and water” flowing from Christ’s side
 4. To appreciate the “spousal image” of the “Woman” at the foot of the Cross – and deepen our love for the Blessed Virgin Mary
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AUGUSTINE: TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 115.2

(On the Kingship of Jesus)

What is in fact Christ’s kingship? It is simply those who believe in him, those to whom he said, “*You are not of this world, even as I am not of this world.*” He willed, nevertheless, that they should be in the world, which is why he prayed to the Father, “*I ask you not to take them out of the world but to protect them from the evil one.*” So here also he did not say, “My kingdom is not” in this world but “is not of this world.” And when he went on to prove this by declaring, “*If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have fought to save me from being handed over to the Jews,*” he concluded by saying not “*my kingdom is not here*” but “*my kingdom is not from here.*”

Indeed, his kingdom is here until the end of time, and until the harvest it will contain weeds. The harvest is the end of the world, when the reapers, who are the angels, will come and gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin. And this could not happen if his kingdom were not here. But even so, it is not from here, for it is in exile in the world. Christ says to his kingdom, “*You are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.*” They were indeed of the world when they belonged to the prince of this world, before they became his kingdom. Though created by the true God, everyone born of the corrupt and accursed stock of Adam is of the world. [But] everyone who is reborn in Christ becomes the kingdom that is no longer of the world. For God has snatched us from the powers of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. This is that kingdom of which he said, “*My kingdom is not of this world; my kingly power does not come from here.*”

B. 18:28–19:6A THE TRIAL OF JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Seven Scenes in a Chiasmatic Structure (Ignace De La Potterie, *Hour of Jesus*, p. 58)

- A. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [1st Dialogue: *What accusation...?*] (18:28-32)
- B. (Inside) Pilate and Jesus: *The Kingship of Jesus* (18:33-38)
- C. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [2nd Dialogue: *Barabbas*] (18:38-40)
- D. THE CORONATION (19:1-3)**
- C¹. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [3rd Dialogue: *Ecce Homo*] (19:4-7)
- B¹. (Inside) Pilate and Jesus [Pilate’s Power] (19:8-12)
- A¹. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [Final Dialogue: *Behold Your King*] (19:13-16)

C. 19:16B–42 THE CRUCIFIXION AND BURIAL OF JESUS

19:16b-18 Introduction: *Via Crucis* and the crucifixion

19:19–22 **Episode 1:**

The King of the Jews – Pilate and the Royal Inscription

19: 23-24 **Episode 2:**

The Seamless Tunic – The executioners divide Jesus’ garments

19:25-27 **Episode 3:**

Behold thy Mother! – Jesus gives his Mother to the Beloved Disciple and the Beloved Disciple to His Mother

19:28-29 **Episode 4:**

I Thirst – Jesus’ cry of thirst; the executioners offer him wine

19:30 **Episode 5:**

It is Finished – Jesus hands over his spirit.

19:31-35 **Episode 6:**

Blood and Water – Pilate and the breaking of Jesus’ legs;
Blood and water flow from Jesus’ side

19:36-38 **Episode 7:**

Behold the Pierced One

19:38-42 Conclusion: The burial of Jesus by Joseph and Nicodemus

CCC 634 “*The gospel was preached even to the dead.*” The descent into hell brings the Gospel message of salvation to complete fulfillment. This is the last phase of Jesus’ messianic mission, a phase which is condensed in time but vast in its real significance: the spread of Christ’s redemptive work to all men of all times and all places, for all who are saved have been made sharers in the redemption.

CCC 635 Christ went down into the depths of death so that “*the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.*” Jesus, “*the Author of life,*” by dying destroyed “*him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and [delivered] all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage.*” Henceforth the risen Christ holds “*the keys of Death and Hades,*” so that “*at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*”

Today a great silence reigns on earth, a great silence and a great stillness. A great silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began.... He has gone to search for Adam, our first father, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow Adam in his bonds and Eve, captive with him—He who is both their God and the son of Eve.... “I am your God, who for your sake have become your son.... I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead.” [*Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday*]

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 10:

1. For Review / further study

- a. Why do the Jewish guards not enter the praetorium (18:28)?
- b. What is the “gospel discrepancy” concerning the meal Jesus ate with His disciple (see: 18:28; 19:14)? *When all the evidence is weighed ... was Jesus’ meal a “Passover meal?” How have some modern scholars cast doubt on this? How did St. Thomas Aquinas resolve the apparent discrepancy?*
- c. In what way is *John* 19:1-3 the “center” of the trial with Pilate?
- d. What is the symbolism, according to Pope-emeritus Benedict XVI, concerning the “seamless tunic” (19:23-24)?
- e. What is the sacramental symbolism of the “blood and water” (19:31-35)?

2. For prayer / meditation

- “What is truth?” (*John* 18:38). Ask God to give you a deeper love for the truth. Ask Jesus to give you a greater love for Mary ... and for the Church.
- What is your spiritual relationship with Mary like these days? Have you “taken her into What is your spiritual relationship with Mary like these days? Have you “taken her into your home?”

3. For group discussion

- a. What are the possible meanings of Pilate’s response to Jesus, “*What is truth?*” (*John* 18:38) What was Pilate afraid of ... and what, if you’re truly honest, do you fear?
- b. What was happening with regard to Our Lord on “Holy Saturday?” What insights does the *Catechism* reveal about His love Adam ... all of humanity?? How might this impact how we view “the New Evangelization?”
- c. Discuss the relationship between ... Jesus, the “Woman” and the “Disciple Whom Jesus loved” (19:26-27)

JOHN 20:1-21:25 THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ as the very center of Christian faith – and of our own Christian hope.
 2. To understand the key distinctions between a “signs” faith and a “not-seeing-yet-believing” faith.
 3. To unlock the mysteries of the final chapters of *John’s Gospel* - as it pertains to the disciples, and especially Peter.
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“Jesus’ Resurrection *points beyond history but has left a footprint within history* ... Could the apostolic preaching have found faith and built up a worldwide community *unless the power of truth had been at work within it?*”⁹

Pope-Emeritus Benedict XVI

PART THREE: THE RISEN JESUS (20:1–31)

A. 20:1–18 THE RISEN LORD AT THE TOMB

- 20:1–10 The disciples visit the empty tomb
- 20:1-2: Early on Sunday morning Mary Magdalene finds the tomb opened and reports to the disciples
- 20:3-10: Peter and “the other disciple” run to the tomb and see the burial clothes; “the other disciple” believes
- 20:11-18 Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene
- 20:11-13: Mary Magdalene looks into the tomb and sees angels
- 20:14-18: Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene and is recognized with difficulty; she proclaims the Lord to the disciples

⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 276. Emphasis added.

B. 20:19–29 THE RISEN LORD AMONG THE DISCIPLES

20:19-23 Jesus appears to the disciples

On Sunday evening, Jesus appears to and greets the disciples who rejoice at seeing Him. Jesus sends the disciples as he is sent; Breathes the Holy Spirit on them and gives them power to forgive sins.

20:24-29 Jesus appears to Thomas

20:24-25: Thomas refuses to believe that the others have seen the Lord

20:26-28: Belief: “*My Lord and my God*” (

20:29 Blessing of those who have “*not seen and yet believed*”

C. 20:30–31 PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.”

IV. EPILOGUE (21:1-25)

A. 21:1–14 THE RISEN JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS

20:1-8 *We will go with you* –The disciples join Peter in fishing all night

20:9-13 *It is the Lord!* Jesus eats breakfast with Peter and the disciples

20:14 John observes: This was the third time that Jesus “revealed himself” to His disciples

B. 21:15–23 THE RISEN JESUS RESTORES AND COMMISSIONS PETER

20:15-17 *The Restoration of Peter* – Jesus rehabilitates Peter in love and commissions him to “*feed my sheep*”

20:18-23 Jesus speaks of the fates of Peter and the Beloved Disciple

20:18-19: Peter will follow Jesus to a martyr’s death

20:20-23: The Beloved Disciple may remain until Jesus comes

C. 21:24–25: CONCLUSION

20:24 The true witness of the Beloved Disciple

20:25 The many other deeds of Jesus

LESSON 11 (CONTINUED)

THE RESURRECTION: A REAL AND TRANSCENDENT EVENT

CCC 639 The mystery of Christ’s resurrection is a real event, with manifestations that were historically verified, as the New Testament bears witness. In about A.D. 56, St. Paul could already write to the Corinthians: “*I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve ...*” (1 Cor 15:3–4). Apostle speaks here of the living tradition of the Resurrection which he had learned after his conversion at the gates of Damascus (See: *Acts 9:3–18*).

The empty tomb

CCC 640 “*Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen*” (Luke 24:5–6). The first element we encounter in the framework of the Easter events is the empty tomb. In itself it is not a direct proof of Resurrection; the absence of Christ’s body from the tomb could be explained otherwise (See: *John 20:13; Matt. 28:11–15*). Nonetheless the empty tomb was still an essential sign for all. Its discovery by the disciples was the first step toward recognizing the very fact of the Resurrection. This was the case, first with the holy women, and then with Peter (See: *Luke 24:3, 12, 22–23*). The disciple “*whom Jesus loved*” affirmed that when he entered the empty tomb and discovered “*the linen cloths lying there,*” “*he saw and believed*” (*John 20:2, 6, 8*). This suggests that he realized from the empty tomb’s condition that the absence of Jesus’ body could not have been of human doing and that Jesus had not simply returned to earthly life as had been the case with Lazarus (See: *John 11:44; 20:5–7*).

The appearances of the Risen One

CCC 641 Mary Magdalene and the holy women who came to finish anointing the body of Jesus, which had been buried in haste because the Sabbath began on the evening of Good Friday, were the first to encounter the Risen One (*Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1; John 19:31, 42*). Thus the women were the first messengers of Christ’s Resurrection for the apostles themselves (See: *Luke 24:9–10; Matt. 28:9–10; John 20:11–18*). They were the next to whom Jesus appears: first Peter, then the Twelve. Peter had been called to strengthen the faith of his brothers (*1 Cor 15:5; Luke 22:31–32*), and so sees the Risen One before them; it is on the basis of his testimony that the community exclaims: “*The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!*” (*Luke 24:34, 36*).

CCC 642 Everything that happened during those Paschal days involves each of the apostles—and Peter in particular—in the building of the new era begun on Easter morning. As witnesses of the Risen One, they remain the foundation stones of his Church. The faith of the first community of believers is based on the witness of concrete men known to the Christians and for the most part still living among them. Peter and the Twelve are the primary “witnesses to his Resurrection,” but they are not the only ones—Paul speaks clearly of more than five hundred persons to whom Jesus appeared on a single occasion and also of James and of all the apostles (*1 Cor. 15:4–8; see: Acts 1:22*).

CCC 643 Given all these testimonies, Christ’s Resurrection cannot be interpreted as something outside the physical order, and it is impossible not to acknowledge it as an historical fact. It is clear from the facts that the disciples’ faith was drastically put to the test by their master’s Passion and death on the cross, which he had foretold (*Luke 22:31–32*). The shock provoked by the Passion was so great that at least some of the disciples did not at once believe in the news of the Resurrection. Far from showing us a community seized by a mystical exaltation, the Gospels present us with disciples demoralized (“looking sad” – see: *Luke 24:17*) and frightened. For they had not believed the holy women returning from the tomb and had regarded their words as an “idle tale” (*Luke 24:11*; see: *Mark 16:11, 13*). When Jesus reveals himself to the Eleven on Easter evening, “*he upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen*” (*Mark 16:14*).

CCC 644 Even when faced with the reality of the risen Jesus the disciples are still doubtful, so impossible did the thing seem: they thought they were seeing a ghost. “*In their joy they were still disbelieving and still wondering*” (*Luke 24:38–41*). Thomas will also experience the test of doubt and St. Matthew relates that during the risen Lord’s last appearance in Galilee “*some doubted*” (*John 20:24–27*; *Matt. 28:17*). Therefore the hypothesis that the Resurrection was produced by the apostles’ faith (or credulity) will not hold up. On the contrary their faith in the Resurrection was born, under the action of divine grace, from their direct experience of the reality of the risen Jesus.

The condition of Christ’s risen humanity

CCC 645 By means of touch and the sharing of a meal, the risen Jesus establishes direct contact with his disciples. He invites them in this way to recognize that he is not a ghost and above all to verify that the risen body in which he appears to them is the same body that had been tortured and crucified, for it still bears the traces of his passion (See: *Luke 24:30, 39–40, 41–43*; *John 20:20, 27*; *21:9, 13–15*). Yet at the same time this authentic, real body possesses the new properties of a glorious body: not limited by space and time but able to be present how and when he wills; for Christ’s humanity can no longer be confined to earth and belongs henceforth only to the Father’s divine realm (*Matt. 28:9, 16–17*; *Luke 24:15, 36*; *John 20:14, 17, 19, 26*; *21:4*). For this reason too the risen Jesus enjoys the sovereign freedom of appearing as he wishes: in the guise of a gardener or in other forms familiar to his disciples, precisely to awaken their faith (See: *Mark 16:12*; *John 20:14–16*; *21:4, 7*).

CCC 646 Christ’s Resurrection was not a return to earthly life, as was the case with the raisings from the dead that he had performed before Easter: Jairus’ daughter, the young man of Naim, Lazarus. These actions were miraculous events, but the persons miraculously raised returned by Jesus’ power to ordinary earthly life. At some particular moment they would die again. Christ’s Resurrection is essentially different. In his risen body he passes from the state of death to another life beyond time and space. At Jesus’ Resurrection his body is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit: he shares the divine life in his glorious state, so that St. Paul can say that Christ is “*the man of heaven*” (*1 Cor. 15:35–50*).

LESSON 11 (CONTINUED)
POPE-EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI
ON THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST¹⁰

On the basis of all this biblical evidence, what are we now in a position to say about the true nature of Christ’s Resurrection?

It is a historical event that nevertheless bursts open the dimensions of history and transcends it. Perhaps we may draw upon analogical language here, inadequate in many ways, yet still able to open up a path toward understanding: as already anticipated in the first section of this chapter, we could regard the Resurrection as something akin to a radical “*evolutionary leap*”, in which a new dimension of life emerges, a new dimension of human existence.

Indeed, matter itself is remolded into a new type of reality. The man Jesus, complete with his body, now belongs totally to the sphere of the divine and eternal. From now on, as Tertullian once said, “spirit and blood” have a place within God (see: *De Resurrect. Mort.* 51:3, *CCSL* II, 994). Even if man by his nature is created for immortality, it is only now that the place exists in which his immortal soul can find its “*space*”, its “*bodiliness*”, in which immortality takes on its meaning as communion with God and with the whole of reconciled mankind. This is what is meant by those passages in Saint Paul’s prison letters (see: Col 1:12–23 and Eph 1:3–23) that speak of the cosmic body of Christ, indicating thereby that Christ’s transformed body is also the place where men enter into communion with God and with one another and are thus able to live definitively in the fullness of indestructible life.

Since we ourselves have no experience of such a renewed and transformed type of matter, or such a renewed and transformed kind of life, it is not surprising that it oversteps the boundaries of what we are able to conceive.

Essential, then, is the fact that Jesus’ Resurrection was not just about some deceased individual coming back to life at a certain point, but that an ontological leap occurred, one that touches being as such, opening up a dimension that affects us all, creating for all of us a new space of life, a new space of being in union with God.

It is in these terms that the question of the historicity of the Resurrection should be addressed. On the one hand, we must acknowledge that it is of the essence of the Resurrection precisely to burst open history and usher in a new dimension commonly described as eschatological. The Resurrection opens up the new space that transcends history and creates the definitive. In this sense, it follows that Resurrection is not the same kind of historical event as the birth or crucifixion of Jesus. It is something new, a new type of event.

Yet at the same time it must be understood that the Resurrection does not simply stand outside or above history. As something that breaks out of history and transcends it, the Resurrection nevertheless has its origin within history and up to a certain point still belongs there. Perhaps

¹⁰ Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: Part Two: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 273-77.

we could put it this way: Jesus’ Resurrection points beyond history but has left a footprint within history. Therefore it can be attested by witnesses as an event of an entirely new kind.

Indeed, the apostolic preaching with all its boldness and passion would be unthinkable unless the witnesses had experienced a real encounter, coming to them from outside, with something entirely new and unforeseen, namely, the self-revelation and verbal communication of the risen Christ. Only a real event of a radically new quality could possibly have given rise to the apostolic preaching, which cannot be explained on the basis of speculations or inner, mystical experiences. In all its boldness and originality, it draws life from the impact of an event that no one had invented, an event that surpassed all that could be imagined. To conclude, all of us are constantly inclined to ask the question that Saint Jude Thaddeus put to Jesus during the Last Supper: “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” (John 14:22). Why, indeed, did you not forcefully resist your enemies who brought you to the Cross?—we might well ask. Why did you not show them with incontrovertible power that you are the living one, the Lord of life and death? Why did you reveal yourself only to a small flock of disciples, upon whose testimony we must now rely?

The question applies not only to the Resurrection, but to the whole manner of God’s revelation in the world. Why only to Abraham and not to the mighty of the world? Why only to Israel and not irrefutably to all the peoples of the earth?

It is part of the mystery of God that he acts so gently, that he only gradually builds up *his* history within the great history of mankind; that he becomes man and so can be overlooked by his contemporaries and by the decisive forces within history; that he suffers and dies and that, having risen again, he chooses to come to mankind only through the faith of the disciples to whom he reveals himself; that he continues to knock gently at the doors of our hearts and slowly opens our eyes if we open our doors to him.

And yet—is not this the truly divine way? Not to overwhelm with external power, but to give freedom, to offer and elicit love. And if we really think about it, is it not what seems so small that is truly great? Does not a ray of light issue from Jesus, growing brighter across the centuries, that could not come from any mere man and through which the light of God truly shines into the world? *Could the apostolic preaching have found faith and built up a worldwide community unless the power of truth had been at work within it?*

If we attend to the witnesses with listening hearts and open ourselves to the signs by which the Lord again and again authenticates both them and himself, then we know that he is truly risen. He is alive. Let us entrust ourselves to him, knowing that we are on the right path. With Thomas let us place our hands into Jesus’ pierced side and confess: “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28).

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 11:

1. For Review / further study

- a. In what way is St. Mary Magdalene “apostle of the apostles?” What is her initial response? What is the initial response of Peter?
- b. Can we really speak of the Resurrection as a real, historical event? How?
- c. Summarize the following key truths from the *Catechism*:
 - i. The empty tomb
 - ii. The historicity of the Resurrection
 - iii. The Resurrection Appearances of Jesus
 - iv. The nature of Christ’s Resurrected body
- d. What is remarkable about Thomas’ disbelief (see: 20:24-25)? What is the difference between “signs” faith and “not-seeing-yet-believing” faith?

For question “e” read the following:

CCC 553 Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter: “*I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*” (Matt. 16:18-19)). The “power of the keys” designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, confirmed this mandate after his Resurrection: “*Feed my sheep*” (John 21:15–17). The power to “bind and loose” connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. Jesus entrusted this authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles and in particular through the ministry of Peter, the only one to whom he specifically entrusted the keys of the kingdom.

- e. Compare John 20:23 with Matt.16:18-20. What is the relationship between Peter and the Twelve? Discuss the role of the Apostles in terms of their ministry of “reconciliation.”

2. For prayer / meditation

- In what ways do I need more of a “not-seeing-yet-believing” faith?
- Do I strive to receive God’s *agape*-love? Am I allowing Him to transform my *phileo*-love, more and more, into unconditional love for God ... for others?

3. For group discussion

- a. According to Dr. Smith, what are we to make of Peter and John running to the tomb of Jesus – and Peter entering first (20:6)? ... John’s “belief” (20:8)?

- b. Summarize, in your own words, the “purpose” of *John’s Gospel* (20:30-31). Looking back, identify some key ways this purpose is evident throughout the entire Gospel.
- c. Discuss the nature of Christ’s love for Peter ... and Peter’s love for Christ, noting the difference in the Greek terms *agape* and *phileo* (20:15-19). In what way does God’s *agape* surpass all human forms of love? How has Christ overwhelmed you with His unconditional love?

I, II, III JOHN AN INTRODUCTION

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand and be able to articulate the basic message and theology of *I, II* and *III John*.
 2. To recognize in the “prologue” of the first epistle (*I John* 1:1-4) an echo of the Gospel Prologue (*John* 1:1-18) and in particular, a confirmation of the theme of “glory” which is central to all Johannine theology.
 3. To learn about the nature of “Christian unity” from the Johannine epistles – and what threatens it – then and now.
-

I, II, III JOHN – SOME BACKGROUND

1. Authorship

a. Did the same author write the Gospel & the Epistles?

- ✓ Like the Gospel, *I John* does not name its author. However, *I John* won acceptance as being written by the same author of *John’s Gospel*, whereas *II, III John* describe their author as “The Presbyter / Elder.”
- ✓ Papias mentions two John’s in his *Logia* (early 2nd cent): a) “John” (the Apostle), and b) John the Elder.
- ✓ The early Church eventually decided this was just a different name for John.
- ✓ Today, there is considerable debate among scholars, and many do not believe that the author of the epistles is the author of the Gospel.

b. External (patristic) evidence

c. Early attestation:

Citations in the early Fathers – mid-2nd century

- E.g. Justin’s *Dialogue* (135-150 AD): “We who observe the commandments of Christ are called genuine children of God” (See: *I John* 2.3)
- Shepherd of Hermas (150 AD): “The Lord is truthful in every word and *in Him there is no lie*” (See: *I John* 2.27)
- 1st undeniable attestation = Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* (cites *II, III John*)

d. Did the same author write all three epistles?

- ✓ Fr. Raymond Brown concludes that even though there are stylistic differences between them (esp. *I — II-III*), there is common authorship (*Epistles*, 19).
- e. **Conclusion:** After examining all of the evidence – both internal and external, there is very good reason for affirming that the author of *I, II* and *III John* is the same author of *The Gospel According to Saint John*.

2. Key similarities / Differences between Gospel / I John

GOSPEL	I JOHN
Jesus = the Light	God = the Light
Jesus’ commandments	God’s commandments
More specific ref. to Spirit	Less specific ref. to Spirit (Only 1 ref. to “ <i>paraclete</i> ” = Jesus)
Realized eschatology	Future Judgment
Many OT Citations, allusions + quotations	No OT citations, etc.
*** “The Jews” ***	*** No ref to “The Jews” ***

3. Who are John’s “Adversaries”

- ✓ Unlike the *John’s Gospel* or *Revelation*, the Johannine epistles do not make mention of “the Jews” as adversaries. Rather, John describe some sort of “internal conflict” among the Christians themselves – caused primarily by some adversaries who had been originally a part of the apostolic community.

* *1 John 2:19* “They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But by going out they made it plain that none of them belongs to us.”

Still – they were a part of the community at one point in time:

1 John 2:20-21: “But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge. I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and you know that no lie comes from the truth.”

- ✓ It is unlikely that the adversaries are Gnostics / pre-Gnostics. (Brown believes that the Adversary Group eventually became a Gnostic group.)
- ✓ Rather, both the author and his followers, and the adversaries claim to “**know God**” – although the adversaries have an overdeveloped Soteriology (I.e. we were saved, are saved, and no longer need Jesus in the same way.)

Primary error of John’s adversaries: A false belief that in “possessing the Holy Spirit” they no longer needed Jesus, the sacraments, Christian community. In short, they wrongly believed they no longer needed Jesus to live the Christian life!

1 John 2:1: “Whoever says, “I have come to know him,” **but does not obey his commandments**, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist”

A false view of Christian “spirit”-uality:

I John 4.1-2: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God”

**** Not denying Jesus came in the flesh – but rather, that what He did in the flesh was related to His being Christ.**

(See: Col. 2.8-11: “*See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ.*”

Those who believed they could love God and live in the Spirit – without Jesus:

I John 2.23: “No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”

In short, an earthy “spiritual perfectionism”:

I John 2.5: “But whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection. By this we may be sure that we are in him.”

*** “Human enlightenment” vs. “The Word which was received”**

I John 2:1 “Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard.”

*** Such false understandings of Christian spirituality leads to a depreciation of sin / ability to sin, and “worldliness”:**

I John 2.15-16: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world.

... But those who “keep the commandments of Jesus will inherit eternal life”

I John 2.17: “And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.”

St. John seeks to correct the misunderstanding, prevent those within the community from falling into similar error:

1 John 2:24: “Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father.”

This is as much to his community as it is to the heretics!

I John 5.6 “Johannine comma” = 3 Witnesses

* A Later addition?

*“This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, **not with the water only but with the water and the blood.** And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.”*

Not attested in earliest manuscripts. Possibly added later by those who agreed with the position of the author / community, to strengthen the position further, “shoring up” loyalty to Jesus, and to the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist (connecting them with the death of Christ).

*I John 5.8: “the **Spirit** and the **water** and the **blood**, and these three agree.”*

Compare with **John 19.34**: “One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.”

STRUCTURE OF I JOHN

- 1.1-4 Prologue (See *John* 1:1-18!)
- 1.5-3.10 Part One: God is Light
- 3.11-5.12 Part Two: God is Life (Love)
- 5.13-21 Epilogue

Compare *I John* 1.1-4 with *John* 1.1-18

- A mini-prologue - Less developed; shares same theology as the Gospel
- Jesus’ teaching = “that which we heard from the beginning” (1.1)
- Sets the tone for the strong polemic in the epistle
- * *Adversaries believ in the pre-existent Word, **but** attributed little importance to what He did in the flesh.*

II JOHN

- Presbyter (“elder”) – title of apostolic dignity / authority
- Addressed to “chosen lady + her children” (local church)
 - One of the sister churches of the author
- Like I John, emphasis on “word of Jesus” / commandment (not a new one) See: vv. 5-6
- Like I John, deals with “Jesus in the flesh” (v. 7), but in vv. 8-11, identifies such persons as “anti-christ”
- v. 10 – Do not welcome such a person

III JOHN

- Only Johannine use of “ekklesia” (v.6)
- Author = Presbyter
- v. 1. Conflict between local church leader (Gaius, “who I love in the truth”)
- v. 9 Diotrophes – who “loves to be first”
 - Gaius not a member of his church
- writes to Gaius as if part of a church not-so-directly-involved, but speaks of “church of Diotrophes”

- Diotrophes refuses hospitality to Gaius, others (goes beyond what author asks in I John) v. 10: So if I come, *I will call attention to what he is doing*, gossiping maliciously about us. Not satisfied with that, *he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.*
- Author asks Gaius to continue his own hospitality (possibly establishing his own “breakaway” community?)
 - Diotrophes- on his way to being a self-styled bishop – not respecting the authority of John

THE CATECHISM ON “GOD IS LOVE”

CCC 214 God, “He who is,” revealed himself to Israel as the one “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” These two terms express summarily the riches of the divine name. In all his works God displays not only his kindness, goodness, grace, and steadfast love, but also his trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness, and truth. “I give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness.” He is the Truth, for “God is light and in him there is no darkness”; **“God is love,” as the apostle John teaches.**

CCC 733 “God is Love” and love is his first gift, containing all others. “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

CCC 734 Because we are dead or at least wounded through sin, the first effect of the gift of love is the forgiveness of our sins. The communion of the Holy Spirit in the Church restores to the baptized the divine likeness lost through sin.

CCC 2331 “God is love and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image ..., God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the *vocation*, and thus the capacity and responsibility, *of love* and communion.”

POPE-EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI, *DEUS CARITAS EST*, 39

“Faith, hope and charity go together. Hope is practised through the virtue of patience, which continues to do good even in the face of apparent failure, and through the virtue of humility, which accepts God’s mystery and trusts him even at times of darkness. Faith tells us that God has given his Son for our sakes and gives us the victorious certainty that it is really true: God is love! It thus transforms our impatience and our doubts into the sure hope that God holds the world in his hands and that, as the dramatic imagery of the end of the Book of Revelation points out, in spite of all darkness he ultimately triumphs in glory. Faith, which sees the love of God revealed in the pierced heart of Jesus on the Cross, gives rise to love. Love is the light—and in the end, the only light—that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. Love is possible, and we are able to practise it because we are created in the image of God. To experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into the world—this is the invitation I would like to extend with the present Encyclical.

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 12:

1. For Review / further study

- a. Describe the similarities between *I John* 1:1-4 and the Prologue of *John’s Gospel* (*John* 1:1-18). How is the theme of *doxa* (“glory”) once again crucial to understanding the experience of the Apostle John – and his desire on behalf of all Christians (see: *John* 1:14, 16)?
- b. How do those who say “they have no sin” deceive themselves (*I John* 1:8)?
- c. Summarize the “schism” in the community:
 - i. What is the essential errors of those who “went beyond” the teaching of the Apostle (see: *I John* 2:19)
 - ii. What is the very real danger for those who are still in the community of the Apostle? What do they risk losing?
 - iii. What is John’s urgent admonition to the Christians who are being led astray, or about to be led astray?
- d. How is it that “believers” become “believers” (see: *I John* 3:1)?
- e. What is the difference between sins that are deadly and those that are not (see: *I John* 5:16-17)?

2. For prayer / meditation

- To what extent do I make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation? What is my attitude about the sacrament ... before ... after receiving it?
- To what extent is my Christian walk based upon the love of God? To what extent do I need to grow in the reality of God’s love for me? Whom do I need to pray for that is in great need of the experience of God’s love?

3. For group discussion

- a. How does our sacramental life – especially Eucharist and Reconciliation “root us” in the love of God – and the truth of Jesus Christ?
- b. Why does John admonish the church to let go of the “things of this world?” (see: *I John* 2:15-17)?
- c. According to John, what is the relationship between “love of God” and “love of neighbor?”
- d. How does “*love cast out fear*” (see: *I John* 4:18). *To what extent is this true of my life?*

REVELATION - AN INTRODUCTION

Lesson Objectives:

1. To dispel false notions – and fears about the *Book of Revelation* with a joyful understanding of its hopeful message of Christ’s life, peace and love.
 2. To learn some “skills” for proper interpretation of the *Book of Revelation*.
 3. To contemplate the *Book of Revelation* as: (a) Jewish Apocalyptic; (b) Biblical Prophecy; and (c) Christian epistle.
 4. Finally – to again see “glory” as a fundamental theme in Saint John’s writings.
-

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION¹¹

I. INTRODUCTION – HOW TO APPROACH REVELATION AS A CATHOLIC

- a. Opening Remarks
 - i. *Revelation* is a message of hope – not fear
 - ii. The same Catholic principles that help us read *John’s Gospel*, or Psalm 23, etc. govern our study of *Revelation* (e.g. biblical inspiration & inerrancy; Scripture and Tradition, Catechism’s “3 Rules” of Interpretation (CCC #112-14), etc.
 - iii. At the same time, certain skills are needed to properly study the book (R. Guardini, *The Lord*)
- b. Insights on approaching *Revelation* – Romano Guardini (*The Lord*, 1954)
 - i. “Jesus’ life began in eternity ... the Book of Revelation reveals the ultimate and eternal part of that life.” (Guardini, *The Lord*, p. 557)
 - ii. “A certain amount of knowledge is essential to the understanding of this book.” (Ibid)
 - iii. Book of “consolation” – not a theology of history (ibid)
 - iv. “How does God console? Not by saying ‘your trials are not really terrible. They are terrible, and he sees them as terrible.’ (Guardini, *The Lord*, p. 558)
 - v. “History has its time and power ... But over and above earthy reality, [God] gives us a glimpse of heavenly reality.” (ibid)
 - vi. “[All] things will cease to be ... But Christ will live on.” (ibid)
 - vii. Q: “How is it that a slaughtered lamb can live? How can it have seven eyes and ten horns?” (Guardini, *The Lord*, p. 560)
 - viii. A: “In a dream world.” (ibid)
 - ix. In this apostolic vision “critical reason is silenced, the ebb and flow of the inner life hold sway...” (ibid)

¹¹ References from *Ignatius Study Bible: Book of Revelation* are listed as *Ignatius* (e.g. *Ignatius*, 41).

- x. “God seizes the person, lifts him *out of himself*... everything, the raw material of [] existence, the personal life of the prophet, things, events, images – all are utilized by the divine Spirit as a means of expression.” (Guardini, *The Lord*, p. 561)
- ii. **AUTHORSHIP.** Both known (St. John the Apostle) and unknown individuals have been suggested as author. (Our approach follows the classical view. After all the evidence is examined, the likeliest candidate for the author of *Revelation* is not only a known individual – but Saint John the Apostle.)
 - a. **St. John the Apostle**
 - i. Classical view: *St. John the Evangelist*
 - ii. Alternative suggestions: The author identifies himself as “John.” As such, some have suggested other individuals, e.g., *JBap*; *John Mark*; *John the Presbyter*.
 - b. **Unknown author?**
 - i. Many contemporary scholars posit an unknown Christian author; perhaps from within the so-called “Johannine community.”
 - ii. Today, there is wide skepticism as to the classical, apostolic view. In fairness, there are ample grounds to raise such questions:
 - iii. Thematically, *Revelation* is a strange book, filled with visions, plagues and dragons. Its contents are so markedly different from the Gospel of John that the idea that each had its own author seems fairly reasonable.
 - iv. *Revelation* contains a number of terms not found in the *Gospel of John*. Close textual comparisons supports the above conclusion.
 - v. Such conclusions were likewise reached by some in the patristic era:
 - 1. Dionysius of Alexandria (400’s) - Greek style of *Revelation* is less developed than the *Gospel of John*. He called attention to Johannine motifs absent in *Revelation* (*life, grace, truth, belief*, etc.)
 - 2. Concluded that *Revelation* was not written by St. John, whose gospel was composed in a more developed Greek idiom.
 - c. **Evidence:** *Such skepticism is unwarranted.* There is ample evidence – both internal and external – in favor of Johannine authorship.
 - i. **EXTERNAL (PATRISTIC) EVIDENCE.**

It is true that there are some in early Christianity who were hesitant to link *Revelation* with the Apostle John. Nevertheless, the majority of patristic voices favor Johannine authorship. Key witnesses include:

 - 1. St. Justin Martyr (165 A.D.)
 - 2. St. Irenaeus (180 A.D.)¹²
 - 3. St. Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.)
 - 4. Others: Tertullian, Origen, the Muratorian canon.¹³

¹² Eusebius reports that Irenaeus received his info from Polycarp, who received it from the apostles directly.

¹³ For an extensive list, see: G. Beale, *New Int’l Greek New Testament Commentary* (1998).

LESSON 13 (CONTINUED)

II. INTERNAL (LITERARY) EVIDENCE:

1. Self-identification: “John. The author identifies himself as *Ioannes* (“John”) four times in the book: 1:1, 1:4, 1:9, 22:8.
2. Distinct literary genre. The stylistic differences are less of a conundrum than first appears. Simply put, they are two distinct literary genre:
 - a. *John* is a gospel – and *Revelation* an epistle. Their distinct genre suits their distinct purposes.
 - b. *Revelation* is composed in the manner of Jewish apocalypses (below). Its style and language is well-suited to this genre.
3. Link-terms. For all of their differences, there are a surprising number of overlapping terms that link *John* and *Revelation*. Consider just three of a number of link-terms in common:
 - a. **“Light”**
 - i. *John* (23x) 1:4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 3:19 [x2]; 3:20[x2]; 5:35; 8:12, etc.
 - ii. *1 John* (6x) 1:5, 7 [x2]; 2:8, 9, 10
 - iii. *Revelation* (6x) 18:23; 21:23; 21:24; 22:5 [x2]
 - b. **“Lamb”**
 - i. *John* [x2] 1:29, 36
 - ii. *Revelation* [x 29!] 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 8:1; 12:11, etc.
 - c. **** “Glory”**
 - i. *John* [16x] 1:14 [2x]; 2:11; 5:41, 44 [x2]; 7:18 [2x]; 8:50, 54; 11:4; 17:22, etc
 - ii. *Revelation* [16x] 1:6; 4:9, 11; 5:12, 13; 7:12; 11:13; 19:1, etc.

iii. **AUDIENCE.**

- a. The author of *Revelation* addresses seven particular churches in Asia Minor.
- b. As further evidence of classical / Johannine authorship, all seven churches are within a fifty-mile radius – and in the vicinity of Ephesus, which is the home of St. John for the latter part of his life. The churches are addressed in ch. 2-3, beginning with Ephesus, in a counter-clock-wise, sequential fashion (*Ignatius*, 39).

iv. **PROVENANCE.** “Patmos,” a small island in the southern Aegean Sea, used as a penal colony by Romans. Like the seven churches, the island of Patmos is in the region of Ephesus.

- a. John is banished there for his proclamation of the gospel (*Rev* 1:9).
- b. It has been concluded that this colony was “up and running” in the time of the Roman emperor Domitian, which would suggest a late 1st century date [90’s]. Assuming John was exiled to Patmos, such a later date is inconclusive. It is just as likely John was there earlier – during the reign of Nero [60’s].

LESSON 13 (CONTINUED)

v. **PURPOSE. Perseverance amidst suffering.**

- a. *Revelation* addresses the urgent concerns of the seven churches who, to one degree or another, face immediate persecution by some “oppressive force.”
- b. The seven churches are encouraged to “hold fast” to Christ and his gospel (*Rev* 2:13, 25; 3:11), knowing the final outcome:
 - i. God’s justice come to these oppressors
 - ii. Vindication and eternal life for those who do not lose heart and who persevere amidst this suffering and darkness.

vi. **DATE.** (LATE 60’s A.D [OR] MID-90’s A.D.)

Note: As will be explained below, the dating of the book is crucial to its interpretation; it provides the specific context in which the book is to be understood. Few topics are as crucial to understanding *Revelation* than when it was written. It is not a side issue of passing curiosity. There are two schools of thought:

- a. **90-100 A.D.** This would place it in the persecutions under the Roman Emperor Domitian. This is the predominant view of most scholars (a large consensus). *This is R. E. Brown’s view – and that of numerous scholars*
- b. **66-70 A.D.** This would place the composition of the book in the middle of the Jewish War with Rome, under Nero. A minority of scholars hold this position, although there is a substantially smaller number than those in category a, it is not an insignificant number. I subscribe *This is my view* – that of Hahn, Beale, Chilton and others.

vii. **LITERARY GENRE** The *Book of Revelation* is complex and contains 3 interrelated genres:

- (a) JEWISH APOCALYPTIC;
- (b) BIBLICAL PROPHECY;
- (c) CHRISTIAN EPISTLE.

a. **JEWISH APOCALYPTIC** (Ch. 1, 4-22)

- i. What is Jewish Apocalyptic?
 1. *Apokalypsis* = “to reveal”
 2. Many have been / are unaware that there are close parallels -- and differences between Jewish apocalyptic and *Revelation*.
 - a. Biblical examples: texts from: *Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah*
 - b. Extra-biblical examples: *I, II Enoch; II Baruch; DSS*
- ii. Opening clues that *Revelation* fits this genre well”
 1. **1:1-2** “*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw — that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.*”
 2. Whose “revelation” is it? Some mistakenly call the book “the revelation of John.” *This is not accurate.* It is the revelation *of* Jesus

Christ to his servant John, by sending an angel to John, and giving the revelation.

3. [Technically, God the Father gave it to Jesus, Jesus entrusted it to the angel, who delivers it to John!]
4. Given – why? To communicate “*what must soon take place*”. We are not told more about what that entails at this point.

iii. A Book of *Blessings*!

1. **1:3:** “*Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.*” While we are not told what is going to take place, we do learn two key things about it:
2. Often, we associate *Revelation* with “gloom & doom” but in reality, it is a “*book of blessing*”, for all of its recipients “*who take to heart*”, or act upon the message that is given, in accord with the instructions therein.
3. There is a blessing - for the reader and the hearer of the prophecy.
4. Still, the message of *Revelation* is in the form of prophecy. There will be things foretold about “*that which must soon take place*”. Whatever will happen is imminent, i.e., for “*the time is near*”.

b. **BIBLICAL PROPHECY.**

- i. The thought-world of *Revelation* is Jewish prophecy – OT prophecy. The book is saturated with images from *Daniel*, *Ezekiel*, *Isaiah*, *Zechariah*, as well as *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Deuteronomy*:

Dan. 7:9-11, 13-14

As I looked,

thrones were placed

and one that was ancient of days took his seat;

his raiment was white as snow,

and the hair of his head like pure wool;

his throne was fiery flames,

its wheels were burning fire.

A stream of fire issued

and came forth from before him;

a thousand thousands served him,

and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;

the court sat in judgment,

and the books were opened.

I saw in the night visions,

and behold, with the clouds of heaven

there came one like a son of man,

and he came to the Ancient of Days

and was presented before him.

And to him was given dominion

and glory and kingdom,

*that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.*

- ii. *Revelation* draws upon the imagery and message and prophecies of the OT in order to convey its message.
- iii. The book should not be read primarily as a “prophetic codebook” but as a combination of letter, apocalyptic warning encouragement – and prophetic word (instruction, judgment).

c. **CHRISTIAN EPISTLE** (Ch 2-3)

- i. Above all – keep in mind that *Revelation* is a “circular” letter, dispatched to seven particular churches as an apostolic epistle:
Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea. (Rev. 1:1)
- ii. John writes to encourage and admonish these seven churches!
- iii. As the book opens, we read a greeting much like we read in any of St. Paul’s epistles:
Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. (Rev. 1:4-5)
- iv. That *Revelation* is a “circular letter” intended to be read aloud to each church is clear: *Rev. 2:1, 2:8, 2:12, 2:18, 3:1, 3:7, 3:14.*
- v. Keep this well in mind as you read the rest of the book! *If you lose sight of this, you will end up in a maze. If you remember it, the rest of the book – no matter how bizarre it sounds – is properly read as: encouragement, warning, blessing and instruction for real Christians in real churches.*

viii. **STRUCTURE.** Scott Hahn suggests a threefold structure of *Revelation*:

- a. *1:1-20 Account of ‘What you see’* (Inaugural vision)
- b. *2:1-3:22 Account of ‘What is’* (Letters)
- c. *4:1-22:21 Account of ‘What is to take place’* (Heavenly liturgy, seals, trumpets, bowls, marriage supper of the lamb, New heavens & new earth)

I would add that the book is accounting of the past, present and future as laid out before the Seven Churches:

Rev. 1:19 “Now write
what you see
what is and
what is to take place hereafter.

LESSON 13 (CONTINUED)

ix. WHY READ REVELATION TODAY?

a. To Embrace the Reign of God and Await the Triumph of the Lamb God.

The Father reigns! Jesus is Lord! The Spirit will prevail! *Revelation* is a call to worship! We are given a glimpse of the *Heavenly liturgy*! John’s vision re-aligns our hearts towards the eternal throne of the eternal God and his faithful slaughtered and risen Lamb:

- “To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.” (1:5-6)
- “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne ...” (7:10)
- “You are worthy.” (4:11; 5:9, 12)
- “Holy, holy, holy ...” (4:8, 11)
- “Worthy is the Lamb ...” (5:9-12)
- “Blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” (5:13)
- “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” (7:12)
- “Amen, come Lord Jesus!” (22:20)

b. To Recognize, Confront and Overcome Evil – by God’s Grace. As intense as the suffering was, which the seven churches of *Revelation* experienced, every age has institutional structures of evil.

- *Revelation* is a scathing critique of sin – and a summoning of the saints to recognize, confront and overcome evil – through holy living and faithful witness.
- It is a call to personal holiness! *Revelation* is a call to renounce personal sin, and to overcome everyday temptations to idolatry and immorality – in loyalty to God and the Lamb.
- *Revelation* is a “missionary” text ... telling the story of God’s continual call to conversion, even – and especially in the midst of suffering and darkness.
- In *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, Richard Bauckham writes: “One of the functions of *Revelation* was to purge and refurbish the Christian imagination ... it recognizes the way a dominant culture, with its images and ideals, constructs the world for us, so that we perceive and respond to the world in its own terms. [*Revelation*] unmasks this dominant construction of the world as an ideology of the powerful which serves to maintain their power” (p. 59).

LESSON 13 (CONTINUED)

c. **A Book of Blessing!** *Revelation* is a book of blessings – for faithful Christians! Christ empowers His disciples by the Holy Spirit to bear witness – in life and death, in spite of danger, persecution and martyrdom. SEVEN BEATITUDES ARE GIVEN IN THE BOOK:

- 1) **1:3** *Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near.*
- 2) **14:13** *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth. ‘Blessed indeed,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!’*
- 3) **16:15** “Lo, I am coming like a thief! *Blessed is he who is awake, keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed!*
- 4) **19:9** *Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.*
- 5) **20:16** *Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection!*
- 6) **22:7** And behold, I am coming soon. *Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.*
- 7) **22:14** *Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.*

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 13:

1. For Review / further study

- a. According to Romano Guardini, our reading of *Revelation* is an intense study of the eternal life of Christ. *Explain.*
- b. In *The Lord*, Guardini suggests that our study of *Revelation* can be approached, in some sense, with insights from “dreams.” What is Guardini getting at? As helpful as this explanation is, what caution is necessary (i.e. *Revelation* as “inspired Scripture” and apostolic vision vs. private vision, etc.)
- c. What is the threefold structure of the book as a whole (see: *Rev.* 1:19)?
- d. For all of the literary distinctions, what are the key literary clues that actually “connect” the *Book of Revelation* with *John’s Gospel*?

2. For prayer / meditation

- Reflect on the “seven beatitudes” of *Revelation*. Spend some time in *Lectio Divina* contemplating *Revelation* as a “book of blessings.”
- As our study begins, pray that God who “renew your Christian hope” as we contemplate the heavenly liturgy and the triumph of the Lamb.

3. For group discussion

- a. What has been my attitude about the *Book of Revelation* prior to this study? What were my impressions of the book?
- b. How is *Revelation* best understood as:
 - i. Jewish apocalypse
 - ii. Biblical Prophecy
 - iii. Christian epistle
- c. In regards to the above genres, why is it especially important to approach this book with a sustained understanding of “*Revelation* as a letter to the Churches”?
- d. If Christ were to write a letter to my family ... what might He say?

REV. 1:1-3:22 LETTER TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand the message of Christ – to each of the Seven Churches of *Revelation* – and the spiritual insights for all Christians today.
 2. To understand how *Revelation* makes sense as “Jewish apocalyptic” literature – but not only as apocalyptic literature.
 3. To be renewed towards “holiness” and “holy living” – and to pray for a deeper love of the Blessed Trinity.
-

1:1-8 **“The Revelation of Jesus Christ” – John’s Prologue**

- 1:1-3 Introduction
- 1:4-6 Initial greeting to the 7 Churches
- 1:7-8 “Who was and is and is to come”

1:9-20 **The Scope of the Prophecy:** (v. 19 “*What is and what is to take place hereafter*”)

2:1-3:22 **Seven Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia (2:1—3:22)**

- 2:1-7 Ephesus
- 2:8-11 Smyrna
- 2:12-17 Pergamum
- 2:18-22 Thyatira
- 3:1-6 Sardis (3:1-6)
- 3:7-13 Philadelphia
- 3:14-22 Laodicea

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 14:

1. For Review / further study

- a. What does “apocalypse” mean (1:1)? Whose apocalypse is it?
- b. What are the Seven Golden Lampstands (1:12)? How is this an image of the universal Church?
- c. Why does John use the language of “synagogue of Satan” (2:9)? Describe the tensions that exist between the early Christians and some Jewish brethren.
- d. What is the significance that John receives this vision: “*in the Spirit?*” ... “*on the Lord’s day?*” (see: *Rev.* 1:9)
- e. Dr. Smith discussed the “kingdom of God” as prophesied by the OT prophet Daniel (See: *Dan.* 2). According to Daniel 2, what is it that is unique about the Kingdom of God – in relation to the “kingdoms” of this world? How is this insight important as we approach the *Book of Revelation*?

2. For prayer / meditation

- Read this brief message from Pope Francis:

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2013/04/20/pope_francois_speaks_about_lukewarm_christians/en1-684817

- Pray for “lukewarm” Christians and Catholics in the Church today. Pray for deeper conversions – especially of those who are in need of deep renewal.

3. For group discussion

- a. Why is “orthodoxy” (right belief) not enough? Why must it be accompanied by “orthopraxy” (right living)?
- b. What is the main concern with the Church at Ephesus (see: 2:4)? What are the spiritual implications of this for Christians today?
- c. Describe some of the main critiques of the Seven Churches. Which of these do you feel, in some spiritual sense, most vulnerable to today ... why?
- d. How are “affluent” Christian communities at particular risk? What must all Christians pray for with regard to managing our resources?

REV 4:1-12:17 THE APOCALYPSE OF JOHN (PART I)

Lesson Objectives:

1. To attentively meditate on the “vision” of heaven – and heavenly worship, as depicted in *Revelation*.
 2. To understand the nature of the “three cycles” of judgments in the book – and why they are necessary.
 3. To grasp the nature of the heavenly Christ – as the “Lamb” of glory who is victorious over sin and death
 4. To contemplate the Blessed Virgin Mary, as central to salvation history – and to our own spiritual safety
-

4:1-22:7 The Vision to John

4:1-11 The Heavenly Liturgy: Worship in the Heaven

5:1-14 The Lamb that was Slain

6:1-8:5 The Seven Seals

- The first six seals (6:1-17)

- Cosmic intermission (7:1-17)

(a) 144,000 Israelites saved (vv. 1-8)

(b) Countless Gentiles saved (vv. 9-17)

8:1-8 The seventh seal (8:1-5)

8:6-11:19 The Seven Trumpets

- The first six trumpets (8:6-9:21)

- Cosmic intermission (10:1-11:14)

(a) “Take and eat” (10:1-11)

(b) The Two witnesses (11:1-14)

11:15-19 The seventh trumpet

12:1-17 The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 15:

1. For Review / further study

- a. Who is “worthy” to open the seals of *Revelation* (see: *Rev. 5:1-5*)? Why is this figure alone worthy?
- b. Who specifically are the 144,000 of *Rev. 7:1-8*? (How is the interpretation of the Jehovah’s Witnesses groundness?)
- c. What is the purpose of the “intermission” between the sixth and seventh seals? What are we to make of the “multitude” around the throne and the Lamb? How does this further the theme of Jesus as “King of all of the World” as discussed in *John’s Gospel* (see: *John 3:16; 20:30-31*)?
- d. What three things does the “woman” of *Rev. 12* symbolize? What does the “Red Dragon” represent? Who is the male child?

2. For prayer / meditation

- Pray for a deeper experience of Jesus through the “Woman” of *Revelation*, the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- Consider a Novena to “Mary the Undoer of Knots” – for all those who are in some sort of spiritual need / spiritual battle. <http://www.theholyroary.org/maryundoerknots>

3. For group discussion

- a. It seems clear that there is a difference in *Revelation* between God’s “punishment of evil” and “chastisements” of His children.
- b. What is the connection between “the ark of the covenant” and the Blessed Virgin Mary (see: *Rev. 12*).
- c. Think of some of the greatest challenges which the Church faces today. (List some.) In what sense is “spiritual warfare” evident in our times? What is to be our response?

REV 13:1-22:21 THE APOCALYPSE OF JOHN (PART II)

Lesson Objectives:

1. To see the culmination of salvation history in the final chapters of *Revelation* – and God’s triumph over sin and death
 2. To make sense of some of the key symbolic imagery in the latter part of the book – especially the “beast(s),” “Babylon” and “666.” Importantly, to view these and other symbols in light of John’s first-century context, and within the framework of Catholic biblical interpretation.
-

4:1-22:7 The Vision to John [Continued]

13:1-10 The First Beast, from the Sea

13:11-18 The Second Beast, from the Earth

14:1-5 The Lamb and the 144,000

14:6-13 Message of the 3 Angels

14:14-20 Final Harvest

15:1-16:21 The Seven Bowls

- The Victory Song of Moses and of the Lamb (15:3-4)

17:1-18 The Whore on the Scarlet (17:1-18)

[Likely an image of apostate Jews (Whore) on Beast (Rome)]

18:1-24 Fall of Babylon (Jerusalem’s destruction)

19:1-10 Rejoicing in Heaven (19:1-10)

19:11-16 Rider on the White Horse (Christ)

19:17-21 Defeat of the Beast

20:1-6 The “Millennial” Reign (Symbolic 1,000 years!)

20:11-15 The Last Judgment

21:1-8 New Heavens, New Earth

21:9-27 Vision of the “New Jerusalem”

22:1-8 Rivers of Living Water (see *Zech.* 14:1-9; esp. v. 8)

22:8-21 Final Benediction

‘Come Lord Jesus!’

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS LESSONS ON THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS:

POPE-EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI¹⁴

- “What does it mean to be holy? Who is called to be holy? *We are often led to think that holiness is a goal reserved for a few elect.* St Paul, instead, speaks of God’s great plan and says: “even as he (God) chose us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him” (Eph 1:4). And he was speaking about all of us. At the centre of the divine plan is Christ in whom. God shows his Face, in accord with the favour of his will. The Mystery hidden in the centuries is revealed in its fullness in the Word made flesh. And Paul then says: “*in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell*” (Col 1:19).”
- “In Christ the living God made himself close, visible, audible and tangible so that each one might draw from his fullness of grace and truth (cf. Jn 1:14–16). Therefore, the whole of Christian life knows one supreme law, which St Paul expresses in a formula that recurs in all his holy writings: in Jesus Christ. Holiness, the fullness of Christian life, does not consist in carrying out extraordinary enterprises but in being united with Christ, in living his mysteries, in making our own his example, his thoughts, his behaviour. *The measure of holiness stems from the stature that Christ achieves in us, in as much as with the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole life on his.*”
- “*However, the question remains: how can we take the path to holiness, in order to respond to this call? Can I do this on my own initiative? The answer is clear. A holy life is not primarily the result of our efforts, of our actions, because it is God, the three times Holy (cf. Is 6:3) who sanctifies us, it is the Holy Spirit’s action that enlivens us from within, it is the very life of the Risen Christ that is communicated to us and that transforms us.* To say so once again with the Second Vatican Council, “the followers of Christ, called by God not in virtue of their works but by his design and grace, and justified in the Lord Jesus, have been made sons of God in the baptism of faith and partakers of the divine nature, and so are truly sanctified. They must therefore hold onto and perfect in their lives that sanctification which they have received.”
- “How can it happen that our manner of thinking and our actions become thinking and action with Christ and of Christ? *What is the soul of holiness?* Once again the Second Vatican Council explains; it tells us that Christian holiness is nothing other than charity lived to the full. “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (1 Jn 4:16). Now God has poured out his love in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (cf. Rom 5:5); therefore the first and most necessary gift is charity, by which we love God above all things and our neighbour through love of him. But if charity, like a good seed, is to grow and fructify in the soul, each of the faithful must willingly hear the word of God and carry out his will with deeds, with the help of his grace. He must frequently receive the sacraments, chiefly the Eucharist, and take part in the holy liturgy; he must constantly apply himself to prayer, self-denial,

¹⁴ Pope-emeritus Benedict XVI, General Audience, April 13, 2011. (Available online here: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20110413_en.html.)

active brotherly service and the exercise all the virtues. This is because love, as the bond of perfection and fullness of the law (cf. Col 3:14; Rom 13:10) governs, gives meaning to, and perfects all the means of sanctification” (see: *Lumen Gentium*, n. 42).”

- “Perhaps this language of the Second Vatican Council is a little too solemn for us, perhaps we should say things even more simply. *What is the essential? The essential means never leaving a Sunday without an encounter with the Risen Christ in the Eucharist; this is not an additional burden but is light for the whole week.* [The essential means] means never beginning and never ending a day without at least a brief contact with God. And, on the path of our life [the essential] means following the “signposts” that God has communicated to us in the Ten Commandments, interpreted with Christ, which are merely the explanation of what love is in specific situations.”
- “It seems to me that *this is the true simplicity and greatness of a life of holiness:* the encounter with the Risen One on Sunday; contact with God at the beginning and at the end of the day; following, in decisions, the “signposts” that God has communicated to us, which are but forms of charity.”
- “We might ask ourselves: can we, with our limitations, with our weaknesses, aim so high? ... Actually I must say that also for my personal faith many saints, not all, are true stars in the firmament of history. And I would like to add that *for me not only a few great saints whom I love and whom I know well are “signposts”, but precisely also the simple saints, that is, the good people I see in my life who will never be canonized.* They are ordinary people, so to speak, without visible heroism but in their everyday goodness I see the truth of faith. This goodness, which they have developed in the faith of the Church, is for me the most reliable apology of Christianity and the sign of where the truth lies.”
- “**In the Communion of Saints, canonized and not canonized**, which the Church lives thanks to Christ in all her members, we enjoy their presence and their company and cultivate the firm hope that we shall be able to imitate their journey and share one day in the same blessed life, eternal life.”
- “Dear friends, how great and beautiful, as well as simple is the Christian vocation seen in this light! *We are all called to holiness: it is the very measure of Christian living.*”
- “I would like to ask all to open themselves to the action of the Holy Spirit, who transforms our life, to be, we too, as small pieces in the great mosaic of holiness that God continues to create in history, so that the face of Christ may shine out in the fullness of its splendour. Let us not be afraid to aim high, for God’s heights; let us not be afraid that God will ask too much of us, but let ourselves be guided by his Word in every daily action, even when we feel poor, inadequate, sinners. It will be he who transforms us in accordance with his love.”

(Study Questions follow.)

Study Questions for Lesson 16:

1. For Review / further study

- a. From a Catholic perspective, what is the most likely identity given by Dr. Smith as to the “great beast” that rises out of the sea (See: *Rev.* 13:1-10? Likewise, what is the likely identity of the second, and lesser “beast from the earth” (see: *Rev.* 13:11-12)?
- b. On what basis does it make sense to see “666” as a possibly symbol of the historic figure Caesar Nero (see: *Rev.* 13:16-18). On what basis is it possible to see King Solomon underneath this symbol as well? (For this last question, see: *I Kings* 10:12; *II Chron.* 9:13 + *Sirach* 47:12-22 [esp. v. 19!])
- c. Why, based upon all the evidence does it, according to Dr. Smith, make best sense to see “Babylon” not as a symbol of “imperial Rome” ... but of “apostate Jerusalem?” In what way is there an “unholy alliance” between the two?
- d. NOTE: *While not explicitly discussed in the CD lesson, if “Babylon” is a symbolic image for “Jerusalem about to be judged,” then the “Woman” atop the beast, dressed in scarlet and gold and “drunk with the blood of the saints” (see: Rev. 17:3-5) is likely an image of Jewish authorities (Temple and synagogue) who are persecuting the (Jewish) Christians and in league with Rome.*
* If this is true, how is this “unholy woman” *contrasted* with the pure and holy woman of *Rev.* 12? (In a similar way, how does the beast of *Rev.* 13:1-2 “imitate” the Lamb of glory?)
- e. What cautions does Dr. Smith discuss, from a Catholic biblical perspective, concerning “millennialism” and a “literal” 1,000 year reign of Christ (see: *Rev.* 20:1-6)? Summarize Catholic teaching on the “Last Things” [See: [Appendix III](#)].

2. For prayer / meditation

- *Do we long for the “marriage supper of the Lamb”?* *Do I desire to see the “face of God”?* *How can I “seek the face of God” today? ... In Scripture? At Mass? In Eucharistic Adoration? In charity and service?*
- What final impressions can we draw about “holiness” from Pope-emeritus Benedict XVI (see above)?

3. For group discussion

- a. What “mark” did you receive at your baptism? What is the “sign” of the Lamb that we make *every time* we pray? How is this increasingly in our culture a “sign of contradiction?”
- b. What does it mean that there will be a “new heavens and new earth” (see: *Rev.* 21:1)? *In what sense does the “new Jerusalem” already dwell, in some sense, on earth?*

- c. Who is invited to the “marriage supper of the Lamb?”

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I:
The
GOSPEL
According to
ST. JOHN
STRUCTURE & CONTENT

DR. STEVEN SMITH

- I. THE REVELATION OF THE WORD MADE FLESH (1:1–18)
II. THE SIGNS AND WONDERS OF THE NEW MOSES (1:19–12:50)
III. THE SUPPER AND THE GLORY OF THE LAMB (13:1–20:31)
IV. EPILOGUE (21:1–25)
-

**I. THE REVELATION OF THE WORD
MADE FLESH (1:1–18)**

The Johannine Prologue makes us realize that the Logos is truly eternal, and from eternity is himself God. *God was never without his Logos.* The Word exists before creation. Consequently at the heart of the divine life there is communion, there is absolute gift. “God is love” (*1 John* 4:16), as the same Apostle tells us elsewhere, thus pointing to “the Christian image of God and the resulting image of mankind and its destiny”. God makes himself known to us as a mystery of infinite love in which the Father eternally utters his Word in the Holy Spirit. Consequently the Word, who from the beginning is with God and is God, reveals God himself in the dialogue of love between the divine persons, and invites us to share in that love. Created in the image and likeness of the God who is love, we can thus understand ourselves only in accepting the Word and in docility to the work of the Holy Spirit. In the light of the revelation made by God’s Word, the enigma of the human condition is definitively clarified. (*VD* 6)

CCC 463 Belief in the true Incarnation of the Son of God is the distinctive sign of Christian faith: "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God."

CCC 464 The unique and altogether singular event of the Incarnation of the Son of God does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man, nor does it imply that he is the result of a confused mixture of the divine and the human. He became truly man while remaining truly God. Jesus Christ is true God and true man.

CCC 470 ...The Son of God. . . worked with human hands; he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.

CCC 478 Jesus knew and loved us each and all during his life, his agony and his Passion, and gave himself up for each one of us: "The Son of God. . . loved me and gave himself for me." He has loved us all with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by our sins and for our salvation, "is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that. . . love with which the divine Redeemer continually loves the eternal Father and all human beings" without exception.

1:1-3	The Word is "with" God in the Beginning
1:4-5, 9	The Word is Light and is Coming into the World
--	[1:6-8, 15 Witness of John the Baptist (see 1:19-34)]
1:10-13	The Word Gives Life to the World, to Become Children Born of God
1:14a	The Word Became Flesh
1:14b	The Word <i>Reveals the Glory</i> of the Father to the Apostles
1:16-18	The Only Begotten Son Reveals " <i>Grace and Truth</i> ", the Father Himself

II. THE SIGNS AND WONDERS OF THE NEW MOSES (1:19–12:50)

PART ONE: THE FIRST 'DAYS' OF THE NEW MOSES (1:19–51)

A. 1:19–34	THE NEW MOSES, THE LAMB OF GOD, THE DESCENDING SPIRIT
1:19–23	<i>Jesus, the New Moses</i> (the Prophet- see: <i>Deut.</i> 18:15–18)
1:24–28	John's Preaching and Baptizing
1:29–31	Jesus, the Sacrificial Lamb of God
1:32–34	The Spirit Descends [See: <i>Matt</i> 3:13–17 / <i>Mark</i> 1:9–11 / <i>Luke</i> 3:21–22]

B. 1:35–51 THE NEW MOSES BECKONS THE NEW ISRAEL (CALL OF THE DISCIPLES)

- 1:35-37 Two of John’s disciples [Andrew & John] acknowledge Jesus as ‘*Lamb of God*’
- 1:38-40 The same two disciples acknowledge Jesus as ‘*Rabbi*’
- 1:40-42 Andrew, the “first disciple” (*protokletos*) finds Simon Peter, his brother
- d. Andrew is identified as the disciple –and brother of Peter [v 40]
[* *Implicit in the text but replete in Tradition is that St. John is the other “disciple” called beloved elsewhere: (13:23-25; 19:26-27; 20:1-10; 21:21-25)*]
 - e. Andrew acknowledge Jesus as ‘*Messiah*’ / ‘*Christ*’ [v 41]
 - f. Jesus re-names Simon ‘*Cephas*’ (Peter) [v 42]
- 1:43-51
- a. Philip—Jesus as fulfillment of Law and Prophets
 - b. Nathanael—Jesus as ‘*Son of God*’ and ‘*King of Israel*’
—*The Son of Man* (angels ascending and descending (See: *Gen 28:12*))

PART TWO: THE NEW MOSES SEEKS THE LOST CHILDREN OF ISRAEL – AND THE WORLD (2:1-4:46)

A. 2:1–11 THE FIRST SIGN OF THE NEW MOSES —JESUS CHANGES WATER TO WINE AT CANA IN GALILEE

- 2:1-2 a. Jesus goes to the Wedding in Cana – on the “third” and “seventh” day
- 2:3-4 b. The Woman (“*They have no more wine ... My hour has not yet come*”)
- 2:5 c. “Do whatever he tells you”
- 2:6 d. Jewish purification – six stone jars
- 2:7-8 e. The servants obey Jesus
- 2:9-10 f. “You have kept the good wine until now”
- 2:11 g. Jesus’ “glory” first revealed at Cana – in the sign of the wine
- 2:12 Transition—Jesus goes to Capernaum

B. 2:13–22 THE PROPHECY OF THE NEW MOSES: THE CESSATION OF TEMPLE SACRIFICES (CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE)

- [Note: This is the first of three Passovers in John: 2:13; 6:4; 11:55 +13:1]
- 2:13 a. (First) Passover at hand; Jesus “went up” to Jerusalem
- 2:14-17 b. The Prophecy of the New Moses: Cessation of Temple Sacrifices
- v. 14 Jesus finds the moneychangers in the Temple
 - v. 15 Jesus drives the animals out of the Temple
 - v. 16 Jesus quotes Scripture (Possibly: *Zech. 14:21*).
 - v. 17 Jesus’ disciples remember *another* Scripture: (“Zeal for your house will consume me” (*Psa 69:10*).
- 2:18 c. “The Jews” (Temple authorities) confront Jesus, “By what *sign* ...?”

- 2:19-20 d. Destroy *this temple* and in *three days* I will raise it up
2:21 e. St. John: Jesus meant the *temple of His body*
2:22 f. Jesus’ disciples “remember” Jesus’ words, and believe the *Scriptures* (OT) and the Word He had spoken (Kerygma / Gospel)
- 2:23-25 Transition—Many “believe” in Jesus in Jerusalem

C. 3:1-21 THE ‘LIFTING UP’ OF THE NEW MOSES (DISCOURSE WITH NICODEMUS)

- 3:1-12 Born Again / From Above (Water and Spirit)
- v. 1-2 Nicodemus’ Night Visit
 - vv. 3-4 Jesus tells Nicodemus one must be “born anew” (*anōthen*)
 - vv. 5-6 Born of “water and Spirit” (to enter the Kingdom of God)
 - vv. 7-8 Jesus reiterates the need to be born “from above”
 - vv. 9-12 Nicodemus grasps a “earthly” (fleshly, natural) meaning – but fails to perceive the “spiritual” (heavenly, supernatural,) meaning
- 3:13-15 The New Moses / Son of Man is “Lifted Up” (see: *Num* 21:8-9)
- 3:16-21 Life for the World, in the Son of God
- 3:22-36 The Final Witness of the Baptist
- d. John Baptizes, Jesus and the Disciples Baptize (but see: 4:2)
 - e. The ‘Friend’ and the ‘Bridegroom’ (vv. 25-30)
 - f. “He who is from above is above all” (vv. 31-36)
- 4:1-3 Transition—Jesus leaves Judea [*St. John clarifies that Jesus himself did not baptize*]

D. 4:4-42 THE NEW MOSES SEEKS THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL (DISCOURSE WITH THE SAMARITAN WOMAN AT JACOB’S WELL)

- 4:4 a. Jesus “had” to pass through Samaria
- 4:5-6: b. Jesus at Jacob's well
- 4:7-15 c. The Offer of “Living Water” (See: *Zech.* 14)
- 4:16-19 d. “Five husbands
- 4:20-26 f. Spirit and Truth
- 4:27 g. Jesus’ disciples return - wonder why he is speaking with Samaritan woman
- 4:28-30: h. The Samaritan evangelist
- 4:31-38 i. “My food is to do the will of *Him who sent me*”
- 4:40-42 j. “Belief” -- many Samaritans believe in Jesus
- 4:43-45 Transition—Jesus enters Galilee (a prophet has no honor in his own country)

E. 4:46-54 THE NEW MOSES SEEKS THE LOST PEOPLES OF THE WORLD (JESUS HEALS THE ROMAN OFFICIAL’S SON)

- 4:46 a. Jesus arrives in Cana for a second time
- 4:47 b. Royal Official (Roman?)
- 4:48 c. “Unless you see *signs and wonders* ...”
- 4:49 d. “Belief” – Come before my little boy dies
- 4:50-51 e. Sign: “Go, your son will live”
- 4:53 f. “Belief” – Son lives; man’s “household” believes in Jesus
- 4:45 g. “Second sign” (see 2:11)

PART THREE: THE NEW MOSES RECAPITULATES THE GREAT JEWISH FEASTS (5:10-10:42)

A. 5:1–47 THE MERCY OF NEW MOSES—JESUS RECAPITULATES THE MEANING OF THE SABBATH

5:1-15 Healing on the Sabbath at the *Bethzatha* pool (‘House of Mercy’)

5:16-47 The *Shaliach Discourse* — Jesus explains his “work” on the Sabbath

NOTE: The above is referred to as the *Shaliach Discourse* in that it transcends a simple explanation of His work on the Sabbath; in fact, it functions as a Christological treatise of the of the relation between the Son, and the Father who “*sent*” him.

B. 6:1–71 THE NEW PASSOVER OF THE NEW MOSES —JESUS RECAPITULATES THE MANNA OF THE EXODUS

6:1-21 The New Moses: Multiplying the loaves; Walking on the sea

6:22-24 Transition—The crowd comes to Jesus

6:25-71 [SPECIAL FOCUS BELOW!]

6:25-71 SPECIAL FOCUS: THE BREAD OF LIFE DISCOURSE

(Given at Capernaum Synagogue)

PART ONE (vv. 25-51): RABBINIC HOMILY IN THREEFOLD MOVEMENT:

(I. Quote from Law; II. 2nd quote from Prophets; III. Explanation Based Upon texts of Law & Prophets)

IV. Law (see: *Exod.* 16:4, *Psa.* 78:24)

- f. Do not Labor for Bread (Manna) that Perishes (vv. 25-26)
- g. Labor for Food that Gives ‘Eternal Life’ [see: *Exod.* 16:4, *Psa.* 78:24] (v. 27)
 - a. It was *not Moses* – but *my Father* (vv. 28-33)
 - b. Lord, give us this bread *always* (v. 34)
- h. *I AM the Bread of Life* (vv. 35-40)
{1st PROCLAMATION OF NEW TEACHING}
- i. ‘The Jews’ murmur / *The Father who sent me* draws the one who comes (vv. 41-44)

V. Prophets (see: *Isa* 54:13)

- a. ‘*They shall be taught by God*’ [quote of *Isa.* 54:13] (vv. 45-46)

VI. Explanation Based Upon Law & Prophets

- a. He who *believes* has eternal life (v. 47)
- b. ‘*I AM the Bread of Life from Heaven*’ (vv. 48-51)
{2nd PROCLAMATION OF NEW TEACHING}

PART TWO (vv 52-59) TRUE FOOD AND TRUE DRINK

- e. ‘The Jews’ Dispute Among themselves (vv. 52; see vv. 41-44)
- f. *Unless you eat ... and drink* (vv. 53-54)
{3rd PROCLAMATION OF NEW TEACHING}
- g. *Food indeed ... and drink indeed* (vv. 55-58)
- h. Explanatory comment by John [Capernaum synagogue] (v. 59)

PART THREE (vv. 60-71) ‘YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE’

(* This third panel completes the saying of vv. 45-46 [‘*taught by God*’])

3. Many Disciples Disbelieve (vv. 60-65)

- i. Disciples murmur (v. 60; see vv. 41-44)
- ii. *Do you take offense?* / *Ascending Son of Man* (vv. 61-62)
- iii. Explanatory comment by John, i.e., *those who do not believe* prefigure the *Betrayer*, Judas (vv. 64)
- iv. *No one can come to me unless granted by the Father* (v. 65)

4. Peter and the Disciples Believe (vv. 66-71)

- j. Many disciples leave (v. 66)
- ii. Jesus: Will you also leave (v. 67)
- iii. Peter: You have the words of eternal life (vv. 68-69; see: 45-46!)

- iv. Jesus indicates his betrayal (v.70)
- v. John explains that it was Judas (v. 71)

C. 7:1–8:59 THE NEW MOSES AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES—JESUS RECAPITULATES THE SYMBOLS OF WATER & LIGHT

- 7: 1–13 Introduction: Will Jesus go up to the feast?
- 7:14–36 The New Moses is Greater than the First (*Discourse in the middle of the feast*)
- 7:37–52 *Rivers of Living Water* (Discourse on the final, i.e. “great” day of the feast)

[7:53–8:11 JESUS & THE ADULTERESS: YAHWEH AND ISRAEL?]

- 8:12–20 *I AM the Light of the World*
- 8:21-30 *He who sent me is with me*
- 8:31-59 *Before Abraham was, I AM*
- 9:1 -41 Jesus heals the man born blind (Jesus is the *Light*; see: 1:4-5)
- 10: 1–21 Jesus is *The Good Shepherd*

E. 9:1-10:22 THE NEW MOSES ILLUMINATES THE BLIND

- 9:1-41 *Jesus heals the man born blind (Jesus is the Light; see: 1:4-5)*
- 10:1-21 *Jesus is the Good Shepherd*

F. 10:22–39 THE NEW MOSES AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION — JESUS, RECAPITULATES THE MEANING OF THE TEMPLE (HIMSELF IN PLACE OF THE TEMPLE ALTAR)

- 10:22–30 *I and the Father are one*
- 10:31–42 Jesus is *the Son of God*.

PART FOUR: THE NEW MOSES MOVES TOWARD THE ‘HOUR’ OF GLORY (11:1-12:50)

A. 11:1–54 JESUS GIVES LIFE TO MEN; MEN CONDEMN JESUS TO DEATH

- 11:1-44 *Jesus raises Lazarus to life*
 - 11:1-6 a. Jesus hears from Martha and Mary
 - 11:7-16 b. “Lazarus is dead”
 - 11:17-27 c. “Belief” – “I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God”
 - 11:28-37 d. "Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died”
 - 11:38-44 e. The “raising” of Lazarus
 - 11:45-54 f. Sanhedrin condemns Jesus to die; withdrawal to Ephraim

11:55-57 Transition—Will Jesus come to Jerusalem for Passover?

**B. 12:1-50 BETHANY & THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM:
(PREPARATORY SCENES TO JESUS’ PASSOVER AND DEATH)**

- 12:1-8 At Bethany, Mary anoints Jesus for death
- 12:9-19 *Hosanna!* The welcome the Messiah into Jerusalem
- 12:20-36 The coming of the Greeks marks the ‘hour’ of Jesus
Andrew brings “the Jews,” i.e. Simon Peter (see: *John* 1:40)
Andrew, with Phillip bring “the Greeks” (12:20-22)
- 12:37-43 An evaluation of Jesus’ ministry to “his own”
- 12:44-50 *Not judgment but salvation:* Summary of Jesus Ministry to “the world”

“The hour of Jesus is the hour of the great stepping-beyond, the hour of transformation, and this metamorphosis of being is brought about through *agápē*. It is *agápē* “to the end”—and here John anticipates the final word of the dying Jesus: *tetélestai*—“it is finished” (19:30).

This end (*télos*), this totality of self-giving, of remolding the whole of being—this is what it means to give oneself even unto death.”

Pope Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth: vol. ii: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2011), 55.

III. THE SUPPER AND GLORY OF THE LAMB (13:1-20:31)

NOTE: *As Part III opens, watch for a marked shift in tone. No longer is Jesus readily available to “the world.” In fact, He has moved away from “the world” and is available at this time only to “His own,” the disciples.*

PART ONE: THE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (13:1-17:26)

A. 13:31-14:31 THE *EXITUS* AND *REDITUS* OF THE LAMB

13:31-38: Jesus’ departure and the commandment to love; Peter’s threefold denial.

13:1 The *Telos* of Jesus: He loved them “to the end”

13:2-17 The Foot-washing: “*You are all clean*”

13:18-20 “I Know whom I have chosen”

13:21-38 The Morsel “Lord, who is it?”

14:1-14: Jesus is the way to the Father

14:1-4: Jesus’ *Exitus* and *Reditus*

14:5: *How can we know the way?*

14:6-11: *I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life*

14:12-14: Greater works than these

14:15-24: The Paraclete

14:15-17: Coming of the Paraclete (to the disciples, not to the world)

14:18-21: *You in Me and I in you*

14:22: Judas' question

14:23-24: The coming of the Father (with Jesus)

14:25-31: *Rise, Lets us Go*

14:25-26: Sending the Paraclete to teach.

14:27ab: *Peace I leave you*

14:27c-29: Jesus' *exitus*

14:30-31: Struggle with the Ruler of the World

B. 15:1–16:33 JESUS, THE TRUE VINE

15:1–17: Abiding in Jesus

1–9: The Vine and the Branches

15:10-17: The Commandment to Love

15:10-11 Abiding in Jesus and his love.

15:12-17: *Love one another*

15:18–16:4a: The world's hatred for Jesus and his disciples (§54)

15:18–21: The world hates and persecutes the disciples

15:22–25: The guilt of the world

15:26–27: The witness of the Paraclete

16:1–4a: The persecution of the disciples

16:4b–33: The Gift of the Paraclete

16:4b–15: Jesus' departure and the coming of the Paraclete.

16:5-7: Jesus' departure and the disciples' sadness

16:8-11: The Paraclete against the world

16:12-15: The Paraclete as guide of the disciples

16:16-33: Jesus' return will bring the disciples peace

16:16-23a: The disciples will see Jesus again and rejoice

16:23b-33: *I have overcome the world*

C. 17:1-26 JESUS' HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER

(The Recapitulation of Everything' – CCC 2748)

17:1-8: Father, Glorify Thy Son

17:1-5: Glory from '*before the world was made*' (see 1:18)

17:6-8: Jesus' work of revelation among the disciples

17:9-19: Jesus prays for those whom the Father has given him

17:9-16: The disciples and the world

17:17-19: The *consecration* of the disciples and of Jesus

17:20-26: Jesus prays for those who believe through the disciples' word

17:20-23: The unity of those who believe in Jesus

17:24-26: '*To behold my glory*' -- Jesus prays for all believers to be with him and the Father

PART TWO: THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST (18:1-19:42)

A. 18:1-27 THE ARREST AND INTERROGATION OF JESUS

18:1-11 The Arrest of Jesus

18:1-3: Judas, the Betrayer, enters the Garden of Gethsemane with the band of soldiers

18:4-8: Jesus meets the arresting party and *reveals* His power.

18:9: *I have not lost one*

18:10-11: Peter reacts to the arrest by striking at the servant

18:12-13 [Change of scene] Jesus is taken from Gethsemane to Annas

18:14-27 The interrogation of Jesus

18:14: Expedient that one man should die

18:15-18: Introduction of Peter into high priest's palace; *first* denial

18:19-23: Annas interrogates Jesus who protests his innocence

18:24: Jesus sent bound, from Annas to Caiaphas

18:25-27: Peter's *second* and *third* denials

B. 18:28–19:6A THE TRIAL OF JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Seven Scenes in a Chiastic Structure (Ignace De La Potterie, *Hour of Jesus*, p. 58)

A. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [1st Dialogue: *What accusation...?*] (18:28-32)

B. (Inside) Pilate and Jesus: *The Kingship of Jesus* (18:33-38)

C. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [2nd Dialogue: *Barabbas*] (18:38-40)

C O R O N A T I O N (19:1-3)

C¹. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [3rd Dialogue: *Ecce Homo*] (19:4-7)

B¹. (Inside) Pilate and Jesus [Pilate’s Power] (19:8-12)

A¹. (Outside) Pilate and the Jews [Final Dialogue: *Behold Your King*] (19:13-16)

C. 19:16B–42 THE CRUCIFIXION AND BURIAL OF JESUS

19:16b-18 Introduction: *Via Crucis* and the crucifixion

19:19–22 **Episode 1:**

The King of the Jews – Pilate and the Royal Inscription

19: 23-24 **Episode 2:**

The Seamless Tunic – The executioners divide Jesus’ garments

19:25-27 **Episode 3:**

Behold thy Mother! – Jesus gives his Mother to the Beloved Disciple and the Beloved Disciple to His Mother

19:28-29 **Episode 4:**

I Thirst – Jesus’ cry of thirst; the executioners offer him wine

19:30 **Episode 5:**

It is Finished – Jesus hands over his spirit.

19:31-35 **Episode 6:**

Blood and Water – Pilate and the breaking of Jesus’ legs;
Blood and water flow from Jesus’ side

19:36-38 **Episode 7:**

Behold the Pierced One

19:38-42 Conclusion: The burial of Jesus by Joseph and Nicodemus

PART THREE: THE RISEN JESUS (20:1–31)

A. 20:1–18 THE RISEN LORD AT THE TOMB

- 20:1–10 The disciples visit the empty tomb
- 20:1-2: Early on Sunday morning Mary Magdalene finds the tomb opened and reports to the disciples
- 20:3-10: Peter and “the other disciple” run to the tomb and see the burial clothes; “the other disciple” believes
- 20:11-18 Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene
- 20:11-13: Mary Magdalene looks into the tomb and sees angels
- 20:14-18: Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene and is recognized with difficulty; she proclaims the Lord to the disciples

B. 20:19–29 THE RISEN LORD AMONG THE DISCIPLES

- 20:19-23 Jesus appears to the disciples
- On Sunday evening, Jesus appears to and greets the disciples who rejoice at seeing Him. Jesus sends the disciples as he is sent; Breathes the Holy Spirit on them and gives them power to forgive sins.*
- 20:24-29 Jesus appears to Thomas
- 20:24-25: Thomas refuses to believe that the others have seen the Lord
- 20:26-28: Belief: “My Lord and my God” (
- 20:29 Blessing of those who have “not seen and yet believed”

C. 20:30–31 PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.”

IV. EPILOGUE (21:1-25)

A. 21:1-14 THE RISEN JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS

20:1-8 *We will go with you* –The disciples join Peter in fishing all night

20:9-13 *It is the Lord!* Jesus eats breakfast with Peter and the disciples

20:14 John observes: This was the third time that Jesus “revealed himself” to His disciples

B. 21:15-23 THE RISEN JESUS RESTORES AND COMMISSIONS PETER

20:15-17 *The Restoration of Peter* – Jesus rehabilitates Peter in love and commissions him to “*feed my sheep*”

20:18-23 Jesus speaks of the fates of Peter and the Beloved Disciple

20:18-19: Peter will follow Jesus to a martyr’s death

20:20-23: The Beloved Disciple may remain until Jesus comes

C. 21:24-25: CONCLUSION

20:24 The true witness of the Beloved Disciple

20:25 The many other deeds of Jesus

APPENDIX II: CATHOLIC TEACHING ON THE FOUR GOSPELS

Dei Verbum 18 *"The Church has always and everywhere held and continues to hold that the four Gospels are of apostolic origin. For what the Apostles preached in fulfillment of the commission of Christ, afterwards they themselves and apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: the foundation of faith, namely, the fourfold Gospel, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."*

DV 19 *"Holy Mother Church has firmly and with absolute constancy held, and continues to hold, that the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation until the day He was taken up into heaven (see Acts 1:1). Indeed, after the Ascension of the Lord the Apostles handed on to their hearers what He had said and done. This they did with that clearer understanding which they enjoyed after they had been instructed by the glorious events of Christ's life and taught by the light of the Spirit of truth."*

The sacred authors wrote the four Gospels, selecting some things from the many which had been handed on by word of mouth or in writing, reducing some of them to a synthesis, explaining some things in view of the situation of their churches and preserving the form of proclamation *but always in such fashion that they told us the honest truth about Jesus. For their intention in writing was that either from their own memory and recollections, or from the witness of those who "themselves from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word" we might know "the truth" concerning those matters about which we have been instructed (Luke 1:2-4).*

Sancta Mater Ecclesia (1964)

The Apostles rendered testimony to Jesus, announcing first and foremost the Lord's death and resurrection. They faithfully set forth His life and His words, adapting the format of their preaching to the condition of their audience. When Jesus rose from the dead and His divinity became manifest, faith by no means obliterated the memory of the events which had taken place. On the contrary it reinforced these memories, because it rested on the things which Jesus had taught and done. Nor did their worship of Jesus as Lord and Son of God transform Him into "mythological" figure, or distort His teaching.

However there is no reason to deny the fact that the apostles, in telling their listeners about our Lord's deeds and words, utilized *the fuller understanding which they had acquired from the glorious events of Christ's life and the guidance of, the Spirit of truth. After His resurrection Jesus Himself "interpreted to them"⁶ His own words and those of the Old Testament. In a similar manner they explained His deeds and words according to the needs of their audience.*

The truth of the Gospel account is not compromised because the Evangelists report the Lord's words and deeds in different order. Nor is it hurt because they report His words, not literally but in a variety of ways, while retaining the same meaning. As St. Augustine says: "It is quite probable that each Evangelist felt duty-bound to narrate his particular account in the order which God suggested to

his memory. At least this would seem to hold true for those items in which order of treatment would not affect the authority or truth of the Gospel. After all, the Holy Spirit distributes His gifts to each as He chooses. *Since these books were to be so authoritative, He undoubtedly guided and directed the sacred writers as they thought about the things which they were going to write down; but He probably allowed each writer to arrange his narrative as he saw fit. Hence anyone who uses enough diligence, will be able to discover this order with the help of God.*

Some deny, a priori as it were, the historical nature and historical value of the documents of Revelation. And finally, *some minimize the authority of the Apostles as witnesses to Christ. Belittling their office and their influence in the primitive community, these people exaggerate the creative power of the community itself.*

CCC 126 "We can distinguish three stages in the formation of the Gospels:"

(Stage 1) *The Life and Teaching of Jesus.* the Church holds firmly that the four Gospels, "whose historicity she unhesitatingly affirms, faithfully hand on what Jesus, the Son of God, while he lived among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation, until the day when he was taken up."

(Stage 2) *The Oral tradition.* "For, after the ascension of the Lord, the apostles handed on to their hearers what he had said and done, but with that fuller understanding which they, instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth, now enjoyed."

(Stage 3) *The Written Gospels.* "The sacred authors, in writing the four Gospels, selected certain of the many elements which had been handed on, either orally or already in written form; others they synthesized or explained with an eye to the situation of the churches, the while sustaining the form of preaching, but always in such a fashion that they have told us the honest truth about Jesus."

Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* 52, 55 To understand the word of God, then, we need to appreciate and experience the essential meaning and value of the liturgical action. *A faith-filled understanding of sacred Scripture must always refer back to the liturgy, in which the word of God is celebrated as a timely and living word ... The Eucharist opens us to an understanding of Scripture, just as Scripture for its part illumines and explains the mystery of the Eucharist. Unless we acknowledge the Lord's real presence in the Eucharist, our understanding of Scripture remains imperfect.*

VD 55 "The historical fact is a constitutive dimension of the Christian faith. The history of salvation is not mythology, but a true history, and it should thus be studied with the methods of serious historical research."

VD 34 "Against this background, one can better appreciate the great principles of interpretation proper to Catholic exegesis set forth by the Second Vatican Council, especially in the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* ... the Dogmatic Constitution indicates **three fundamental criteria** for an appreciation of the divine dimension of the Bible: 1) the text must be interpreted with attention to *the unity of the whole of Scripture*; nowadays this is called canonical exegesis; 2) account is to be taken of the *living Tradition of the whole Church*; and, finally, 3) respect must be shown for *the analogy of faith*.

Only where both methodological levels, the historical-critical and the theological, are respected, can one speak of a theological exegesis, an exegesis worthy of this book"

APPENDIX III:

INTERPRETING THE BOOK OF REVELATION FROM A BALANCED CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

“At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love.”
St. John of the Cross, *Dichos* 64

There are almost as many interpretative models of how to “decipher the symbols” within the *Book of Revelation* and make sense of it. Below are **three major models** – all of which have some insights useful for interpreting *Revelation*.

Yet, each of the following three views contains flaws and are thus problematic from a balanced Catholic biblical approach. (E.g. The Church has not, does not, and never will subscribe to “millennialist” beliefs, which stem from some of these approaches.)

For the Catholic approach, we turn not to individual scholars or schools of thought, but Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and the Church’s Magisterium! That said, while the Catholic Church does not “subscribe” to any school of approach, we will suggest a final view held by a small but growing number of Catholic (as well as Protestant) scholars. That more reasoned and sensible view will be highlighted below and is known as the “Modified Preterist” view. While imperfect as all these models are, it is the one closest to the teachings of the Church as in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and within Sacred Tradition.

x. **THREE (3) FLAWED MODELS FOR INTERPRETING REVELATION**

a. **#1 – THE FUTURIST MODEL**

“History is littered with failed attempts to use Revelation to predict history.”
(David Barr)

- i. **SUMMARY:** Sees most / all fulfillment of *Revelation*’s prophecies as happening far in the future, long after the writing of the book (i.e. 20-21st century!)
- ii. **PROBLEMS:**
 1. Uproots *Revelation* from its first-century A.D. Jewish-Christian context.
 2. Often leads to very speculative hypotheses regarding modern events, persons, etc. and how the book of *Revelation* is “being fulfilled” in our day.

iii. **EXAMPLES:**

1. Early examples:
 - a. Nicholas of Lyra
 - b. Joachim of Fiore – viewed *Revelation* as a “chronological chart” of Church history through the ages
2. Modern examples:
 - a. B. B. Warfield (Early 20th century Princeton professor and proponent of “dispensationalist” and “rapture” theology)
 - b. J. N. D. Darby (Scofield Bible)
 - c. Hal Lindsey (*Late Great Planet Earth*)
 - d. Tim LaHaye (*Left Behind* book series)
 - e. Connect Rev 6-19 w/ prophet Daniel (70th week, Dan 9:25-27)
 - F. Secret rapture – two-stage / double return of Christ

b. **#2 – CLASSICAL (“FULL”) PRETERIST MODEL**

- i. **SUMMARY:** “Preter” = *before* [or *beyond*]. This view sees all of *Revelation’s* prophecies as having already happened in the first happening far in in the future. Full / classical preterists believe all eschatological events were fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
- ii. **PROBLEMS:**
 1. While the classical Preterist approach avoids the “black helicopter” hysteria of the Futurist (fundamentalist / rapturist) approach it errs by reading the book as a relic of history.
 2. In other words, the “living reality” of the book as inspired Scripture *which is still relevant today* is diminished, as its prophetic messages have all come to fruition. So, the book served its purpose through warning about things that were about to come to pass.
 3. Truth be told: many secular academics who hold this view *do not really view the book as “actual prophecy”* but rather as an “after-the-fact” explanation of events that had transpired / were transpiring, which the book is addressing *in the form of prophecy*.
 4. To be clear -- *certainly, not all Classical Preterists see the book as “imagined prophecy!”* Some Preterists view the book with eyes of faith, i.e. as “true prophecy” and inspired Scripture. Nevertheless, by placing all of the prophetic fulfillments *in the past*, the book can *only be understood within its first century context*.

iii. **SPECIAL PROBLEM: THE RAPTURE!**

1. Millennialists (see: Rev 20:1–3, 7–8) often give much attention to a literal “1,000 year” physical reign of Christ on earth. This is preceded by “loosening of evil” on the earth by Satan.
2. Widespread in such literal “millennialist” approaches is the idea of a “**secret rapture.**” According to this fundamentally flawed (and non-biblical!) premise, Christ will – before his Second Coming – return

- in secret and rescue all “true believers” from this time of suffering. They will be “*caught up*” to be with Christ (*I Thess.* 4:16–17).
3. Much more can be said here – only a few remarks will suffice:
 - a. Hopes for a literal 1,000 year (millennial) period era and / or a secret rapture of “true believers” are, however widespread, without merit. Such are literalistic mis-interpretations and proof-texts of select Scripture passages.
 - b. Scripture does not support the idea of a literal thousand year span between Christ’s First and Second Coming. In Matt. 16, Jesus declares, “For the Son of man is to come with his angels in the glory of his *Father*, and then he will *repay every man for what he has done*” (v. 27)
 - c. Not with *fear* of a secret rapture – but with *joy & peace* does the Church await and humbly prepare for the Second Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - d. While ‘millennial’ fears have been around in various forms from as early as the 2nd century, the rapture concept is relatively modern, i.e. late 19th / early 20th century.
 - e. Early pre-millennial “rapture” proponents include Protestant preachers B. B. Warfield and J.N. Darby.
 - f. American evangelist Hal Lindsey’s *The Late, Great Planet Earth* (1969) renewed dramatic interest throughout the 1970s-80s.
 - g. The *Left Behind* book / movie series (1990s) is yet another development that has captured much attention.
 4. From a Christian perspective, much about the “rapture” is totally unacceptable:
 - a. It is truly unbiblical and without any merit. Its proponents treat the Scriptures as rubber bands to be twisted & stretched to fit ill-conceived, speculative notions about the end of the world.
 - b. *It splits the Second Coming into several events the first of which is highly secretive.*
 - c. Its proponents (however well-intentioned) often use fear & hype to promote urgent conversions – *not to Christ as much as to their theological vision.*
 - d. Such views are deficient of orthodox Christian theology and morality; e.g., God will soon plunge the world into an age of unspeakable darkness, while a small minority of “born again” believers is spared any *suffering*. Such ideas are profoundly incompatible with the love and justice of God. Moreover, there is no room for “redemptive suffering” in such a system.

iv. EXAMPLES

1. Early Preterists
 - a. Origen
 - b. Eusebius
2. Modern Preterist scholars:
 - a. David Aune
 - b. R. C. Sproul
Kenneth Gentry

c. **#3 – FIGURATIVE / SYMBOLIC MODEL**

i. **SUMMARY:** Views the *Book of Revelation* as a figurative way, apart from any real historical context. Avoids the extremes of both the Futurist and Full Preterist models, which see the book’s meaning unlocked in future or past events. By “de-historicizing” the book, the reader is invited to cull out “timeless truths” under its symbolic, mythic literary images.

ii. **PROBLEMS**

1. Ignores or downplays the original historical realities from which the book was written. Thus, questions of authorship, audience, etc. are set aside.
2. For some who hold to this model, the book is a kind of “biblical fiction” which can inspire to overcome evil with good, etc.
3. The symbolic approach to *Revelation* is a kind of escape hatch for those who find some of its content appealing (“persevere!”) and other parts of its content appalling (judgments, etc.) Thus, the book is picked apart for what one wishes to hear, or “generalized” as a kind of timeless comfort.

iii. **EXAMPLES**

1. Eugene Peterson, Richard Hays. The book express “great truths” about God, the reality of evil, etc. in mythical, poetic language in order to convey timeless truths to God’s people “in every age”
2. Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza. The book is a politically symbolic critique of “empire” and “imperialism” (in any age). Thus, *Revelation* is deciphered in a “post-colonial” critique of power. Believers strive for social justice amidst oppressive political-religious forces
3. Michael Gorman. The book is a pastoral admonition, designed to call God’s people “faithful witness” in the face of hostility and evil.

xi. **ANOTHER WAY?** ‘*Modified Preterism*’ – Interpreting the *Book of Revelation* in all of its richness – and avoiding the above pitfalls!

d. **MODIFIED PRETERIST VIEW**

i. **SUMMARY:**

1. Follows the general contours of the Preterist view (above) – yet avoids it’s “strictly in the past” pitfalls.

2. Thus, while many of the prophetic passages of the book are rooted in the world of the first century *other events that may find fulfillment in various ages of the church, in the past, present, or even future.*
 - ii. **EXAMPLES:**
 1. Scott W. Hahn, Michael Barber, Steven Smith
 2. [Protestant] Gregory Beale, David Chilton
 - iii. The “Modified” Preterist approach sees the book largely playing out within John’s first-century context.
 - iv. Yet unlike “Full” Preterists, we recognize that other events may find fulfillment in various ages of the church. On the other hand, because the *emphasis* is on fulfillment in the apostolic age, the pitfalls of the Futurist model are also avoided (e.g. *Revelation* as a “code to be decoded” through modern events). Obviously Christ has not returned yet, and so there are things yet to unfold.
- xii. **CATHOLIC TEACHING - *Catechism of the Catholic Church* on: Christ’s Second Coming, the Final Tribulation, the Antichrist, and – God’s victory in Christ**
- a. **CHRIST WILL RETURN.**
 - i. **CCC 673** “Since the Ascension, Christ’s coming in glory has been **imminent**, even though “*it is not for you to know **times or seasons** which the Father has fixed by his own authority*” (*Acts* 1:7). This eschatological coming could be accomplished **at any moment**, even if both it and the final trial that will precede it are “delayed” (see: *Matt.* 24:44; *I Thess.* 5:2; CCC 1048)
 - b. **A FINAL TRIAL**
 - i. **CCC 675** Before Christ’s second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers (See: *Luk* 18:8; *Matt.* 24:12). The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth (See: *Luke* 21:12; *John* 15:19–20) will unveil the “mystery of iniquity” in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh (See: *2 Thess.* 2:4–12; *1 Thess.* 5:2–3; *II John* 7; *I John* 2:18, 22).
 - ii. **CCC 677** *The Church will enter the glory of the kingdom only through this final Passover, when she will follow her Lord in his death and Resurrection* (See: *Rev* 19:1–9). The kingdom will be fulfilled, then, not by a historic triumph of the Church through a progressive ascendancy, but only by God’s victory over the final unleashing of evil, which will cause his Bride to come down from heaven (See: *Rev* 13:8; 20:7–10; 21:2–4). God’s triumph over the revolt of evil will take the form of the Last Judgment

after the final cosmic upheaval of this passing world (See: *Rev* 20:12; *2 Pet* 3:12–13).

c. **ON ‘MILLENARIANISM’**

- i. **CCC 676** The Antichrist’s deception already begins to take shape in the world every time the claim is made to realize within history that messianic hope which can only be realized beyond history through the eschatological judgment. *The Church has rejected even modified forms of this falsification of the kingdom to come under the name of millenarianism, especially the “intrinsically perverse” political form of a secular messianism.*¹⁵

d. **THE PARTICULAR JUDGEMENT**

- i. **CCC 1022** Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul *at the very moment of his death*, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven—through a purification¹⁶ or immediately,—or immediate and everlasting damnation.

e. **“I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY”**

- a. **CCC 998** *Who will rise? All the dead will rise, “those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.”* (*John* 5:52; see: *Dan.* 12:2)
- b. **CCC 989** “We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, so after death the righteous will live forever with the risen Christ and he will raise them up on the last day.”
- c. **CCC 991** Belief in the resurrection of the dead has been an essential element of the Christian faith from its beginnings ...
How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; *if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain ...* (*I Cor.* 15:12-12)

¹⁵ See: Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*, condemning the “false mysticism” of this “counterfeit of the redemption of the lowly”; cf. *Gaudium et Spes* 20–21.

¹⁶ See: Council of Lyons II (1274): DS 857–858; Council of Florence (1439); Council of Trent (1563).

APPENDIX IV: OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

DR. SMITH’S OUTLINE – THE BOOK OF REVELATION

1:1-8 “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*” – John’s Prologue

- 1:1-3 Introduction
- 1:4-6 Initial greeting to the 7 Churches
- 1:7-8 “Who was and is and is to come”

1:9-20 **The Scope of the Prophecy**
(v. 19 “*What is and what is to take place hereafter*”)

2:1-3:22 **Seven Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia (2:1—3:22)**

- 2:1-7 Ephesus
- 2:8-11 Smyrna
- 2:12-17 Pergamum
- 2:18-22 Thyatira
- 3:1-6 Sardis
- 3:7-13 Philadelphia
- 3:14-22 Laodicea

4:1-22:7 **The Vision to John**

- 4:1-11 The Heavenly Liturgy: Worship in the Heaven
- 5:1-14 The Lamb that was Slain

- 6:1-8:5 The Seven Seals
 - The first six seals (6:1-17)
 - Cosmic intermission (7:1-17)
 - (a) 144,000 Israelites saved (vv. 1-8)
 - (b) Countless Gentiles saved (vv. 9-17)
- 8:1-8 The Seventh seal (8:1-5)

- 8:6-11:19 The Seven Trumpets
 - The first six trumpets (8:6-9:21)
 - Cosmic intermission (10:1-11:14)
 - (a) “Take and eat” (10:1-11)
 - (b) The Two witnesses (11:1-14)
- 11:15-19 The seventh trumpet

(OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION –CONTINUED)

12:1-17 The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon

13:1-10 The First Beast, from the Sea

13:11-18 The Second Beast, from the Earth

14:1-5 The Lamb and the 144,000

14:6-13 Message of the 3 Angels

14:14-20 Final Harvest

15:1-16:21 The Seven Bowls

- The Victory Song of Moses and of the Lamb (15:3-4)

17:1-18 The Whore on the Scarlet (17:1-18)

[Likely an image of apostate Jews (Whore) on Beast (Rome)]

18:1-24 Fall of Babylon (Jerusalem’s destruction)

19:1-10 Rejoicing in Heaven (19:1-10)

19:11-16 Rider on the White Horse (Christ)

19:17-21 Defeat of the Beast

20:1-6 The “Millennial” Reign (Symbolic 1,000 years!)

20:11-15 The Last Judgment

21:1-8 New Heavens, New Earth

21:9-27 Vision of the “New Jerusalem”

22:1-8 Rivers of Living Water (see *Zech.* 14:1-9; esp. v. 8)

22:8-21 Final Benediction

‘Come Lord Jesus!’

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