

Gospel John Chapter 21 -- John Karmelich

1. Have you ever enjoyed a good “epilogue” to a story?
 - a) You just watched a very satisfying movie, or you just finished a good book.
 - b) Now there is more one scene where they tell you what *became* of certain characters.
 - i) Usually the author will tell what happened to the characters years later as a result of the experience of the story.
 - c) When the story is very satisfying, I usually love the epilogue.
2. Chapter 21 is an epilogue to the Gospel of John.
 - a) You can summarize the chapter in a question or two:
 - i) Whatever happened to Peter?
 - ii) Whatever happened to John, the writer of the book?
 - b) Chapter 20 ended with the big climax of the resurrection.
 - i) The end of Chapter 20 states the purpose of the book “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31 NIV)
 - c) So why did John add Chapter 21?
 - i) Is it just written for our curiosity as to what became of Peter & John?
 - a) Partially yes. At the time this gospel was written, rumors were circulating about John, and John wanted to put those rumors to rest.
 - b) But the main reason is a summation of what became of Peter
 - c) The Book of Acts gives a lot more details on what happened to Peter, but Jesus summarizes in Chapter 21 how Peter glorifies God.
 - (1) Which is a pretty amazing statement considering the last time Peter & Jesus had a personal confrontation is when Jesus looked at Peter, after Peter denied him three times.
 - ii) There are lessons about this epilogue that apply to your life and mine.
 - a) The work of Jesus is never finished until He comes again.
 - b) The lessons we learn, primarily about Peter are designed to teach us things about our own lives.
 - c) The lesson is despite our shortcomings, God can use us in a mighty way.
 - d) Chapter 21 has great lessons to think about the next time we really mess up.
 - i) The next time we aren’t brave enough to stand up for Jesus (when we should), study this chapter.
 - ii) The next time you feel guilt and remorse about your sin, study this chapter.
 - iii) The next time you think God no longer loves you, study this chapter.
 - iv) Chapter 21 shows how our Lord makes someone *aware* of their mistakes and then restores them to what God called them to do.
3. Chapter 21 teaches of Jesus telling Peter to be in charge of his “sheep”.
 - a) The sheep refers to all believing Christians.
 - i) Remember Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd”.
 - b) Now consider the fact that Peter, who just denied knowing Jesus three times, receives a blessing and a scolding at the same time.
 - i) This would be like your boss telling you, “You’ve really messed up, but not only am I going to forgive you, I’m going to give you a promotion”.
 - a) Jesus gave Peter commands to be a “shepherd” of future believers.
 - (1) Just as God calls us to be “shepherds” of future believers.
 - (2) “Shepherding” is not just being a pastor or a Bible teacher.
 - (a) It is being a good witness for Jesus.
 - (b) It is teaching your children about God.
 - (c) It is being a good witness at home and at work.

4. I mentioned in one of my early lessons that all Christians need to walk around with a big yellow construction sign on our backs and chest that says "Caution, work in progress".
 - a) We are all God's construction plan.
 - i) We often mess up that plan, usually because we're not following instructions.
 - ii) But when we mess up, God does not condemn us. He will probably bring the sins to mind to help us understand what we have done, but we are not condemned.
 - a) "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1, NIV)
 - iii) When we mess up, we need to be restored. That is what happens to Peter in this chapter.
 - iv) A big theme of Chapter 21 is restoration. One of the great promises of God is that He will restore all things.
 - a) "He (Jesus) must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago." (Acts 3:21a NIV)
5. With all that, let's go to Verse 1: Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way:
 - a) Afterward implies lapse of time
 - i) In Chapter 20, Jesus appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem.
 - ii) Now we are in the Galilee region. This is a 1-2 day journey away.
 - b) The "Sea of Tiberias" is the Roman name for the Sea of Galilee.
 - i) John uses the Roman name as this book is primarily for a non-Jewish audience.
6. Verse 2: Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. ³ "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.
 - a) In Matthew 28:10, Jesus appears to the disciples after the resurrection and tells the disciples to go to Galilee and *wait for Him*.
 - i) "Going fishing" here is an act of disobedience.
 - a) The results tell it all. They caught nothing.
 - ii) One of the most difficult things for Christians to learn is *patience*.
 - iii) God called the disciples to go to Galilee and *wait for Him*.
 - iv) Peter's statement to go fishing was a step back to his old way of life.
 - a) "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19 NIV)
 - b) There is a temptation, when you're not sure what God wants you to do, to step back into your former life.
 - c) God lets them, as He lets us do, only to remind us that once we fully commit ourselves to Christian service, our old life will catch "no fish".
 - (1) By the way, this is not a rebuke against fishing or any other occupation. God often calls people to stay in the profession that they were in prior to being a Christian. The lesson here is one of *obedience* to the will of God.

- b) For those who love the writer John's "double references", there are a bunch here:
 - i) John mentions it was "night".
 - a) Throughout the Gospel negative implications are usually referred to as darkness or night. Positive references are referred to as "light".
 - b) Notice when Jesus came to rescue them, it was "daybreak".
 - ii) Simon Peter is listed by his former, "formal" name. Jesus renamed him Peter. (Matthew 16:18), but since Peter is *not doing what he supposed to*, there is a mild rebuke here and Peter is described as of his "old" name. Jesus takes this one step further when He calls Peter "Simon, son of John" later in this chapter.
 - iii) The writer John usually refers to himself as "the one Jesus' loved. Since he was part of this ordeal, he only refers to himself here as "the sons of Zebedee". John was one of two sons of a father named Zebedee.
7. Verse 4: Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.
- a) The disciples were 100 yards from the shore and it was dawn. I suspect that from this distance and at that light, the disciples could not recognize Jesus.
8. Verse 5, Jesus speaking: He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered.
- a) It helps to get a good visual picture here. Imagine the disciples in the evening going out fishing. This isn't a bunch of guys with fishing poles. These are guys with large nets. They cast the nets, they pulled in the nets. They worked the sails looking for the right spots. By the dawn's light, they were physically exhausted and defeated. When Jesus asked if they caught any fish, the only word they could get out of their mouth was "No".
 - b) There's a classic Christian joke that says when the disciples admitted they caught nothing at fishing, it is the one true miracle of the Bible!
 - c) Notice what Jesus *did not* say to them?
 - i) "It's me Jesus, the one who's who are disobeying. What are you doing?"
 - ii) Hey, ex-apostles, do you realize how bad you are messing up right now?
 - iii) No, He calls them friends, (literally "children", or "dear ones".)
 - d) The application to us is, one day, God may ask us "Did you catch anything?"
 - i) Hopefully, you're answer *won't* be the same as the disciples!
9. Verse 6, Jesus continues: He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.
- a) "Whatever the reason for Jesus' suggestion, the disciples evidently felt that one more attempt at casting the net could be no more futile than their night-long efforts have been". (Expositor's Bible Encyclopedia)
 - b) Remember that John loves double references. Early in the ministry Jesus called a bunch of fisherman. He told the disciples that would make them "Fisher's of men".
 - i) The "net" is usually considered a reference to the Gospel being preached.
 - a) We'll talk more about "the net" later in this lesson.
 - c) I read a good quote about the "right side" of the boat I want to share:
 - i) "There is no need to seek symbolical meanings for the right and left side. The difference is not between right and left, but between working with and without Divine guidance." (Plummer)

- d) Remember that the difference between success and failure is simply obeying God's instructions.
 - i) Despite the fact the disciples were disobedient when they went fishing, God *used* this event to show the power of working *through* Jesus.
 - a) Jesus helped the disciples *where they were in their situation*, even when they were disobedient.
 - (1) Does this give us a license to *be* disobedient so God can "bail us out?" No! Look at all the pain & suffering the disciples went through on their own efforts.
 - (2) God is saying there is a better way through Him!
 - (3) "Success for disciples only a boat width away" (Jon Curson)
10. Verse 7: Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. ⁹ When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.
- a) Notice John changes his own self-reference from "The Sons of Zebedee" to "the disciple whom Jesus' loved" when John notices it is Jesus on the shore!
 - i) You know you are in God's will when you are pointing the way to Jesus!
 - b) I wondered this week why Peter *put on* his outer garment when he was about to jump in the water. Wouldn't you want to leave it off not to impede your swimming ability?
 - i) It can be implied from the original language that Peter was tucking up lower part of garment into upper part as to free his legs so he could swim.
 - c) "All night they were looking for fish, when the whole time, Jesus had it in had it ready to eat." Jon Curson
 - i) When you come back to the Lord, you find what you longed for all the time.
 - d) If I worked all night trying to catch fish, I would be starving by morning. Notice Jesus who knows *all* our needs (even the obvious ones!) had breakfast all prepared for them.
11. Verse 10: Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." ¹¹ Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.
- a) You may not know it by reading it, but this may be a miracle in itself.
 - i) If an avg. fish weighs 1 - 2 pounds, this net of fish weighed 150-300 pounds!
 - ii) Remember in Verse 8 the fish was so heavy the rest of the men simply towed in the fish while the net remained in the water.
 - iii) Peter was one strong man, but dragging a 150-300 pound net is an amazing accomplishment. How did he do it?
 - a) Jesus gave the command to bring some of the fish they caught.
 - b) What God *commands*, God *enables* us to do! Period.
 - b) There is a interesting comparison of two "net-full of fish" miracles in the Gospels:
 - a) When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. (Luke 5:6 NIV)
 - b) "It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn." (John 10:11, NIV)
 - c) Remember that these are separate events. The story in Luke's gospel takes place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. This takes place after the resurrection.
 - ii) So why was the "net" torn the first time and not the second time?
 - iii) Casting a net in fishing brings in fish. Jesus said he would make his disciples "fishers of men". The net, therefore, is simply a metaphor for methods of catching fish (or men). It is the preaching of the Gospel.

- iv) The consensus opinion among commentators is that the “torn” net in Matthew’s Gospel refers to evangelism. It is a common fact that not all who make commitments to being Christians stick it out.
 - a) This is why salvation depends upon *abiding* in Christ. It is not just making a one-time commitment and then forgetting about it the rest of your life.
 - v) The “untorn” net refers to those who *are* committed to Christ.
 - a) The good news is that the net you & I are in is not torn!
 - vi) God *cares* deeply for all of us who are part of the “153”. Of those *none* are lost.
 - a) This does not mean that only 153 people are saved? No, it simply means that there is a fixed number of Christians. Of those, God will lose none. If you are “fish #147”, God cares for you, wants to watch over you, and will *never* lose you.
 - c) We now come to the question of why, specifically, 153 fish?
 - i) There are books full of strange commentaries on the topic of “Why 153?”
 - ii) People have discussed all sorts of mathematical statistics regarding this number and what it means.
 - iii) There is a joke in among math statisticians that “if you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything”.
 - iv) Beware of this the next time somebody tells you the “hidden” meaning of “153” or “666” for that matter.
 - v) The one theory I was most *intrigued* by was E.W. Bullinger’s commentary in his book Numbers in Scripture, page 276.
 - a) He added up all the people who were “personally blessed” (miracles, blessings, etc.) in all 4 gospels and it added up to 153!)
 - (1) (Of course, I don’t understand why He didn’t include the 5,000 who were fed with the fish & loaves miracles!)
 - (2) Like all the other “153” theories, this one is interesting, but I don’t know what you do with that information.
 - b) The truth is 153 stands for the number of fish that they caught, and nothing else!
12. Verse 12: Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.
- a) I talked a little last week why none “dared” ask him if it was Jesus.
 - i) Possibilities include:
 - a) That Jesus still bears the scars of his crucifixion.
 - b) They were still not used to seeing anyone who was dead be alive!
 - b) I believe one of the reasons Jesus’ eats with the disciples *after* the resurrection is to assure them that Jesus is not a ghost.
 - i) People theorize that since one day we will be like Jesus in our resurrected bodies (1 Corinthians 13:12), we will still eat food.
 - c) This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead. It was technically his 7th appearance.
 - i) John meant 3rd time to *the disciples*.

13. Now comes Jesus' three questions to Peter, Verse 15: When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.
- a) This conversation is clearer if you know a little of the original Greek here.
 - i) There are 2 words for "love" used here in the original Greek language.
 - a) 'Agape' is love that gives for sake of giving, never expecting anything in return. It implies "to be totally given over to something". It is the strongest word the Greek language has for love.
 - b) 'Phileo' is a lower form of love, usually associated with brotherly love. It also implies "something for something", as opposed to the 'agape' reference of something *without* expecting anything in return.
 - c) Jesus uses the Greek word 'Agape' the first 2 times when He asks Peter "Do you 'love' me". The third time Jesus a lower-type choice of 'phileo'
 - d) Peter uses 'phileo' all 3 times in the answer to Jesus' question.
 - b) Jesus' responses to Peter's 3 questions are slightly different each time.
 - i) First time Jesus says: Feed (pasture) my lambs
 - a) This implies taking care of children and young adults.
 - (1) This verse implies the wonderful blessing of being a Sunday school teacher of children, as well as teaching your *own* children about Jesus!
 - ii) Second time Jesus says: Take care of (shepherd) my sheep
 - a) This implies the total guardianship a shepherd exercises over sheep.
 - (1) This implies all the social services we read about in the Bible. It includes helping the poor, the suffering, the elderly, etc.
 - iii) Third time Jesus says: Feed my sheep
 - iv) So what does "feed" mean?
 - a) A reference to the Word of God.
 - b) It is what I am doing right now. It also refers to regular Bible reading. It also refers a Sunday sermon. It also refers to Bible study classes.
 - (1) When you teach people Bible verses *and how it applies to their lives* you are "feeding lambs and sheep".
 - c) It is important to remember God does not want you to do every one of these functions all the time. Many Christians suffer from "burn-out" because they feel guilty if they say "no" to any type of Christian service. They are afraid God will be disappointed with them if they dare say "no".
 - i) Balance in life includes not doing so much as to burn yourself out, but not doing so little that you are ignoring what God calls you to do.
 - d) By the way, the responsibility of feeding the lambs and sheep is not just Peter's sole responsibility. Listen to what Peter himself says in one of his letters:
 - i) "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away". (1 Peter 5:2-4 NIV)

- e) Remember back in Chapter 20, Peter denied Jesus three times.
 - i) Three times in this section, Jesus asked Peter do you love me?
 - ii) So what is the main reason for this whole exchange?
 - a) To let Peter know the Lord loved him and not cast him out.
 - b) We are not cast out (i.e. lose our salvation) for messing up. We may end up suffering *on earth* for our mistakes, but we are not cast out.
 - c) “Jesus restores us by causing us to face squarely our point of failure, then challenging us to set our eyes on the work ahead” David Guzik
- f) In Verse 9, Jesus asks Peter do you love me “more than these?”
 - i) Was Jesus referring to the fish?
 - a) After all, Peter went back to fishing when He should have been waiting for Jesus to show up.
 - ii) Or Was Jesus referring to the other disciples? (i.e. Do you love me more than these other disciples do?)
 - a) The answer is we don’t know for sure. The point is Jesus is trying to get Peter to *think about* his actions, and it’s implication to his life.
 - (1) One thing God calls us to do is “meditate” on the Bible. (Joshua 1:8, et.al.). This simply means to “think about it”.
 - (2) God calls us to think about the stories in the Bible, and the implications to our lives.
 - iii) The second time Jesus asks Peter the question “Do you love me *more than these*, Jesus drops the “more than these” and just says, “Do you love me? Why?”
 - a) I think Jesus is now lowering Himself a little to Peter’s level.
 - b) The 3rd time Jesus asks the question, Jesus uses a different word for love ‘phileo’ (brotherly love), as opposed to ‘agape’ (fully committed), to lower himself further to Peter’s level.
 - c) God works with us that way.
 - (1) First he tries to bring us up to the level He we wants for us.
 - (2) If we’re unwilling, God comes down to the level we’re at to work with us there.
 - (3) I said in the beginning we are God’s “construction project”. As part of His love for us, God will not violate our free will. God wants wonderful things for us. He will only work on the level that we are willing to attain to ourselves.

14. Verse 18: I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

- a) The Gospel of John was written after Peter’s death.
 - i) “Eusebius, the church historian, tells us that when Peter went to Rome at the close of his life (by the way, he did not found the church at Rome at all; he went there much later), he was finally imprisoned, his hands were bound and he was led out to the place of execution, and there he was crucified. At his own request he was crucified upside down because he did not feel he was worthy to share the manner of his Lord's death”. Steadman

- b) Peter failed Jesus earlier. Jesus is now telling Peter by what method Peter will glorify God through martyrdom.
 - i) You can take comfort in the fact that God knows our future. This is the same God who loves us and wants the best for us.
 - a) For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV)
 - ii) Despite Peter's failures, God used him greatly for the benefit of the church.
 - iii) God uses "ordinary" people like you and me for his Glory.
 - a) This reminds me of one of my favorite Christian slogans:
 - (1) God is not interested in ability; God is interested in *availability!*
 - iv) God knows by what *method* you and Peter and I are going to die.
 - a) Despite how much Peter (and we) mess up, God still wants to use him in a great way to glorify God.
 - b) I brought up the question last week of "why are we here on earth?"
 - (1) Our purpose is simply to bring glory to God.
 - (a) Discovering *how* God wants to use us for His glory is one of the great joys a person can have in their lives!
 - (b) For many people throughout the history of the church, this has meant being a martyr.
 - (c) A martyr's death often leads to others becoming a Christian based on the testimony of the martyrdom.
 - (2) Often we don't understand the pain of God taking someone's life at an early age, but hopefully, someday we will.
 - (a) It is often as a lesson to teach others.
 - v) If you're asking why did Peter have to die this way, consider this question:
 - a) Are you willing to die for a lie? (*Pause and think about this one.*)
 - (1) Some people are willing to die for what they *believe* is the truth.
 - (2) But if you *knew for certain* that something was a lie, are you willing to be tortured and killed for that? I doubt anybody is.
 - (3) So if the Gospels were "fiction" as many people claim to be, why was Peter, and *most* of the disciples tortured and killed?
 - (a) It was for God's glory. It is another verification of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

15. Verse 20: Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?") ²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" ²² Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

- a) Verse 20 shows how Peter & John had a close relationship throughout Jesus' three-year time with them. They were part of an "inner-circle" of 3 people that includes Peter's brother Andrew. Even though they were close, I am speculating they still competed with each other. The Bible mentions that the disciples argued among themselves who was the greatest. (Mark 9:34). This point leads to my next conclusion:
- b) Peter reacted as I might have reacted. "Oh, I'm going to be martyred, huh? We'll what about that guy over there?"
 - i) Jesus response in Verse 22: "What is it to you!"
 - a) Or as I put it: "Peter, mind your own business!"
 - ii) The mistake we make as Christians is we get jealous of other's success.
 - a) Don't worry about what God called anybody else to do.
 - (1) Just focus on what God called *you* to do!

- iii) God does not reward us based on the *size* of our ministry.
 - a) God rewards us on our loyalty to what he called us to do!
 - c) God says to Peter two times (Verse 19 & 22) to “follow me”
 - i) The literal translation implies “Keep on following me”
 - ii) It is a continuous action.
 - iii) God works on us through out our entire lives.
- 16. Verse 23: Because of this, the rumor spread among the brothers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?
 - a) Jesus had promised John that he would live until Jesus returned. Notice Jesus used the word “if”, and not as a promise. John’s explanation of Jesus' announcement may be taken as evidence that the disciple was still living at the time this Gospel was written and that he was the source of its content. Obviously, if he had died early, the rumor would have had no credibility” (Expositor’s Bible Encyclopedia, modified for clarity).
 - b) Rumors were going around that the Second Coming of Jesus wouldn’t happen until before John died. John added these verses to put an end to this rumor.
 - c) The focus is still on Peter. To paraphrase these verses “Peter, mind your own business, I’ll deal about John. You focus on what I called you to do”.
- 17. Verse 24: This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.
 - a) In Verse 24, John goes from “I” to “We”. There were probably people who transcribed John’s notes and added this comment.
 - b) The Gospel of John was one of the last books of the Bible to be written.
 - i) John’s comment about “whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” implies to the letters and Gospels werer already in circulation.
 - ii) To paraphrase this verse, “You could write for years and years about Jesus’ ministry, but you could never fully comprehend what Jesus did.
 - a) This is why we *need* an eternity to be with God.
 - b) This is why God *gives* us an eternity to be with Him.
 - iii) There are libraries and libraries full of commentaries on the impact of Jesus’ ministry. There have been millions of sermons preached on the words of the Bible. Yet, it is still never enough to fully describe the impact of what Jesus did.
 - a) You can never fully summarize it.
 - iv) All you *can* do is ask God to show you the things He wants to show you *today* and act upon it. Abide in Jesus, and let Jesus abide in you! It is that continual action that helps us to grow in our faith and trust in Him.

18. Since this is the last lesson, some final thoughts on the Gospel of John:
- a) Remember that these lessons I wrote are not intended to be an all-inclusive commentary on the Gospel of John. There are volumes written about this book alone, let alone the whole Bible. There is simply too much to learn about any one book.
 - i) I pray each week
 - a) God, show me the things you want *me* to learn this week.
 - b) God, show me the things you want me to *share* with my readers.
 - c) For further study, there is a biography on the next page.
 - b) There is a saying that “The best way to learn the Bible is to teach it”.
 - i) If you are wondering why I take the time and trouble to prepare these lessons, is that it is for my *own* benefit as well as yours!
 - ii) I have a great love affair with the scriptures. I am convinced beyond any doubt that this is the word of God.
 - a) I love to share that passion with other people.
 - b) I love to show people how the Bible applies to their life and your life!
 - c) God’s word is truth, Jesus is truth, and Jesus is God!
 - iii) My hope is not so much you remember all these little details, as much as these lessons help strengthen your faith as a Christian.
 - a) Our salvation, growth and maturity as Christians all depend upon continually sticking close to Jesus.
 - b) Hopefully these lessons have helped you walk a little closer.
19. Let’s pray. Father, we thank you for all the wonderful lessons you have taught us this week, and throughout this entire study. May we continue to grow in you, trust and you, and commit our lives to serving you. We thank you for the Gospel of John, and the truth it teaches us about Jesus. Because of what Jesus did, we can not only have abundant life here on earth, but abundant life for eternity with you. It will take us a lifetime to comprehend these lessons, and through your love, you are supplying us that lifetime. May you continually bless our lives as we abide in your love. In Jesus wonderful name we pray, Amen!

Supplement: Bibliography

“If I have stood out among the crowd, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants”
(Source unknown)

Without prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all these commentaries are useless. My weekly prayer was for God to show me the things He wanted *me* to learn, and second, the lessons He wanted me to pass on in my writings. I have quoted many sources throughout these lessons. If any of these writers appeal to you, I invite you to read further commentaries as listed for further information. I have also quoted other sources not listed. These authors were quoted from the materials as listed below and taken from those sources.

First and foremost, the greatest commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. I mostly quote The New International Version (NIV), The New King James Version (NKJV), and the paraphrased-translation: The Living Bible (TLB). These are the English translations of which I am the most familiar.

Here are the commentaries I have referenced over the past 23 lessons, (in no particular order).

1. The Expositor's Bible Encyclopedia, Zondervan Publications, (via CD-ROM 1998 release). This is a multi-volume encyclopedia with notes on every verse of the Bible. (Available at Christian Bookstores.) Paperback books are published on individual Bible books from this source.
2. The Gospel of John, F.F. Bruce (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1983). (Available at larger Christian Bookstores.)
3. Tree of Life, Bible Commentary Journal -- The Gospel According to John. By Jon Curson. (Three Volumes) Tree of Life Publications, Jacksonville Oregon, 1997. (Available at Chapel Store Bookstores, which are the bookstores at larger Calvary Chapel churches.)
4. Commentary on the Gospel of John by Ray Steadman (48 messages from the Gospel of John in 1983-85 at Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California (available for free on the internet at <http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/john/index.html> or call (650) 494-3840.
5. Gospel of John by J. Vernon McGee. Nelson Publishing, 1982. This is available in book and computer software formats. The late Dr. McGee has written commentaries on every book of the Bible. He is still broadcast daily in 60 languages around the world on Christian Radio.
6. Audio Commentary on the Gospel of John by Chuck Missler, (available for free on the internet, via Real Audio at, or contact K-House Ministries 1-800-KHOUSE1. The web address is http://www.khouse.org/blueletter/audio/chuck_missler/audio_sub_menu.html
7. Commentary on the Gospel of John by Chuck Smith, (available for free on the internet, via Real Audio or text versions. The web address is <http://www.calvarychapel.com/library/smith-chuck/index.htm> or contact Calvary Chapel Ministries at 714-979-4422.
8. Commentary on the Gospel of John by David Guzik. (available for free on the internet, in text versions. The web address is <http://www.calvarychapel.com/simivalley/commentaries/>
9. The Life Application Bible, Zondervan Publishing (available at most Christian Bookstores in NIV, Living Bible and other translations).
10. Nelson's Quick Reference Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Commentary Warren Wiersbe, Nelson Publishing 1991. (Available at Christian Bookstores.)
11. Halley's Bible Handbook by Henry H. Halley Zondervan Publishing Revised edition, 1979 (Available at Christian Bookstores.)
12. When Critics Ask : A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties -- Norman L. Geisler, Thomas Howe; Baker Book House 1999 (Available at Christian Bookstores.)
13. Numbers in Scripture by E.W. Bullinger (Kregel Publications, 1967 Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1983). (Available at Christian Bookstores.)