

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN

“Everybody ought to know who Jesus is!” This book tells it! John sums up the purpose of his writing to show that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (John 20:30, 31). It is the central message of the Christian faith. It is needed by all—by the mature Christian, to keep him in touch with his Lord, as with an old friend; by the new Christian, to become better acquainted with his new-found Savior; and by the non-Christian, that he may make the soul-saving acquaintance with Christ.

GREAT PASSAGES

Great passages stand out like tall peaks in a mountain range, as one reads John. These you will cherish:

John 3:1-21 Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus; verse 16 is the “Golden Text.”

John 10:1-8 The Good Shepherd.

John 15:1-7 The Vine and the Branches.

John 14:1-6 The Many Mansions.

John 17:1-26 Christ’s Prayer for Us.

THE WRITER AND THE WRITING

John, the “Beloved Disciple,” brother of James and son of Zebedee, was one of the four fishermen first called to follow Jesus. He was the companion of Peter, both before and after the resurrection of Christ. In his old age he preached in Asia Minor, about the city of Ephesus, and there he wrote the Gospel, the three epistles of John, and the book of Revelation.

JOHN, AND THE OTHER GOSPELS

Matthew, Mark, and Luke had written their records of Jesus’ life nearly thirty years before John committed his message to writing. He knew of these other Gospels, and in his record he repeated only the most important things which they had written, especially the accounts of the crucifixion and resurrection. John wrote mostly about the teaching Jesus did in and around Jerusalem, whereas the others recorded principally the miracles and

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

ministry of Jesus in Galilee. The book of John is called the "Universal Gospel," being addressed to all men everywhere, while the others had particular nations in mind when they wrote.

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK

Its theme - Belief in Jesus as the Son of God.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1:1-18 | Introduction. |
| 1:19-4:54 | Early Manifestations of Jesus. |
| 5:1-12:50 | Fuller revelation: Growth of unbelief among the Jews. |
| 13:1-17:26 | Fuller revelation: Growth of faith among the disciples. |
| 18:1-19:42 | Climax of unbelief: His surrender and crucifixion. |
| 20:1-21:25 | Climax of faith: resurrection and proofs. |

Sermon Outlines Provided:

- "In the Beginning" (John 1:1-14; Gen. 1:1)
- "He Dwelt Among Us" (John 2:1-11)
- "Just Between the Two of Us" (John 3, 4)
- "When Messiah Comes" (John 4:25; 7:25-31)
- "The Judgment of Jesus" (John 8:1-11)
- "A Man Came Seeing" (John 9:1-12)
- "The World Is Gone After Him" (John 12:12-19)
- "Peace—What a Bequest" (John 14:27)
- "That Other Disciple" (John 20:1-10)

Other Sermon Topics Suggested:

- "What Do You Say of Yourself?" (John 1:19-28)
- "The Sign of Christ" (John 2:18-25)
- "That Nothing Be Lost" (John 6:1-14)
- "One Flock and One Shepherd" (John 10:1-21)
- "Shepherd or Hireling" (John 10:12-14)
- "One of You" (John 13:13-21)
- "The Finished Task" (John 17:1-10)
- "Keep Them From the Evil" (John 17:9-19)
- "On Seeing and Believing" (John 20:24-30)

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
IN THE BEGINNING
(John 1:1-14; Genesis 1:1)

INTRODUCTION —

- A. There are beginnings for all of us. For many this is a time of special beginnings.
 - 1. A new experience or a new year at college in new surroundings.
 - 2. A new business or a new home.
 - 3. For all, a new week, and a new day.
- B. Beginnings are important for the prospects that are before them and the possibilities that are in them.
(Maple sprouts in the lawn are only potentially the beginning of tall trees.)
- C. Learn from the beginning of all things.

I. GOD WAS IN THE BEGINNING.

- A. The writer gives by revelation what otherwise we guess and grope for.
 - 1. We are not left to speculate about “whatever gods may be.”
 - 2. Even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.
- B. The simple term, God, excludes the possibility of there being others.
 - 1. It is exclusively singular.
 - 2. It declares ultimate supremacy.
- C. He is personal, active, willing, evaluating.
- D. He is known by what He does.
So are you and I known by what we do.
- E. *Apply*—unless God is in our beginnings, and kept there, we are empty. —Do we need the warning? Yes, especially if we think we don’t.
“I can get along by myself.”
“I have already all the help I need.”

II. THE ACTIVITY OF GOD BROUGHT ABOUT THE BEGINNING.

- A. “Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.”

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

- B. He has the right to be heard concerning the things He has made:
 - 1. His Body the Temple.
 - 2. His Church, the bride.
 - 3. In business, honesty, dependability, service.
 - 4. In the home, unselfish devotion.
 - 5. In our studies: Reverence for God is the beginning of wisdom.

III. THERE IS OPPOSITION FROM THE BEGINNING.

- A. We surmise from Bible that Satan was early with God, but rebelled.
 - He was active in man's earliest experience.
- B. Adam turned to disobedience.
- C. "Jesus came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

IV. THERE IS GOD'S WAY OF CORRECTION THROUGH CHRIST.

- A. "To as many as received Him, gave He the power to become sons of God."
- B. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us."
- C. Hebrews 1:1.

CONCLUSION —

The beginnings of the world, the church, and our lives are established. Let us follow faithfully the God who authored them!

The beginning of a new life and a new day in Christ is available. Let us accept it!

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
HE DWELT AMONG US
(John 2:1-11)

INTRODUCTION —

- A. At the occasion of Missionary Roger Clark's death in the Belgian Congo (now Zaire) the natives spoke of their love for him. "He spoke our language," they said. He was one of the very few white men who had learned the language of the drums.
- B. Likewise John writes of Jesus, that He "dwelt among us" (John 1:14).
"We have not a high priest who is not touched with a feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. 4:15).

I. JESUS WAS INVITED.

- A. He was naturally included where life's current ran strongest. — With Him were the disciples whom He had recently called.
- B. The feast —
 - 1. Center of the whole community life for a week.
 - 2. Groom, garlanded with flowers. Bride veiled, and be-jeweled.
 - 3. Bridegroom goes to the home of the bride, when the feast starts — no set time.
 - 4. The gathering procession to the home of the bridegroom, where the feast goes on.
- C. Jesus' presence sanctifies the simplest and most natural incidents of life.
 - 1. His every contact with people left them better for receiving it — or worse for their rejection of it.
 - 2. He moves about the feast, enjoyed and enjoying, taking a guest's place.

II. THE WINE FAILED.

- 1. It was always the center of the feast — to have it fail was a disgrace.
- 2. "Grape-growing countries know its use as northern countries cannot."

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

3. Mary approaches Him, and makes known the fact—
“Lady, why approach me? I am not in charge.”
(He is never in charge until He is invited to be so.)

III. THE PROBLEM WAS REFERRED TO HIM.

- A. “Whatever He tells you to do, do it,” said Mary.
— He is now in charge.
- B. This the invitation of those who would preach Him—
not our way but His.
- C. Mary had learned that, whatever was done, obedience
to Him was a part of it.
- D. His command was to fill the six water jars, of nine gal-
lons each.
 1. It was done without question, apparently on Mary’s
authority.
 2. Perhaps even you first turned to Jesus because a re-
spected friend urged it. — Later you followed for His
own sake.

IV. THE WINE DIPPED OUT WAS BEST.

- A. The comment of the governor of the feast to the bride-
groom.
- B. God always provides the best—
 1. Manna, meal, oil, etc., in Old Testament.
 2. The Son Himself in the New Testament.

V. HE BECOMES THE SANCTIFIER OF ALL OF LIFE.

- A. Each nation claims Him, believing, as its own.
— So in art and literature, He is represented as a native
of the artist’s land.
- B. Each party finds in Him the reflection of its own char-
acteristics.
— One says, “Don’t you know that Jesus Christ was a
Dumb Dutchman?”

CONCLUSION — contrast between John Baptist, the recluse,
and Christ.

John forever the preacher, condemning our sins. Christ for-
ever the Teacher, leading us into His way, and saving us.

— He dwelt for a lifetime among us, that we might dwell for-
ever with Him.

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
JUST BETWEEN THE TWO OF US
(John 3, 4)

INTRODUCTION — The marvelous, fragile gift of human speech.

- A. To none of His creatures but man, has God given the powers of spoken language.
— How then shall it be used?
- B. The occasions of formal, public speeches are commonly approached carefully.
- C. Most of our talking, though, is informal and at least semi-private.
 - 1. Do we escape responsibility for what is said “between the two of us”?
 - 2. Much time is wasted on trivia, or worse than wasted on gossip.
- D. Look to Jesus for example in conversations “between the two of us.”
— John tells of His talks with Nicodemus and a Samaritan woman.

I. THE OCCASIONS WERE VERY DIFFERENT.

- A. One at night in Jerusalem, the other in daytime outside a Samaritan village.
— Yet Jesus’ occupation, His Father’s business, was the same.
- B. One evidently a formal interview, the other a chance meeting. — Yet the same basic truths dominated both conversations.
- C. One a man who was a ruler of the Jews; the other a woman of questionable repute even among the Samaritans. — Yet Jesus maintained the same attitude toward both.
- D. Nicodemus initiated the interview with a question; the woman responded with surprise to Jesus’ introductory request.
- E. The principles that cover these occasions can cover almost anything.

II. THE LORD MET BOTH IN MUCH THE SAME WAY.

- A. He respected each as a person.
 - 1. He was neither awed nor resentful in the presence of the ruler.
 - 2. He was neither disdainful nor condescending in the presence of the woman.
— She was amazed that He even spoke to her.
- B. He addressed each one at the level of that one's interest, understanding the need.
 - 1. To do so He perceived more than was evident on the surface. — In this we are limited in our following of His example.
 - 2. His awareness centered in the other person; He offered Himself to help. — In this we can follow Him more completely than we usually do.
 - 3. To each He gave His full attention and His best self.
- C. To each He taught things eternal, based on that one's own experience.
 - 1. Nicodemus had trouble with the idea of birth from above, but he would never forget the teaching.
 - 2. The woman had difficulty understanding "living water," but would not forget the teaching of the Teacher.
- D. To each He showed boldly and kindly that one's fault, error, and need.
 - 1. The ruler may have doubted that he needed much of anything.
 - 2. The woman may have doubted that her great needs could ever be met.
— In our following of His example we can present Jesus and His word; we cannot imitate His authority in judgment.
- E. To each He declared His Messiahship and Sonship to God.
 - 1. The Nicodemus conversation produced the "Golden Text of the Bible" (John 3:16).

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN

2. To the woman He said, "I that speak unto thee am he [Messiah]" (John 4:26).
- F. Both conversations brought important results.
1. The less likely prospect brought more immediate returns, in persuading the people of Sychar (John 4:39-42).
 2. Nicodemus identified himself at last as a follower of Jesus and assisted in His burial (John 19:38-42).

CONCLUSION —

"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36).

- A. Doesn't that put one under an awful strain, never able to cut loose and say what you want to?
1. To the nominal "Christian," seeking the appearance of religion while loving the world, yes!
 2. But not to the one of whom we can say, "His delight is in the law of the Lord."
- B. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34)—
even when it is just between the two of us.

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE
WHEN MESSIAH COMES
(John 4:25; 7:25-31)

INTRODUCTION —

- A. What grand things almost any of us will do, when . . .
 - 1. "When my ship comes in."
 - 2. "When I get things squared away."
 - 3. "When the right time comes."
- B. The Jews had great anticipation and some sense of obligation for — "When Messiah comes." Illustrated in two episodes in our text.
 - 1. John 7 tells of Jesus in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, facing opposition.
 - 2. John 4 tells of Jesus' conversation with a Samaritan woman beside Jacob's well.
 - 3. In both instances the Messiah was at hand; would they confess Him?
- C. The hearer of the Gospel probably has some expectation of Christ's (Messiah's) coming into his or her life. When? — The words of the text become a common expression.

I. EXPRESSION OF DISBELIEF (7:27-29)

- A. Faith is balked by preconceived ideas.
 - 1. The Jews assumed, without Scriptural warrant, that the Messiah would appear suddenly, mysteriously, as though falling from Heaven.
 - a. This lent force to Satan's temptation for Jesus to float down from the pinnacle of the temple.
 - b. Scripture identified Bethlehem as birthplace and Nazareth as dwelling (Matthew 2:5, 6, 23).
 - c. They refused to acknowledge potential grandeur in the known commonplace.
 - 2. Many hearers of the Gospel assume, without Scriptural warrant, that Christ's coming to them must be mysterious and spectacular.
 - a. Some insist on emotional seizures, visions, and "feelings."

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN

- b. Some insist that their lives must be cleaned up first.
- c. They refuse to acknowledge Christ's presence according to the Word.
- B. The Lord's reply fixed responsibility squarely on the hearer.
 - 1. The Jews knew the town He came from, but not the Father from whom He came.
 - 2. The present-day hearer needs to see the power of God, not in latter-day miracles, but in the supreme miracle of Christ.

II. EXPRESSION OF PROCRASTINATION (4:25)

- A. The Samaritan woman tried to dodge responsibility for thinking and doing.
 - 1. To her, worship centered in a place; Jesus said it centered in a Person.
 - 2. She was willing to postpone such topics to the conveniently indefinite future, "When Messiah comes."
- B. Hearers of the Gospel may also dodge and procrastinate.
 - 1. Many avoid the basic question, "What think ye of the Christ?"
 - 2. Many would delay commitment to a "more convenient season" (Acts 24:25).
 - 3. Many would wait for a great occasion, such as Easter, Christmas, "revival," or when Grandma is here. — You are asked, not to confess a great occasion, but a great Lord.
- C. The Lord's reply nailed the woman's responsibility to the here and now!
 - 1. "I that speak unto thee am He!"
 - 2. For us, "Now is the accepted time" (II Cor. 6:2).
 - 3. We do make a decision for this day, one way or the other.

III. EXPRESSION OF COMMITMENT (7:31)

- A. The believers accepted the convincing evidence.
 - 1. Their prejudices and questions were not all answered.

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

2. Yet they saw enough of Jesus' power to convince them He was Messiah.
 3. They acknowledged that no essential proof was still lacking.
 4. They passed over the circumstances of His coming, to the worth of His person.
- B. We are asked to confess Christ, rather than times or circumstances.
1. It is Christ in the life that is important, not the vision or feeling.
 2. As to occasions, the acceptance of Christ, not the calendar date, is what makes the occasion meaningful and memorable.
 - a. The coming of Christ made — and makes — Christmas!
 - b. The resurrection of Christ makes Easter.
 - c. The coming of Christ into my life makes the supreme occasion.
- C. The grandeur of Christ overrides all questions and uncertainties.
1. Compare Job 42:1-6. Job's questions were not answered, but he saw God, and that was enough.
 2. Our queries and curiosities about many things may remain, but we have seen Christ in the Gospel, dying for our sins and raised for our life eternal. That should be enough.

CONCLUSION —

When Christ comes to you — what essential element can that hour possess that is not available here and now?

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
THE JUDGMENT OF JESUS
(John 8:1-11)

INTRODUCTION —

Someone says that God denied to man the virtue of justice, and man chose another emotion, labeling it justice. He chose revenge for the masquerade.

They stand before us, the characters in this incident.

I. THE GUILTY SINNER.

- A. No doubt of her guilt — guilty both of sin and of getting caught.
- B. What about those who are not caught?
“Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance” (Psalm 90:8).
- C. There is the story of the preacher ministering to a condemned prisoner, who was the companion of his own early escapade, but could not run quite so fast as the one who escaped and became a minister.

II. THE GUILTY JUDGES.

- A. They had backing of the law of Moses; the law has no better thing to offer.
- B. “He that is without [the] sin among you, let him first cast stone at her.”
“I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5:28).
They seem to have had a morbid interest in this sin, and the apprehension.
Thou art inexcusable, O man,
whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things” (Rom. 2:1).
- C. “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant. To his own master he standeth or falleth” (Rom. 14:4).
- D. They departed, from the oldest to the youngest — The oldest had the greater sense of sin.

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

III. THE GUILTLESS JUDGE.

- A. Able to pass sentence without condemning Himself.
— But He refused to pass sentence.
- B. Able to read accurately the temptations of the sinner.
“Not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Heb. 4:15).
- C. Purpose of judgment is not destruction but reformation: God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
- D. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (II Cor. 5:19).
His act does not lightly regard sin—“lest a worse thing come unto thee” (John 5:14).
- E. This does not remove finality of last judgment, which is condemnation to the unrepentant.
(The jurist sentences the man he had rescued from an earlier accident. “Your savior then; your judge now.”)

IV. THE SINNER REMADE.

“No man, Lord [condemns me].”

- A. If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature.
(A man cannot be tried twice for the same crime.)
“Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified . . .” (I Cor. 6:11).
The crushing load of the past slips away.
- B. As we have stood in judgment as sinners, we may stand in God’s presence whole.
- C. “The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you” (Matt. 21:31).
Where were those who condemned her?

CONCLUSION —

“Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repenting” (Luke 15:7). Hence, “Joy to the world, the Lord is come” in judgment!

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
A MAN CAME SEEING
(John 9:1-12)

INTRODUCTION —

Two parts of one sermon "A Man Came Seeing"; "The Seer Came, a Man."

- A. The event took place rather late in Jesus' ministry.
 - 1. He was well known, so that His name meant something to the blind beggar.
 - 2. Pharisaic opposition to Him had crystalized.
 - B. He walked with His disciples in the Temple area on the Sabbath of the feast.
- I. A MAN.
- A. Member of a minority group—a beggar, because blind, had never seen.
 - 1. Knew only that others could do what he couldn't. (We all are members of various minority groups.)
 - 2. But in one thing he shared a universal status; he had a need that only God could meet!
 - B. What was he to himself?
 - 1. We know little of his self-esteem.
 - 2. He faced a hopeless existence.
 - C. What was he?
 - 1. The object of scorn; or pity, or academic interest.
 - 2. Apostles saw in him an interesting question: "Who sinned, . . . that he should be born blind?"
 - a. The question thoroughly in Jewish tradition; suffering considered a punishment; judgment inherited; sin in earlier life or prenatally.
 - b. We are not so foolish; or are we?
One sin, committed before birth, is regularly met with death penalty: the sin of being conceived by a mother who doesn't want you! Abortion. This blind beggar at least was born!
 - D. What was he to Jesus? — "*He saw.*"
 - 1. The man was an object of God's love, to be applied.
 - 2. Others analyze the problem; He corrects it.
 - 3. Others might diagnose; He would heal!

II. CAME.

- A. The coming involved work, even on the Sabbath: An idea rejected and opposed.
- B. He came to Jesus' attention, and under His care.
— This is the only way of salvation, and often the work of others.
- C. Jesus worked!
 - 1. The symbolic anointing of the blind eyes was outlawed as a sabbath activity by Jewish tradition.
 - 2. "I must work the work of Him that sent me."
What did this take out of Jesus? "Virtue is gone out" (Luke 8:46).
(Ministers feel drained after a day of counseling.)
- D. The man worked.
 - 1. The pool of Siloam, the meaning is "sent"—"The sent One sends you."
 - 2. A half mile or more, from the Temple area, down along the Kidron Valley, through the old city of David, to the rock-hewn pool to which Hezekiah had brought water from Gihon.
 - 3. Here was participation in the act of God, but it wasn't easy for the man.

III. SEEING.

- A. A totally new experience, opening up areas of life not known or imagined!
"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard . . ." (I Cor. 2:9).
- B. A new man, different enough in appearance that neighbors weren't sure of his identity.
- C. He didn't see it all yet, and it didn't bother him.
"How did the healing take place?" He *did* and said; "I did"; "I see"! "Where is He?" "I don't know!"
- D. There are unexplained mysteries in such as baptism and Lord's Supper.
How is Jesus present at the table, here and in Japan, Manila, Adelaide?

CONCLUSION —

Even the unseeing have the right to life! — In Christ!

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
THE WORLD IS GONE AFTER HIM
(John 12:12-19)

INTRODUCTION — The setting, as might be viewed by a stranger.

- A. Spring Sunday on Mt. Olivet.
- B. The strange procession shouting its way to Jerusalem.
- C. Contrast with the processions of conquering monarchs.

I. ENEMIES.

A group by the way, and one says, "See how ye prevail nothing." Ask him questions:

- A. Are you His friend that you say, "Ye prevail nothing"?
No, just human.
 - B. Why are you opposed to Him?
 - 1. We were leaders, and He made us a laughingstock:
 - a. Respected for piety; He calls us hypocrites, and prefers sinners.
 - b. Admired for wisdom; He makes fools of us.
 - c. Ruled the people; and He neither submits nor lets others submit.
 - C. What is the meaning of this display?
 - 1. The thing most provoking—
 - a. A public acceptance of glory.
 - b. A proclamation of Messiahship.
"Thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9).
 - c. We even urged Him to silence them, but He said that truth came from the mouth of babes.
 - 2. The thing which gives occasion for His destruction — His presumption becomes a weapon with Caesar.
 - D. What will you do about it?
 - 1. Use His proclamation for His destruction.
 - 2. Use the same mob to secure His downfall.
- Apply* — Are His enemies our friends?

II. THE MULTITUDE.

—Visitors, many from Galilee, to the feast.

A. Why do you shout His praises?

1. He is the Prophet of Nazareth, in our own Galilee (so answered to citizens).
2. He did many wonderful works in Galilee.
3. He recently raised Lazarus from the dead.
4. It is the feast time, and occasion to honor great men.

B. What is the meaning of this particular occasion?

1. Some say He is the Messiah.
2. It is a possibility to exult over.

C. What will you do about it?

1. We will shout with the people, and be glad.
2. We will rejoice in His popularity.
3. (This group, loudest to acclaim, were first to desert.)

- Apply*
1. The world goes after Him at Easter—what does it mean? Where will they be next week?
 2. His weaker disciples join the multitude, and for like reasons.

III. DISCIPLES.

A. Why are you in this crowd?

We are always with Him, wherever He is.

B. What means this occasion?

1. We are not sure; it is different from any other.
2. We rejoice to do Him honor at any time.

C. What will you do about it?

1. We will continue to follow and to learn.
2. We will remember this occasion for future understanding.

IV. AND CONCLUSION —

Christ alone the complete master of the occasion, and knows its meaning.

A. Proclamation of Messiahship, for all time to come.

B. Teaches the nature of Messiah's Kingdom; humility; voluntary character,

C. Dedication of the Passover Lamb.

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
PEACE — WHAT A BEQUEST!
(John 14:27)

INTRODUCTION —

See the stark contrast between Christ's conversation in the Upper Room and the labored pronouncement of a cease-fire in any modern warfare. It is only because we have faith in the one that we can see any hope in the other.

Peace — what is it?

Shalom (Hebrew) — “completeness, peace, wholeness.” The peaceful person is all there! He has it all together.

Eirene (Greek) — Peace, unity, concord — “Of the two, one person, so making peace.”

I. CHRIST'S PEACE IS PERSONAL.

A. It is as personal as Dad's leaving you his watch.

B. The whole conversation is “I” and “you.”

C. It is the conveyance of a gift from Him who has it to the person who needs it.

II. IT IS A BEQUEST, “Peace I leave with you.”

A. Compare the sending of the Holy Spirit—If I do not go He cannot come.

B. It is purchased by the same conditions—Christ's departure in death.

—We can't have peace without His sacrifice!

C. “A testament is of none effect without the death of the testator” (Heb. 9:17).

III. NO ONE CAN GIVE WHAT HE DOESN'T HAVE.

“My peace I give unto you.”

A. So Jesus at the conclusion of a tense week, filled with controversy, was at peace.

B. The apostles had been wrangling about who'd be captain of the team—He quietly washed the feet of them all.

C. He announced that one of His own would betray Him, and told Judas so in such a way that none of the others caught on.

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

D. Later that night—“Pilate before Christ.”

1. Pilate thought He didn't know what was going on.
2. Had He been smoking pot? Was His mind “way off in some ethereal meditation”?
3. No! The Lord's reply showed Him keenly alert to all that was going on: “You would have no power at all if it hadn't been given you by someone else” (cf. John 19:10, 11).

E. Jesus refused the pain-killing drug on the cross. His peace was His own!

IV. “NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH.”

A. The world can provide an uneasy cessation of hostility, and perhaps make it stick.

(Compare Sheriff Andy Taylor's effort to quiet a wrangling pair by making them say sweet things to each other. They became unbearable to everybody.)

B. Personally, the world can give the temporary peace of satiated appetite—

“Soul, take thine ease—thou hast much goods laid up for many days” (Luke 12:19). (He would have been hungry again tomorrow.)

C. The world offers the killing of desire through drugs, or meditation, etc.

These are now popular in a world hungry for peace—
—but not with Jesus.

V. LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED—Believe!

Believe in God — His Word and His reign beyond the world.

Believe also in Me — “I have overcome the world.”

Overcame time, space, sin, temptation — “I go to prepare a place for you.”

“I will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:1-3).

CONCLUSION —

We receive His peace now; we share His triumph forever. Arise—let us go hence—to Gethsemane—trials—crucifixion—resurrection—glory!

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN
THAT OTHER DISCIPLE
(John 20:1-10)

INTRODUCTION —

There is much in the story to encourage one to identify with that unnamed "other disciple." He is not the headliner in the story, but the one through whose eyes we behold the scene, and through whose words we hear of it.

- A. It is elsewhere established to be John, the apostle—someone special.
(In the eyes of self and of God, each of us is someone special.) John, the inner circle—closest to Jesus at the Supper, Gethsemane, Calvary.
- B. Willing to claim special prerogatives (Matt. 20:20); asks for place at the right hand of Christ in the kingdom. "*Boanerges*"—Willing to bring down fire on a Samaritan village (Luke 9:51ff.). Forbade one to cast out demons in the name of Christ—"followed not with us" (Luke 9:49).
- C. But here he steps back into the common place—He was not first to see the risen Lord. He comes near to taking his place with us.
- D. Fulfilled the admonition, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

I. HEARS THE WORD OF THE RESURRECTION
FROM ANOTHER.

- A. Apparently at his own lodging in Jerusalem.
- B. The words of the women.
"They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where thy have laid him." (Apparently the definite word of the resurrection came later.)

But see Luke 24:11: "And their words seemed to them [Peter and John] as idle tales, and they believed them not."

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

- C. But much concerning Jesus seemed at first incredible.
(Experience is in slow motion; and events of years pass in review.)

See: The event of Luke 5:1-11, and the call to be a fisher of men.

The transfiguration, and "Hear ye him."

The manifold miracles—"I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25).

- D. What are you prepared to hear? Only what is already familiar? Then you'll not "Learn of me" — for He is full of surprises.

II. *COMES TO THE EMPTY TOMB.*

- A. Response a little like that of Thomas later: "Except I see . . ."

B. He came to learn, to observe, and to share.

- C. He was willing to be involved.

1. It could be dangerous—safer places were far away.

2. Let someone else stick his neck out first.

- D. But John outran Peter (he couldn't outtalk him), and came first to the tomb.

III. *OBSERVES AND SHARES THE OBSERVATION IN VIVID DETAIL.*

- A. The open tomb, with stone removed; the soldier guards perhaps by now gone.

B. Leans down and looks inside, seeing the grave wrappings lying empty.

- C. Then after Peter enters the tomb, John goes in too.
— sees the head kerchief, folded by itself.

- D. Not the blase attitude of the lad who had "seen a circus already," nor the unimpressed attitude of the one who said, "I was there, but I don't remember anything."

IV. *BELIEVES.*

- A. It had to be resurrection; that tomb was not robbed!

B. Then He had to be Messiah—"My Lord and my God!"

PREACHING THROUGH JOHN

- C. He believed now what he had been told before:
"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day (Matt. 16:21).
- D. But John is the one who recorded Jesus' words to Thomas: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

V. *DECLARES.*

(Read John 20:30, 31; 21:24.)

- A. To the other disciples who were not present (Thomas later).
- B. To Jerusalem: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19, 20).

"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 4:33).

- C. To Ephesus, and to the world.

Rev. 1 — Receives message from the risen Lord.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (1:10).

CONCLUSION —

There is place in this program of faith and declaration for still another disciple—you!

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God . . ." (I Thess. 4:16).

"Even so come, Lord Jesus."

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE

QUESTIONS OVER ACTS

1. Who was chosen to replace Judas as an apostle? (1:26)
2. The early church continued steadfastly in what four things according to Acts 2:42?
3. What Old Testament person predicted God would raise up a prophet like unto himself? (3:22)
4. Who said, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard"? (4:19, 20)
5. What did Peter say was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira? (5:3)
6. The disciples were to choose seven men to serve tables so the apostles could devote themselves to what two things? (6:4)
7. What were Stephen's last words when he was stoned to death? (7:60)
8. What did Philip preach to the Ethiopian treasurer? (8:35)
9. After Saul's conversion what did he preach in the synagogues in Damascus? (9:20)
10. Who was Cornelius? (10:1, 2)
11. Where were the disciples first called Christians? (11:26)
12. In whose house did the disciples meet in prayer for Peter when he was in prison? (12:12)
13. Why did Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles? (13:46)
14. Why did Paul not want to take Mark on his second journey? (15:38)
15. What co-worker did Paul enlist at Lystra? (16:1)
16. What was Paul's trade? (18:3)
17. On what day did Paul preach and break bread with the church at Troas? (20:7)
18. When Paul started following Jesus what did Ananias tell him to do? (22:16)
19. Paul preached to Felix about what three things? (24:25)
20. What strange thing happened to Paul when he was shipwrecked on the island of Malta? (28:3)