Session 6 John’s Loyalty and Jesus’ Early Ministry (Jn. 1:19-4:42)

1. overview of John 1-4
   1. ***Review***: In Luke 3, we see the beginning of John’s ministry (summer AD 26) and that he baptized Jesus (autumn AD 26), followed by Jesus’ temptation (Lk. 4:1-13).

*Here in session six we are looking at John’s loyalty to Jesus as well as the early ministry of both John and Jesus. We are looking at John 1-4.*

*Just a quick review here. In the last session, we looked at the time when Jesus was baptized. In John’s early beginning, he was preaching by himself. Jesus in the fullness of time came to be baptized. The heavens opened, and the Spirit came on Jesus. John saw it with his eyes. It was like the shekinah glory rested on Jesus in a dove-like way, but it was the glory of God and not so much a physical dove. So this glory came upon Him, and the audible voice of God declared, “This is My Son.” John witnessed all of this.*

*After Jesus was baptized, from there Jesus went for six weeks—forty days—into the wilderness to be tempted. So now we are picking up the storyline here. John is still baptizing, and he is there at the river Jordan. Jesus is coming out of the forty-day fast, so He is a bit skinny. He comes walking back. John has not seen Him for six or eight weeks. Then He comes on the scene again.*

*John says, “That is the Man that I saw two months ago, before He went into the wilderness for that long fast. That is the guy I have been talking about right there. There He is!” Because in that eight-week period—approximately eight weeks, the six weeks probably plus a little bit of extra time—John has been telling everyone, “He is here! The Man is here! I saw Him! I witnessed it with my eyes! I saw the glory!”*

*Then one day John looks up and that Man is walking out of the wilderness. Again, after forty days on a water fast He is a little bit thinner than normal. John says, “That is the Man I have been talking about.”*

* 1. ***Overview of John 1-4***: The apostle John describes how Jesus went to Perea (1:28), Cana (2:1), Capernaum (2:12); Jerusalem (2:13), Judea (3:22), and Samaria (4:4). Only John gives a record of Jesus’ early ministry in Judea (Jn. 2-4). The Synoptic writers began their narratives with Jesus’ ministry in Galilee without mentioning His early ministry in Judea.

*I want just to give kind of an overview of these four chapters because I like to see where the thing is going in the story. I can get more details in a story once I get the whole picture. So it starts off as John describes how Jesus went to Perea. In the New Testament Perea is called “the region beyond the Jordan.” The region beyond the Jordan only means east of the Jordan. Most of Jesus’ story and ministry takes place west of the Jordan in that little piece of land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Every now and then He went on the other side of the Jordan which was not very far at all, and that is called the region beyond the Jordan or east of the Jordan or the region of Perea.*

* + 1. Jesus’ first sign was at the wedding in Cana (2:1-11), then He cleansed the temple (2:13-22), then had a conversation with Nicodemus, (3:1-21) and with the Samaritan woman (4:1-42).

*Then from there, He goes up north to Cana in Galilee. That is about seventy, eighty miles depending on what part of Perea that you are in. Then He goes to Capernaum. Then He comes back down to Jerusalem, and that is when He really makes a national impact and a lot of things are stirred up. A lot of people get excited and a lot of controversy gets started when He goes into Jerusalem at that time.*

*Now the point I want you to know about this part—John 1-4—is that the other gospels, the synoptic gospels, do not talk about this early ministry of Jesus. John is the only one who describes what happened in John 1-4. The other gospels pick up His ministry after this is over. So if you want to get the early storyline of Jesus’ ministry, you have to start in John 1-4, which is where we are tonight.*

*Again, a snapshot of tonight’s session: He meets John. John declares who He is. Jesus meets or has a connection with five of His future disciples. This is His first connection with them. He is not calling them yet, but He is knowing them and connecting with them and conversing with them.*

*Then He goes to a wedding in Cana in Galilee, which is up north. Then He comes back down to Jerusalem, cleanses the temple, and does a lot of miracles. Then He talks to Nicodemus, one of the top leaders in the religious institution. Then He talks to the Samaritan women, though the Pharisees considered the Samaritans kind of “the enemy” in the height of their hostility towards the Samaritans.*

*So Jesus goes from the most intense religious leadership to the Samaritans whom the Jews did not like and in particular speaks with a woman who seemingly had moral issues. We see Jesus approach the five young men that He connects with, then what He does at the wedding, and then what He says with Nicodemus and this woman in Samaria. It is quite a glorious insight into His heart when we see the story put together and we see how He feels, responds, and acts in each of those stories.*

* + 1. Five disciples were referred to in these early days (1:35-51)—Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathaniel and one unnamed – it is commonly accepted this was John.

1. John the Baptist declared Jesus TO BE the lamb of God (Jn. 1:19-28)
   1. A deputation of priests and Levites were sent from Jerusalem to ask John about his ministry in Perea (Jn. 1:19-28). John identified Jesus as the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29-34). The Pharisees were looking for a king who would deliver them from Roman oppression, not for a spiritual leader.

26John answered them, saying, “…there stands One among you whom you do not know.  
27It is He… whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.” 28These things were done in Bethabara [Bethany] beyond the Jordan…29The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world...” (Jn. 1:26-29)

*Jesus went in the wilderness, out in the desert, for six weeks—forty days—about six weeks. So maybe add another week or two before He got back to John.*

*John was still at the river, preaching. John 1:26, He has been preaching now probably for the whole eight-week period, “There stands one among you”—meaning He is here, He is in the land, He is among us somewhere, but I do not know where. He is out in the wilderness somewhere. He did not let me go with Him. He said, “but He is among us.”*

*Then he said, “You do not know who He is. You will not be able to figure out who He is just by the natural eye.” Why? Because John, in verse 33, is going to tell us in a minute, “I did not know who He was until the Spirit came on Him.” He went on, as it were, “But I want you to know He is going to surprise you. He is amazing beyond anything you could imagine.”*

*Verse 27, “I am not even worthy to tie the strap of His sandals” or His shoes. “I am not worthy; that is how amazing He is. You will not get it when you see Him.” These people and these leaders are not really very impressed with John, kind of a wild man out in the wilderness.*

* 1. ***Beyond the Jordan***: This refers to the east side of the Jordan (in Perea). The city of Bethabara is also translated as Bethany (NIV and ESV); it was on the east side of the Jordan a few miles from Jericho. It is not the same Bethany where Lazarus was raised, near Jerusalem, west of the Jordan.

*Verse 28, “Now these things were done in Bethany beyond the Jordan.” Most translations say Bethany. Again beyond the Jordan means on the other side, the east side. There are two Bethanys. There is the Bethany we know about where Mary of Bethany lived. Lazarus was raised from the dead in Bethany; that is on the west side of the Jordan. This is another Bethany. All they are really saying is that he is on the other side of the Jordan. He is basically out of the reach of most of the Jerusalem leadership. So they send a delegation to him because the numbers were really increasing that were following John. The religious institution is getting more and more nervous because he is making stronger statements to bigger crowds. It is causing disruption in the nation. The nation is getting the truth, and it is now challenging the Jerusalem leadership. “You know, you guys are not really saying the truth. There is this other guy telling us the truth.” So this delegation comes to meet with John, this group from the Sanhedrin from Jerusalem.*

*Now in verse 29, I want you to notice this phrase, “the next day,” because throughout John 1 there are four different times where it says “the next day” and “the following day.” John never does that except for right in the beginning here in John 1. Throughout the rest of the Gospel he does not talk about “the next day…the next day.” This is very unique and very intentional.*

*He is describing a seven-day period. He says that John preached, the next day John identified Jesus, the day after that Jesus met Andrew and John the disciple—they became apostles later—and the next day after that Philip and Nathaniel come on the scene. Then a couple days later He is at the wedding. So it is a seven-day period. I have it all laid out for you; it is pretty easy to follow.*

*I think John does this because I believe he is intentionally pointing back to the seven days of Genesis 1. The beginning of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth is not just a creation, though He is the God who created in Genesis 1, but this is a whole new order, it is a whole new realm. So I believe John is intentional about laying out that seven-day cycle there. I just want you to pay attention to that as you are reading through this.*

*Verse 29, “The next day,” again this is the second day of that seven-day period when John saw Jesus, who again was coming out of the wilderness, He has been fasting forty days, so He was pretty thin. John never forgot His face because they were related and their families knew each other, but John had been away for a long time. His parents were elderly, and they had died. He has been with a company out in the wilderness. There are several different theories about who he was with, but it was not a normal family upbringing. So he might have seen Jesus a few times in their youth, but it is not like he had grown up with Him and was really familiar. He said, “You know, I am not sure I will recognize Him.”*

*The Father could have said, “Do not worry, John. I am going to make it really clear. I am going to make it really clear which one He is, though you have not seen Him for years.”*

*John looks up, verse 29, and sees the Man he saw six or eight weeks ago, before that long fast. He was walking towards John. I imagine Jesus had a big smile, like, “I was anointed. I got through the temptation. It is over, and I am ready. There he is: John, My faithful forerunner.” I could just imagine the light in their eyes as they encountered each other, because, though John had spent his whole life preparing to introduce this Man, they were only together a very few times. Once John knew Jesus was in His place and the nation was beginning to understand Him, John was delighted.*

*So for these few times that they come together, I like to really stare at them. I can just imagine the gladness and the brightness of their countenance when those two are together, those few times in their life in their adulthood they actually got to be together.*

* 1. ***Lamb of God***: The One who died for our sins as a lamb (Isa. 53:7; cf. Gen. 22:8-14; Ex. 12:3-17; Isa. 53:12; 1 Pet. 1:19). This title joins together the truths about Jesus’ purity, gentleness, and submission to God as the substitutionary atonement as the Passover lamb (Ex. 12: 21-27).

*John makes this new statement. It is a new term related to a person, “the Lamb of God.” Now there was the lamb that God had appointed in the Old Testament for the sacrifice. The high priest would choose the lamb on the day of atonement. This is a Man as “the Lamb of God,” and this phrase had never been associated with a Man. This is the first time. Of course John was the one who was entrusted with announcing that. The idea that we are familiar with—that He takes away the sins of the world—was a new idea then. Now the reason that was so new was that Israel was looking for a Messiah to take away the oppression of Rome. They were not looking for a spiritual reformer. They were looking for a political reformer. They were looking for a powerful King more anointed than David. They did not want a guy talking about things like get your heart right, deal with sin, repent of lust, get your identity in God. Like, “Okay, okay, okay! That is great. Let’s get on to the real stuff.”*

*John the Baptist was saying that the Messiah was coming first to deal with the issues of the heart. That is primary on His mind first. Even in our own lives we want the outward things, and we get some of the outward things, but the Lord is far more focused as the Lamb of God to apply not just the forgiveness of our sin but that transforming reality.*

*That is how He was introduced in human history: the One who removes sin, the One who cleanses, the One who helps, the One who focuses on the heart getting free, not just the outward life getting stronger and better and the nation getting corrected and restored. Those things happen here and there, and they will happen in fullness when the Lord returns in the ultimate sense. This is a pretty significant statement: that the Messiah is coming first to deal with the issues of the heart.*

*Even as believers we are like, “Yeah, we know, but what about the money? What about my ministry? What about my favor? What about…? Yeah, I know the heart. I know, Lord. I get all of that, but what about…?”*

*He would say, “No, I am first the Lamb of God. That is how I was presented by the Father to the human race. That is what I am talking to you about first: about your heart being liberated and growing in love all of your days.*

* 1. Notice three ideas repeated in three verses (Jn. 1:15, 27, 30)—*He that comes after me* (in the time of his birth and ministry), *He is preferred before me*—Jesus’ supremacy over him (Mt. 3:11), and   
     *He was before me* (1:30)— Jesus’ pre-existenceas the uncreated God with the Father. The high point of John the Baptist’s testimony about Jesus is that He is the Son of God (1:34).

30“This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’” … 32John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33I did not know Him, but He [the Father] who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” (Jn. 1:30-34)

*In verse 30 John says, “This is He.” This is the one. Now verse 30 has three really key phrases in it. As a matter of fact, John had repeated these three phrases three different times, and he put them all together each time. This is the most concise summary of the Lamb of God. There is a mountain of ideas behind each one of these phrases, and I do not want you to miss them, because the great forerunner is introducing Him as the Lamb of God who liberates from sin, deals with sin, and cleanses from sin. He says that you have to know who He is so you pay more attention to Him.*

*It says in verse 30 first that “He comes after me.” Second, “He is preferred before me;” He has a higher status than I. Third, “He was before me.” Now those are very simple phrases, but the implications are quite significant. John is saying, “That is the guy who came after me. His ministry comes after mine; I am on the scene first ministry-wise. I was born before Him, and the angel visited my father before the angel visited His mother. So I was first, and my ministry was established first. Do not be sidetracked by what He is telling the people, because I am phasing out. Just because I am first does not mean that you understand the storyline of God.”*

*Number two, “He is preferred before me. He has a status and He has a supremacy far beyond anything that I have.”*

*Thirdly, “Though He was born after me, He existed before me.”*

*They are looking at him saying, “Are you giving us a riddle right now? What do you mean is He before you and after you?”*

*“He was before me. He is the preexistent, eternal God, the uncreated God. That is why He is above me and above everyone, above everything.”*

*So, in verse 32, John bore witness saying, basically, “I am telling you eight weeks ago I saw the Spirit come on this guy. I have been saying it ever since I saw Jesus just before He went in the wilderness. I have been saying this truth: He is the Man I saw the Spirit rest on.”*

*Again, I do not think it was a physical dove, like some folks think. I think it was the glory of God in a dove-like way coming down. John and Jesus saw it like, you know, Moses saw the glory of God in the burning bush or how they saw the glory of God in the temple of Solomon. I do not know what it looked like, but a tremendous manifestation of the glory of God and the audible voice of God declared over Jesus, and the glory remained on Him. John said this a couple times, “He remained on Him.” Jesus is not like the Old Testament prophets or kings where the glory would come on them, but nobody saw it with their eyes. They saw an anointing of power for a deed, and then the anointing would lift. He says about Jesus, “He remained on Him.” He says, as it were, “I saw the glory! It stayed on Him, and He went into the wilderness with the glory on Him. and the glory is on Him right now.”*

*Then he goes on verse 33, “I did not know Him.” So back in verse 26, he said, “You guys did not know Him.” Now he is saying, “I am not putting you down; I did not know Him either.” Because, if you looked at Him by the natural eye, you never would have guessed that He was the One, which tells us a whole lot about what God is like. He went on, “The Father who sent me to baptize”—because it was the Father who sent John to baptize—“He told me. He said, ‘John, when you see the glory on a Man, and it remains on Him, not like David upon whom the anointing came and went, not like Elijah where it came and went, but the glory stays on Him permanently in His humanity, that is the Man.” There had never been a man like that before.*

*In verse 34 John says, “I testify He is God.” When he said, “He is the Son of God,” in the Jewish mindset that meant He is God.*

*That is, whenever Jesus said, “I am the Son of God,” the leaders of Israel, the Pharisees, knew He was declaring Himself to be God.*

*So when John said this startling statement, the leaders of Israel who were listening to him did not like this. They wondered, “What do you mean, He is after you, before you, higher than you, that He is God? That the anointing is on Him far beyond David. What are you talking about? Who is this guy?”*

*You know, most of the apostles did not really grasp Jesus was God until after the resurrection. He told them a couple of times in various ways. They kind of went, “Yeah.” But when He died they said, “It is over!”*

*Jesus said, “No, I really am God.” The apostles did not even get it. Therefore, this is the high point of John’s life right here and his witness, when he says, “This Man is fully man, but I am telling you He is more; He is God.” For a man to call another man or a human being “God,” that is a pretty intense declaration to say to the leaders of Jerusalem and the Sanhedrin who hate that statement, who were very troubled by that statement. That is heresy on steroids as far they are concerned.*

* 1. John’s witness and the first disciples (Jn. 1:35-42). The transition from John to Jesus.

35Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. 36And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” 37The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38Then Jesus turned…said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi… where are You staying?” 39…they came…and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). 40One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41He first found his own brother Simon [Peter] and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” …42he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, a Stone). (Jn. 1:35-42)

*In verse 35, John writes, “Again the next day.” John the apostle is telling you, “Hey, I am giving you a seven-day cycle here. Pay attention.” So verse 35 is talking about the third day in this seven-day week.*

* + 1. ***Two disciples***: Andrew and John (most consider the unnamed disciple to be John)

*John and two of his main disciples are talking. We find later it is Andrew and an unnamed disciple who almost all the scholars agree is John, the man writing the gospel of John. It is him, because John refers to himself a number of times in the gospel, but he never says his name. He says things like, “the disciple God loves.” He says, “the disciple who put his head on the Lord’s breast.” He says here, “the disciple who was with Andrew.” It seems almost clear he is talking about himself.*

*In verse 36, they are looking at Jesus as He walked along. John the Baptist now says to his main guys and a few others, “That is the Lamb of God. The one that I have been talking about for the last eight weeks, the one that I told you the anointing came on and you guys did not see it, that is the Man right there. Go follow Him.”*

*Then in verse 37, the two disciples—again John and Andrew—heard John speak. They said as it were, “Okay, if the idea is for you to get us ready to receive Him, then okay we will do it.”*

*John answered, “Go, follow Him now.” So, in verse 38, they are following after Jesus. Of course, Jesus knows the whole story. He turns around and says, “You guys are following hard after Me. You are obviously intent on talking to Me. What is it that you want?”*

*Now Jesus already knows what they want. Jesus is wanting them to tell Him—and this is even a part of the way He leads us—He is really saying to them, “I want you to put in words, even for yourself, what you are after.” What are you after? I mean that is one of the great questions to ask ourselves even now as we seek the Lord.*

*The answer they give is basically, “We want to be with You.” For many believers, the reason they are following the Lord is not really because they want to be with Him. That is not really it. They want their life better. Guys like me want their life better. They want to go to heaven, guys like me. There is a lot of things we want, but there is something Jesus was teasing out of them. He wanted them to want Him higher than everything else.*

*They looked at Him and they asked, “Where are You staying?” Of course, the obvious connotation of that is that when disciples connected with a new rabbi, a new teacher, they would stay with him. So they were all but saying—and Jesus understood it—“We are moving from John. You saw us with John; we have been with him.” Jesus might have nodded. “We want to shift over to You. We want to stay with You now. We want to serve You. We want to be with You. That is what we want.”*

* + 1. ***The tenth hour***: This was 4 pm. Most assume that they remained with Jesus that night.

*They came and remained with Him that day. It was the tenth hour which is four o’clock in the afternoon. Undoubtedly they spend the night with Him.*

* + 1. Jesus did not call them to follow Him as His disciples at this time. He did that some months later (Mt. 4:18-22; 9:9; Mk. 1:16-20; 2:13-14; Lk. 5:1-11, 27-28). John relates Jesus’ intimate conversion with these men, while Matthew, Mark and Luke relate their call to be disciples.

*Jesus already knows who they are and where this is going. They do not know, and these are just those early conversations. He has not called them to be apostles nor has He called them to follow Him in the official way that He is going to in a little while.*

* + 1. Jesus gave Simon a new name “Peter”—a rock—so that he would see himself as who God was making him to be. The impulsive Simon would become a steadfast rock from whom others might draw strength. He gave him a new name to express his new character. *Cephas* is Aramaic, and means *Rock*. *Peter* is the English form of Cephas from the Greek, *Petros*.

*Verse 40, then one of the two who heard John—you know John the apostle is writing this. He says—one of the guys that heard John the Baptist was my good friend Andrew. Andrew went right off, right from there, and got a hold of his brother Simon. We know Simon is the apostle Peter. So Andrew found his brother Simon. He said verse 41, “Hey brother, big brother, you are not going to believe this! We found the Messiah.”*

*Peter says—Well, Simon is his name, Peter is his new name—he is saying, “Really? You found the Messiah, the Son of man? Well, that is really interesting! That is a pretty big statement. How do you know?”*

*“Well, the man me and John have been following”—this is Andrew talking to his older brother Peter, and it is agreed upon it was John the apostle with him, and they were all friends, grew up in the same area, were fishermen together—“we have been following John the Baptist, and John the Baptist swears, I mean he is adamant he saw the power come on Him and heard the audible voice of God that this is the Man. We believe John that He is the Messiah, and we are going after Him.”*

*Peter is like, “Wow, really? Is that how it works?”*

*So Peter goes up and meets Jesus. Here we are in verse 42. Right in the very first conversation recorded, He looked right at Peter and said, “You are Simon son of Jonah.” Okay, that is good. “From now on you are called Cephas.” You know, often, when we first encounter the Lord, He gives us a new name. I do not mean go search for some name. Like, if your name is Mary and you now want to be called Linda, that is not what I mean to say. That is not what I mean by that. When the Lord calls us, He sees us so differently than we see ourselves. He names us—again I do not technically mean an actual name, though He might with some people—He calls us like He sees us. For example, He says to Israel, “You are Hephizabah: I delight in you; you are mine forever.” He calls us by names that are different from the way that we view ourselves. So He said, “Your name is Cephas; you are a rock.”*

*Now we find out that Cephas and Peter are the same name. Cephas is the Aramaic word, and Peter is the English word that comes from the Greek word. So they are the same. Peter and Cephas are the same. Sometimes in the New Testament it will say, “Cephas said” and other times it will say “Peter said.” It just depends on what language they are using, but it is the new name, “The rock.” He is no longer Simon. He is the rock. Peter was unreliable and a little unstable and impetuous a number of times. The Lord says, “I call you the Stable One before you are stable. The way that I name you–you are actually going to grow into that in the days to come.”*

* 1. Jesus found Philip (Jn. 1:43-44), who witnessed to Nathaniel (Jn. 1:45-51), either before traveling to Galilee or soon after arriving there. Someone could walk from Bethany-beyond-the-Jordan to Galilee in two days. So these five men were probably friends before becoming followers of Jesus.

43The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” 44Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses…and the prophets, wrote...” 46Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” … 47Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” 48Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered…, “…when you were under the fig tree,   
I saw you.” 49Nathanael…said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God...” (Jn. 1:43-49)

*Okay, verse 43, “The following day,” See, here are these time indicators. Now we are on the fourth day of that week. We have been tracking along. I have them all written in one place so you could put it all together later.*

*Now it is the following day, the fourth day in that seven-day period. Jesus tells them, “I want to go to Galilee.” From Jerusalem to Capernaum in Galilee is about 100 miles, ninety to 100 miles, depending on which way you walk, as there are different routes. It is about 100 miles straight up north. He says, “I am going to go to Galilee.” Some commentators say it is when He got to Galilee that He found Philip. Others, which probably I would lean towards, say that on the journey to Galilee He is talking to Philip.*

*Verse 43, so Jesus wanted to go from down south around the Jerusalem area—while Perea is on the other side of the Jordan, it is still pretty close to the city of Jerusalem—up north to Galilee, because Jesus knows there is a family wedding He has to be at, and He has about three days to get there. I imagine that when Jesus took off saying, “Mom, I am going down south,” and it is a ninety-mile walk, so Mary answered, “Okay, Son, but be back for the wedding. It is a big wedding; it is an important family wedding.”*

*“I will be there, Mom. Do not worry.”*

*“Jesus, it is important! This is an important wedding.”*

*“Okay, I will be there.”*

*So Jesus goes and gets anointed by the Spirit, hears the audible voice of God, does the forty-day fast, and meets these five guys: John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel. They are all right there, these five guys that end up on His apostolic team. He connects with them, then these five guys are all walking with Him from Jerusalem together. Jesus is talking to them, and they are pretty excited, but they are still not sure quite who He is.*

*He seems like a real Man, but He is supposed to be the anointed Messiah. He eats and sleeps. He is a real regular guy. You know how it is if you see a Jesus movie, they show Jesus is always staring in this distance. They come and talk to Him, and He gives one-word answers or something like, “You will see.” Then He looks the other way and we think, “Oh, we will see? What does that mean, we will see?”*

*Well, I think He was a full of life, full of joy, a gregarious, interactive person with a very deep life but very engaged with them. So I think they are really a little surprised how human He is. Maybe they were thinking, “He is a good guy, but is He really God? Is that what guy in the wilderness, John the Baptist, said? You know Andrew?”*

*“Yeah, yeah, he said He was God.”*

*“Okay, okay, we will go with it, sort of. God? I mean really? Wow.” So I just imagine that three-day walk as they are going up to Galilee together.*

*So then He finds Philip, and in verse 45, Philip finds Nathaniel and says, “Hey, Nathaniel! Nathaniel, we found Him, the Messiah, the one we have been talking about our whole life as boys. We studied the prophets, we had our E-12 groups, I mean we are really into this. We found the Messiah!”*

*Nathaniel is saying, “Really? You know, Phil, that is a pretty big statement that you found the Messiah.”*

*It is all really interesting. I love the play on words because verse 43 says that Jesus found Philip. Then in verse 45, Philip said, “I found Jesus.”*

*You know all, a lot of times someone says, “I sought for the Lord, and I found Him.”*

*Well, that is a little bit true, but the Lord might say, “From My end of the story, I wrestled you down. I ambushed you in a corner, took away five of your options, finally you said yes, and now you say, ‘I found the Lord.’ I have been working on you for years.”*

*That is okay; Philip found the Messiah. Jesus says, “That works for Me.” For the holy record, Jesus found Philip, and that is the truth about you and me as well.*

*So verse 46, Nathaniel says, “This is the guy the prophets wrote about, that Moses wrote about?” That is verse 45. Nathaniel says, “Really? That the Moses prophecy about Messiah, that one? Isaiah? Jeremiah?”*

*“Yeah, yeah, we found Him.”*

*“He is from Nazareth?” Now Nazareth was truly the other side of the tracks. It was lesser educated, lower economically. It was a city that had a reputation for being minus one. It was not a city of any kind of notoriety. It was a city like, ugh, you know you got to get out of Nazareth once you grow up because it was economically and educationally and status-wise lower.*

*Nathaniel is thinking, “Really? Nazareth? Are you sure He came from the other side of the tracks? Really on that side of town?”*

*“Yes, yes, that is where He came from.” So that kind of throws Nathaniel off.*

*Verse 47, when Jesus saw Nathaniel walking with Philip—here they are walking towards Him—Jesus is really dialing into him. He responds to each one of these guys in such a different and unique way. He says, “Nathaniel, an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”*

*Nathaniel is thinking, “Wow!” because though the nation is named after Israel, Jacob was re-named Israel. Jacob was known for manipulation and deceit. So when He says, an Israelite— a Jacobite—that does not have deceit and guile, that is interesting. Nathaniel took a step back because Nathaniel knew he had an honest heart. He is thinking, “Okay, okay, and who are You now?”*

*“I am Jesus.”*

*Nathaniel asked, “Well, how do you know me? Philip just told me about You, and I do not think Philip told You about me.”*

*He answers, “No, no, he did not. He says, but I saw you under the fig tree.”*

*Nathaniel said, verse 49, “You are the Son of God.”*

* 1. Jacob had an encounter with the Lord in a dream at Bethel (Gen. 28:10-22). Jesus referred to Jacob’s encounter to describe the greater revelation that Nathanael and others would experience.

50Jesus answered…, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” 51He said to him, “Most assuredly…hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”   
(Jn. 1:50-51)

* + 1. The Son of Man brings the realities of heaven to God’s people on earth.
    2. God is now revealing Himself to people directly through Jesus.

*Jesus said, “Because I saw you under the fig tree you think I am God?” Because to say, “You are the Son of God” means “You are God.” So I think what it was happening was that Nathaniel was under the fig tree and he was talking to God. He was having some kind of encounter with the Lord. Now, this is my theory. I could be wrong, but I think it is something like this. He was saying something like this, “Lord, I love You.” He is a man with no guile, he has an honest heart, and he knows the Scriptures. He has been studying what Moses and the prophets about the Messiah. He is a spiritual man; he is a young man. He says, “I love You.” The Lord stirs him. He says, “Lord, I have to see You. I have to know You. I want to know that You know I am here. I want to know that You know I am here and that You are hearing me.” So he was out of the way—you know I am saying this just hypothetically—a mile or two out of the way in his morning time with God, and the Lord was touching him. His big cry was, “Lord, I need to know that You know I am here crying out to You. Here I am, and I have to encounter You today.” The Lord gave him some kind of stirring; that is my theory.*

*Then Jesus says, “I saw you under the fig tree.”*

*He thinks, “Nobody knows what I said to God under that fig tree, but God* ***does*** *know me. I asked God, ‘Do You know me? Let me know You know me. Let me know You know my heart.’”*

*Jesus says, “You are an honest man. I know your heart, and I saw you under the tree.” That is my theory of what was going on.*

*He said in verse 50, “Because I said I saw you under the fig tree you believe? You are going to see a whole lot more than that.” Then He takes Nathaniel back to the Jacob encounter with the Lord; remember Jacob and Israel are the same guy, the deceiver who got changed. He said, as it were, “Let me go back to the guy regarding whom I am telling you that you are different than him. You are an Israelite without deceit; he was an Israelite—his name was changed to Israel— and he had deceit. So let’s go back to Jacob.” He went on, “Remember Genesis 28 when Jacob had the open heaven dream and the angels ascended and descended?” Of course Nathaniel, who is a student of the prophets, knows what the prophets say and Moses. “Yeah,” Jesus said, “You are going to see that ladder to heaven that Jacob saw in Bethel because I am that ladder. You are going to see that by connecting to Me there are going to be interactions between heaven and earth that are going to come to your life. You are going to see things you cannot imagine. He saw the glory on the Lord in this age and then in the age to come. I mean it goes on and on and on. I am that ladder to heaven that Jacob saw. You are going to see the fullness of that partially in this age and then the fullness forever and ever. That is your destiny; that is where this thing is going, the open heaven. I am the open heaven.”*

1. Jesus’ Early public ministry—mostly in Judea in early AD 27 (Jn. 2-4)
   1. Jesus’ first miracle was changing water to wine at Cana in Galilee in the spring AD 27 (Jn. 2:1-11). Jesus began His earthly ministry in context to a wedding feast, symbolizing the messianic banquet.

1On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. 3And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” 4Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.” 5His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.” (Jn. 2:1-5)

*Here Jesus has made it to the wedding. He has been walking about three days with His five new acquaintances. They are talking, and I mean they are excited. I would just give anything to know what they talked about. Jesus is watching the light of discovery as the lights goes on and I mean He is telling them stuff. I just can imagine what that is like.*

* 1. ***Third day***: That is, the third day after Nathanael met Jesus. John referenced several days (1:29, 35, 43; 2:1). On day 1, a group questioned John (1:19- 28). On day 2, John declared Jesus was the Lamb of God (1:29-34). On day 3, John’s disciples, Andrew and John, followed Jesus (1:35-42).   
     On day 4, Philip and Nathanael met Jesus (1:43-51), and on day 7, attended a wedding (2:1-11).

*Verse 1, “On the third day.” Now this means the third day after meeting Nathaniel, the third day after the last event. The third day after Nathaniel and Philip talked to the Lord which was the fourth day in that cycle. So three days later we have come to the seven-day mark. Now they have made it up to the wedding after the ninety-mile walk over three days. You could make it in three hard-pushing days.*

*There was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. It was a family wedding, I mean Jesus’ brother, sisters, and mother all lived fairly close to that area. They are there, and we can tell by Mary’s action in the wedding when they were out of wine that Mary is involved because they are obviously connected. There are family connections going on here.*

*Verse 3—you know the story—they ran out of wine. The mother of Jesus spoke to Him. It is interesting that Mary is never called Mary once in the gospel of John. She is always “the mother of Jesus.” John never calls her by her name. There are several different theories as to why, but I just wanted to point that out.*

*So the mother of Jesus came and said, “Son, there is no wine.” Now this is a crisis because many a wedding in the ancient world went a week long. Part of the deal of a wedding was that the people hosting the wedding would commit to have ample supplies of food and drink. The people coming to the wedding would bring generous gifts. It is a little bit of an unofficial but understood agreement.*

*So, because they are coming for three, four, five days, and sometimes the wedding was for seven days, so not to have enough supplies was a pretty out-of-touch thing to do, very disgraceful actually. It was not like a three-hour wedding reception like in the Western world and they ran out of food or wine in this context. It was a week-long affair, and the people did not bring supplies with them because they understood that there would be enough. So to run out was a social stigma, not a small thing.*

*So when they ran out of wine His mother says, verse 4, “Jesus, there is trouble. I mean this is a big issue, and we love this family.” Now I am assuming Mary knows that Jesus has just been six weeks on a fast anointed by the Spirit, and that is where He has been out of town the last eight weeks, the last two months or so, maybe a little bit longer. So Mary is assuming, “Hey, it began! You are anointed, You have been in the desert, and John called you out. I heard the story. They are talking about it, all the family and friends. It is amazing. So we have a huge disgrace problem here, the stigma on a family friend. What about it? I mean can’t You do something about this?”*

*He says to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.” Now that response troubles a lot of people, because in the English translation we look at that and it sounds so disgraceful. The actual words at that time in history are not as coarse or rough as the English translation sounds. As a matter of fact, He calls her, “Woman” each time He speaks to her through the Gospel of John, on three different occasions. Even when He is on the cross, and He tenderly gives the care of His mother to John the apostle, He says, “Woman, your son.” So it is not a coarse term to Him, though we look at that and may think, “Oh man, how disrespectful!” That is not what He is saying.*

*We can tell by verse 5 that Mary understood that the game was on somehow. She thinks, “Okay, I got it.” Then she says, “Hey servants, just do whatever He says.”*

*They might have asked, “Well, what is He going to do?”*

*She might have said, “I do not know, but He smiled at me. That means we are good, we are good.”*

* 1. Mary knew Jesus was recently anointed by the Spirit and thought it might be time for Him to begin to *openly manifest* His power (2:3). Jesus publicly demonstrated His power first in Jerusalem. The hour of *publicly* manifesting His power was not at hand. Mary gathered from His response to her that He intended to help, so she told the servants to obey Him without making a big display (2:5).

*I believe what was going on in part when Jesus said, “My hour is not yet come,” is that He meant “My hour to publicly display My miracles and for the Word to go across the nation is not yet come. I cannot do that, though I am not far away. I am going to go down to Jerusalem, as I have to do it in Jerusalem first. His first public miracles were in Jerusalem, but that was still a couple weeks away, not far away, but maybe a month or two away. He was saying, “Not yet, I cannot go public. I have to go public in Jerusalem. I have to give the leaders of Israel the first opportunity to see Me in My office of the Messiah in power. I cannot do it openly here.” So Mary understands that Jesus is understanding the situation and He feels compassion for that family.*

*So Jesus did a private miracle. You will notice as you read the story carefully that nobody knew what happened. The bridegroom did not know, and the leader of the whole ceremony did not know what was going on. The master of the ceremony did not get what happened. Only the servants who poured the water into the water pots and the apostles—well they are not apostles, they were just His friends right then—they were the only ones that saw it. Jesus left town, and there was no big declaration. Jesus did not stand in the water and say, “In the name of Jesus, water turn!” He did not do anything. It was all quiet. He just told them to fill the water pots up.*

* 1. ***Woman***: Calling Mary “woman” was not disrespectful, but He wanted her to know that she must no longer think of Jesus *only* in terms of being her son—He was her Lord. He wanted her to know that their relationship was now changing as He entered His messianic ministry. Jesus was explaining to Mary that He would handle the situation, on His terms—in obedience to His Father.

*Again, when Jesus calls Mary, “Woman,” He is not being disrespectful as I mentioned. He is wanting her to know that, now that He has been anointed by the Spirit and is beginning His unique, Messianic role, she cannot think of Him only in terms being her son. He is saying, “Mom, I am more than your son. I am actually your Creator, your Redeemer, and your Lord. Things have shifted after the Father put His hand on Me down at the Jordan River. Things are different now. I am in My Messianic function now. You have to readjust now that I am entering into My Messianic ministry. Now I am going to solve problems and provide on My terms, not on yours, because My terms are in obedience to My Father, not to My family relationships. My priority is Him. I have got to do it on His terms, not on your terms, so things are shifted.”*

*Mary was not offended. She is going, “Okay, okay, I get it. Wow, it is really happening!”*

* 1. Jesus spoke of “His hour” as the time of His death and its consequences (Jn. 5:28-29; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1)—the hour He was to return to the Father (13:1) and be glorified (17:1).
  2. Jews had strict purification laws related to washing their hands, their utensils, etc.

6Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. 7Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.”…9When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from…[he] called the bridegroom. 10 And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine [ best, NIV] until now!”…11His disciples believed in Him. (Jn. 2:6-11)

*As we know, there were, verse 6, six water pots of stone. Each one held twenty, thirty gallons, so I am calling it about twenty-five gallons. So six of them, about twenty-five gallons each. Jesus told a few of the waiters to go fill them up. Six times twenty-five gallons means 150 gallons. I mean, that is a lot of buckets from the well, pouring it in there. For 150 gallons’ worth, that is going to take a few minutes.*

*Then the master of the feast tasted the water, and it had turned to wine. He did not know anything because the water pots were mostly kept outside, kind of out of the way, a bit out of the way. So the servants were doing that unseen. The servants were probably completely shocked because they poured water in, and then they gave it to the master of the feast. Verse 10, the master of the feast said to the bridegroom, “Hey, we are not in the crisis we thought we were in a couple hours ago.”*

*The groom is going, “What do you mean?”*

*He says, “The crisis is over. They brought out the really good wine, the very best wine. You have saved the very best wine until last.”*

*Now that was a major statement! Well, there were a couple really major statements going on here. Major statement number one, Jesus began His earthly ministry as a Messiah at a wedding. Because He is going to bring His Messianic ministry to fullness at a wedding, the marriage supper of the Lamb, He actually began at a wedding, though He began in private and nobody saw it but a couple of waiters and the disciples. The city did not know, the wedding guests did not know, it was secret, but it began there. Here Jesus is saying, “I am beginning something bigger than you understand.”*

* 1. Each waterpot held around 25 gallons; thus six waterpots together might hold 150 gallons of liquid. A normal bottle of wine today is about 25 ounces (128 ounces in one gallon)—about 5 standard-sized bottles hold about one gallon of wine—150 gallons would be over 700 bottles of wine.

*By the way, if you added up twenty-five gallons for six containers, 150 gallons, and there are five bottles of wine in a gallon, that is 750 bottles of wine. I just had to get a picture of this. I mean, that is a lot. If it is the best wine—and it may not be that I know what I am talking about—but call it $100 a bottle. I mean the best might be $1,000, a million, whatever it is. Let’s just say that at $100 dollars a bottle, that is a $750,000 gift to this poor couple. They were so poor they did not have enough supplies for their wedding, which was the most disgraceful thing you can do. I mean Jesus basically gave them a $750,000 gift by telling those waiters to do that. I just find that interesting that He is that extravagant, and of course He did it all in secret.*

* 1. Jesus went to Capernaum with His family and disciples, about 15 miles from Cana (2:12). Later, Jesus made Capernaum His ministry base and moved there from Nazareth (Mt. 4:13; Mk 1:21; 2:1).

12After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days. (Jn. 2:12)

1. JESUS’ FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM (jn. 2:13-3:21)
   1. Jesus’ first Passover after He was anointed by the Spirit was in April, AD 27. He traveled about 90 miles from Capernaum to Jerusalem to attend. He wanted the leaders of Israel to have the first opportunity to accept Him as the Messiah.

*Well, now it is approaching the first Passover of Jesus’ ministry, which is April AD 27 by my figuring with many others as I have taken my material from many different scholars that I have studied over the years. One of the primary views, which I believe is the accurate one, is that the first Passover of Jesus’ ministry was in April AD 27. He was crucified at AD 30. That is, He did not begin in AD 30 and then died in AD 33. I believe that if you do the math, you will find it is not so complicated to do. Some of the indicators is pretty clear there. So all through the series I am building upon the presupposition that the AD 27 is the accurate time for this.*

*I am giving you the times so that you can follow the story better. We are not going to break down all His teachings because it would take several years to do that, but I want you to grasp the storyline, the cities He is traveling to, and the people He is touching, with some of the sequence and timing of how it goes together. Then the in-depth teaching fits into that context, and we get greater insight into the teaching. That is, of course, beyond the scope of a twenty-eight-session course on the life of Jesus.*

*So here He is, coming to Jerusalem. It is His very first Passover after being anointed with the Spirit. He had been going to Jerusalem as a boy for all the feast times every year.*

* 1. Jesus cleansed the temple during Passover (Jn. 2:13-22). He cleansed the temple three years later (Lk. 19:45-48). This was His first public act as Messiah.

13Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. 15When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen and poured out the changers’ money and overturned the tables. 16And He said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!” 17Then His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.”   
(Jn. 2:13-22)

* + 1. Only John mentioned the cleansing of the temple at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. This reveals an important aspect of Christ’s character which is ignored by many today.
    2. The Old Testament predicted that Messiah would come and purify the Levites (Mal. 3:1-3). That prophecy was partially fulfilled by this.

*John 2:13, “Now Passover was at hand.” So He is anointed with the Spirit, and this is maybe some weeks after the wedding. He went into the temple and as you know He cleansed the temple. You know the story well.*

*Verse 16, He told everybody who was selling the doves and all the money changers to take these things away and get rid of all of this. The reason that is significant because three years later, right before He died, He cleansed the temple again. He did it twice. He began His ministry cleansing the temple, and He ended His ministry cleansing the temple, both at Passover. Why? Because three years later there was no change! They did not pay attention at all to what He said.*

*This was done as a little bit of fulfillment of Malachi 3. You know the famous verse, “…and the Lord will suddenly enter His temple.” Well, He did that. Here He is the Lord anointed in power. He walks into the temple when nobody is expecting His entrance into the temple. The “suddenly” was a surprise, but it was a negative surprise to the leadership of Jerusalem. Of course, that prophecy of the Lord entering His temple has its ultimate fulfillment at the second coming, but it has a partial fulfillment right here when He entered the temple.*

* 1. Why did Jesus not answer clearly? He sometimes offends the mind to reveal the heart.

18The Jews…said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?” 19Jesus… said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” 20Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple…?” 21He was speaking of the temple of His body. (Jn. 2:18-21)

*So He cleansed everything. Then the Jews say, “What is the deal? Why did You do this? What is Your authority? What is Your sign?”*

*He says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”*

*They said, “Wait, we have been working on this thing forty-six years; Herod has been building it for forty-six years. You are going to raise it up?”*

*Of course He meant the temple of His body. He said, in effect, “My sign is kill Me, and I will rise from the dead. I will sit at the Father’s right hand, and you will bow before Me; that will be your sign.” That is what He was saying, but of course they do not get it at all. That is, He said, as it were, “You will see in due time that I have authority to cleanse the temple when you bow before Me when I am at the right hand of the Father as a Man who is fully God and have fully triumphed over the devil.”*

*Now the principle I like to always highlight here is that Jesus offends the mind to reveal the heart. He does it often, though not always. Meaning, what Jesus did confused the disciples who loved Him. Why are You throwing everything around? You did not even give them a chance to respond. Jesus. But we still love You; we cannot cast You aside. We love You, though we do not get what You are doing. Their heart passion actually was increased. They were more zealous for the Lord through the process. The people who did not really want Him, Jesus gave them every reason to abandon Him if they wanted to. Jesus leads in that way today. He says as it were, “If you are really after Me, you are not going to be offended and cast Me aside. If you really want to cast Me aside, you are going to find all kinds of mindsets and views to do so. They are not the right views, but you will have different reasons to throw Me aside if you want to, and that is your choice if you want to do it.”*

* 1. This provides a chronological marker, helping us to date His visit to the temple in AD 27. The work of rebuilding the temple began in 19 BC (18th year of Herod’s reign); 46 years later is AD 27.
  2. Jesus did many signs *publicly* so that many believed (Jn. 2:23-25). However, Jesus knew they were following Him to see the miraculous and not out of genuine desire to be right with God.

23Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover…many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. 24But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, 25and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in men. (Jn 2:23-25)

*When He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, many believed in His name. They saw the signs as He did signs there at the Passover; that was when the miracles began right there, very first time. First He cleanses the temple, now He is doing public miracles. His hour is now beginning. As a matter of fact, John recorded it twelve times in the gospel of John that it is Jesus’ time or Jesus’ hour. It always means His Messianic mission, which comes to a high point at His death and glorification.*

*Remember, to Jesus His death and His glorification are two sides of one coin. He might have said something like, “When I am lifted up and I am crucified, that is when I bring glory to God. I redeem the earth, and I purchase My people. I am glorified in that hour.” So when Jesus made these twelve references in the gospel of John to His time or His hour, it is always linked to His crucifixion and resurrection. The hour of His death and glory when all the good stuff is released and all the debt is paid and the Father is honored, the Son is raised from the dead, that is the hour He is always talking about. It is that hour. When He began His miracle ministry here, that hour was just around the corner. I mean it was three years away, but He said, “It has begun.”*

*This is a troublesome combination. He goes into the temple and disrupts it all, which challenges the authority of the leaders of Jerusalem. He disrupts the economics, and they are really angry with Him. His first act makes the national leadership angry with Him, and He did it on purpose; it was not an accident. He would say, “I am not changing the way I am leading because it is from the Father. You have to change, not Me. I am not changing. You have to change.” That is the way He is today as well. He is not embarrassed by His judgments. He is not embarrassed by His zeal. He is not embarrassed by His plans, though we do not always like them. He would say, “I am not changing. You will be changing if you love Me.” That is how He begins His ministry and He has been doing it that way ever since.*

*Then He goes out of the temple and heals all of these people. Now He has this huge excitement of the common people in the city. So, amid the religious leaders and the economic problems He just brought as well as the disruption now, there is this groundswell of excited crowds of people. “He is amazing! He is amazing!” Then Jesus leaves town after that. I mean the whole city is a buzz and in an uproar, and they are all talking about Him.*

*Then He goes back to Galilee after that. He might have looked at the Father and said something like, “Father, I did it the way You wanted. This an intense way to begin, but I did it Your way. I troubled the leaders by holding Your standard. The crowds got excited.”*

*Okay, we are going to end with this. We will pick up with page five and six next week. I thought I would go a little bit faster than I did. Look here at verse 23. “Now He did this at Jerusalem at Passover.” It was kind of His debut in the nation, His national introduction. Many believed in Him, as they saw the miracles. That was the first time there were open miracles, because up in Cana of Galilee He told His mom, “It is a month or two out before I really push the “go” button, but I will do a private miracle right here because I am anointed and the Father says, ‘yes.’”*

*Now look at verse 24; this is very important. “Jesus did not commit Himself to the people because He knew what was in their heart.” He had no need for any of them to agree with Him. When it says, “He had no need for any of them to testify of man,” it is as if Jesus said, “I do not need them to approve of My plans. I do not need them to approve of My leadership, I do not need that. I have the Father’s witness and His direction, and I know what is in man’s heart.”*

* + 1. The people sought a political king, not a spiritual deliverer. He knew the men were interested in miracles and not spiritual reform. They wanted the miraculous to serve their own purposes.

*And it means that Jesus knew the crowds were excited by His miracles. They were not excited by His spiritual agenda for them to be transformed, for them to leave their sin and obey His leadership. He knew they were excited by miracles because they thought they could work it out to where He would come back and just make everything better in their life and their world would get changed. Jesus would have said, “No, that is really what I am doing right now. Really what I am after is I am the Lamb of God to take away sin. I am after the sin issue, to renew the heart, to liberate the heart, so the heart would grow in love, and the heart would connect to Me.” Now the Lord wants those other things to happen as well, but His first agenda was to be a spiritual leader. So they wanted a political leader, but Jesus wanted to be a spiritual leader, and so that is how He was presenting Himself.*

* + 1. He knew their enthusiasm from seeing miracles would soon dissipate. Many who believed turned against Him later (Jn. 6:15, 60, 66). He did not place His destiny in the hands of any others—He was not dependent on human approval.

*He knew that they would be enthusiastic. Many of those very people turned on Him later. Just think, if the Lord would only give miracles all the time, we would all get happy, and we would all stay happy. The whole earth would turn to Jesus, and it would all be done. Jesus would say, “No, miracles get people’s attention, but with miracles often times people imagine they are excited about Jesus when they are really only excited about seeing a supernatural act.” Many times that excitement wanes when His leadership is not exactly what they want it to be. So John said that Jesus did not entrust Himself to them. He did not say, “Now I am going to follow what you guys think I should do.” Why? Because He knew they were going to turn on Him anyway because they were only enthusiastic for a minute merely because it was exciting. He might have said, “You are not really into Me; you are into things being exciting. I am into My Father’s agenda and His kingdom and His plan. So I am not going to do it on your terms; I am going to lead on My terms.”*

*So what I say is, “Yes, Lord, I want to follow You on Your terms. I love the miracles, but if I see this, that, or the other, I am not going to get distracted from following hard after You at the heart level.” That is the message of John 1-2.*

*We will finish this in the next session. Amen, let’s stand.*

*So the Lord says to us, like He said to Andrew and John back in John 1, “What do you seek? What are you after? Are you after miracles? I will give them to you, but you will not stay with Me long if that is mostly what you are after. Are you after prophetic experiences? I will give them to you, but that is mostly what you want and you will not stay steady over time. In pressure, under temptation, you will not stay steady. I want you to give yourself to Me.”*

*Tonight, I want us to take and answer the question, “What do you seek?” I want to answer to the Lord, “I want to be with You. I want to be with You where You are. Yeah, I want miracles. I want the prophetic. I love that, but I love You more than that. When those things come, I love it and I want more, I always want twice as much. But if it is not happening the way I think, I am still with You.”*

*When Andrew and John said, “We want to be with You,” Jesus said, “Good, come on then, and stay with Me. That is a good answer.”*

*So, Lord, here we are before You. Lord, we say we want to be with You. We thank You that You do not need man’s approval. You are not changing that. We are changing. Lord, we want to change more to come in agreement with who You are, the glory of who You are.*

*I want to invite anybody to come forward tonight if you are saying in your heart, “I want to recommit myself to Him, not just to exciting revival. I am really into revival, but I want to be His above everything. The seasons come and go. Sometimes the seasons are more exciting, and sometimes they are more difficult. I want to be with Him until the end. That is the cry that I hear from the Spirit in these two chapters.”*

*I want to invite you to come forward. This is an hour where the Lord is saying, “Will you sign back up? To Me, to be Mine. Not just to be excited. Do not give up that vision, but do not make it number one. Make it number two.”*

*I want to be Yours, Lord, because You are the Lamb that frees from sin. He forgives. He liberates. His agenda is that.*

*He says to us, “I want to free your hearts to come fully into agreement with Me. That is what I am after right now.”*

*So, Holy Spirit, we say yes to Your leadership. Lord, I want You. I want You, Lamb of God, beautiful Savior, beautiful God. Lord, we want to sit before You. We want to stand in Your counsel. This is what the Lord is saying right here in this song; this is exactly what the Lord is saying to us. Lord, I want a heart loyal to you, greater than the difficult hours or the exciting hours. Let me be found loyal. Lord, I want to be loyal to You. I want to be with You where You are. Exciting or challenging or both or neither, I want to be with You where You are. I want to connect at the heart level more and more, Lord. I set my heart to be loyal to You, Lord.*