

The Gospel of John (Lesson 05)

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Concerning the studying

I **recommend** you to read through the respective book in the bible at first. Our manual is the bible. And then to go through one or two pages of the material every day, which implies to also look up and read the given bible scriptures to become thoroughly acquainted with the subject. Another suggestion would be to use this material as one's regular devotion.

If you would like to **obtain a degree (certificate) at the end of the seminary**, you need to answer the **test questions** at the end of each lesson and send or email it to us with your full name and address. And now I wish you lots of joy and spiritual profit during your bible study.

Pastor Joh. W. Matutis

The GOSPEL OF JOHN

Miscellaneous

The New Testament contains 5 scripts that are accredited to John: the gospel of John, the three letters of John and the book of revelation. The book of revelation differs so much from the content of the other 4 books, that it had to be a chapter by itself, no matter if the author was the same John or not. However, meanwhile there is an overall agreement that the gospel of John and the three letters of John were authored by the same person. They are not only similar in style but also have a lot of theological terminologies in common. For example: „Spirit of truth“, „light“ and „darkness“, „of this world“, „children of God“, „born of God“, „remain in Christ“, „keep His commandments“, „testimony“, „life“ and „death“.

To fully understand this gospel you would also have to rest at the breast of Jesus, like the author did. In many ways John has a different view of Jesus than the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark, Luke). According to him Jesus has no objections to publicly confess His Sonship of God. In the gospel of John there is no stylistic difference between the teachings of Jesus and the authors own words. Therefore we could assume that the author is responsible for the verbal style of Jesus speeches.

The gospel of John and the Synoptics

It is told that John already knew the other gospels and that the other disciples had well displayed the terrestrial life of Jesus. He was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write a „spiritual“ instead of a „historical“ gospel. Therefore John describes the indwelling spirit of Jesus and His inner man, while the other evangelists describe the outward virtue of Jesus. Additionally John also willingly depicts traditions and memories that were not applied in the synoptic traditions. At this point the gospel of John amends and completes the image of Jesus in many ways. The Synoptics, for example, emphasize Jesus' restraint to openly confess that He was „the Christ“. But this could make believe that therefore it cannot be counted the people's fault if they did not believe in Him. But John points out, that the rejection of faith was not caused by Jesus. In other words: the way Jesus presented Himself was so clear, that the responsibility of those who rejected the faith was their own fault.

Introduction of the gospel of John

The author of the gospel of John, started with the geographics of Palestine (Joh. 1,28/ 4,5 f./ 20) and Jerusalem (Joh. 5,2/ 19,13) as well as the condition of the temple before its destruction (Joh. 2,20/ 8,20/ 10,23) and the overall condition of Israel during the era of Jesus and therefore expresses well the Jewish way of thinking at that time. In great detail he reports about Jesus' surroundings, so that it is obvious that those information originated out of the circle of the „12 disciples of Jesus“.

John starts his gospel with the **„tearing down of the temple“** (Joh. 2,18-22), because the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem was still a trauma / shock that was deeply rooted in the minds of the Jews. To them the temple was the center of worship and a guarantor for the old covenant. A visible sign of God's dwelling among the people, where His glory could be seen. And suddenly all was gone. The Jews who once returned from Babylon waited in vain for a second temple to be built (Mal. 3/ Hag. 2,7-10) of which the glory was supposed to be greater than the first one.

To John Jesus is therefore the appearance and revelation of the new Divine Reality. The new center of worship, the new covenant, the new temple which is indestructable and finally leads to the church (the body of Jesus) (Rom. 1,4).

The evangelist connects the ancient chronology and the the prophecies and speeches of Jesus, and explains how the Jews misused and defiled the temple, and how after 3 days – after the resurrection of Jesus – a new temple would be built.

This way the depictions of the evangelists – with numerous details about place and time – are superficially considered not important for the story, but it proves that the author is well acquainted with his topic (Joh. 1,39/ 2,1/ 3,23/ 4,6+40/ 11,54/ 18,10/ 21,11) and it helps them to submit a clear message which is easy to understand.

The author of the gospel had a very **intimate relationship with Jesus**. In John 21,24 the author, who is not mentioned by name is called the „disciple that the Lord loved“ (Joh. 21,20). This disciple is also mentioned in Joh.13,23/ 19,26/ 20,2 und 21,7 and is also identical with „the other disciple“ (Joh. 18,15 f.). Whenever this disciple appears the intimacy of the relationship with Jesus is highlighted.

We first encounter Him in the upper room **where he sits next to Jesus** and is close enough to lean back and whisper something in His ear without the others hearing it (Joh. 13,21-25/ 21,20). The next thing we notice: inspite of the prophecy of Jesus, that all disciples would leave Him (Joh. 16,32), this one followed Him till the palace of the high priest (Joh. 18,15). Even on the cross Jesus entrusts His mother to him (Joh. 19,25-27), and delivers – here he is mentioned together with Peter – the message of the empty grave to Mary Magdalene (Joh. 20,1 f.). And in the end this disciple is the first to recognize Jesus at the Sea of Genesareth and shouts to Peter: „It is the Lord!“ (Joh. 21,7). After a common breakfast he is also participating in the personal conversation between Jesus and Peter (Joh. 21,20-23).

If this disciple that „Jesus loved“ was truly John, we can complement this picture of the familiar relationship between the Synoptics. Peter, James and John formed an inner circle within the 12. Jesus allowed them to be there with Him during particular, important events. For example the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark. 8,51) as well as the transfiguration of Jesus (Mark. 9,2) and they also heard His apocalyptic instructions (Mark. 13,3) and were very close to Him during the torture at the garden of Gethsemane (Mark. 14,33). Further John says, „*He saw Him with his own eyes*“ (1.Joh. 1,1-3/ 1.Joh. 4,14 / Joh. 1,14), heard with his own ears and touched with his hands (1.Joh. 1,1-3). He had internalized the thoughts of his Lord and reached the bottom of Jesus' revelation and was truly inspired by the spirit of his Master.

According to Mark, Jesus called the brothers John and James the surname „**Sons of Thunder**“ (Mark. 3,17) and their hot temper was revealed several times in the Gospels. John, for example, takes offense at one exorcist who did not belong to the Twelve and forbids it at once (Luk. 9,49 f.). Both of the „Sons of Thunder“ take offence at the Samaritan inhabitants who did not want to give Jesus a shelter and wanted to plead fire to come down from heaven as a punishment, just like Elijah (Luk. 9,51-56). And both of them came with their mother to ask Jesus for the best seats in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mark. 10,35-45/ Matth. 20,20-28). The Spirit of God still had to transform them. Jesus said: „Do you not know whose spiritual children you are?“ (Luk. 9,55) or: „You do not know what you are asking for“ (Matth. 20,22/ Mark. 10,38). And yet the „Son of Thunder“ turned into an „apostle of love“.

John was well equipped to share the matter of the heart of His Master. He wanted to introduce the readers to the person he got to know and love. He also wanted them to have fellowship with Him (1.Joh. 1,3), and he trusted that their character would also be transformed just like his.

He does not leave any room for doubts concerning the question why he wrote it. He wrote the gospel so that the reader would receive faith and by faith obtain new life (Joh. 20,31). And he wrote in his first letter to people who already believed, so that they would know that they have life (1.Joh. 5,13). His theology is very deep, almost unbelievable, but in the end he is targeting a practical thing. He wants the readers to receive eternal life and to have assurance about it (Joh. 1, 4).

John presents Jesus Christ in His whole incarnated glory throughout his gospel, so that we might see and believe. John seemed to have considered especially the Jews in His word, because he emphasizes that Jesus has fulfilled all the requirements of Judaism and replaced the temple, the law and the feasts. The temple and the service already belonged to the past, because both were destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

After this point the gospel of John must have had a special effect upon the Jews, whose mourning was traded for joy over the fact, that God had replaced the loss of Jesus already.

The message of the gospel of John is the foundation of faith.

The way to eternal life only leads through faith (Joh. 3,14-16+36/ 6,47/ 20,31).

John would have agreed with Paul's answer: „*Faith comes by hearing and hearing from the word of God*“ (Rom. 10,17).

For John faith does not stand by itself. It is rather much more our reaction upon the initiative of God. Faith is a result that comes from His word – or like John calls it : „testimony“. To believe in the testimony that Jesus proclaimed is the first essential step, that leads to eternal life. That is the message of the gospel of John. John says that „**faith**“ is the requirement if you want to be saved, and he tries to explain to his readers, that they have to believe Jesus' testimony if they want to be redeemed.

The topic „**testimony**“ in the gospel of John seems to be especially prepared for the Jews who did not believe. Therefore they had to believe the **human testimony** first.

In the first two sentences of John, 1. John and the Book of Revelation, John describes his own apostolic testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ: „**We saw His glory**“ (Joh. 1,14). He opens his gospel with statements and not with evidence. Just like Genesis starts with the words: „In the beginning God created...“ and this way the existence of the Father was proclaimed, John starts his gospel with the words: „In the beginning was the word...“ and therewith testifies the pre-existence of Jesus with the Father.

Those eternal truths are not the result of human reflections, but of a Divine revelation. But at this point they were passed on through the passionate testimony of people who were convinced of this truth. The gospel of John starts and ends with the indication of the apostolic testimony (Joh. 21,24). In the chapters in between we encounter a whole lot of people, **who met Jesus and testified of Him:**

•**The testimony of John the baptist** (Joh. 1,6-8).

The testimony of the evangelist himself is right beside it (Joh. 1,19-36/ 3,25-30/ 10,40-42), because John the baptist already had a great popularity at the time of the composition.

•**A couple of disciples meet Jesus and testify of Him** (Joh. 1,37-51).

Phillipp gives a strong testimony of Jesus Christ (Joh. 1,49).

•**The Samaritans testify**

At first the Samaritan woman (Joh. 4,29) and then the people from Samaria (Joh. 4,42), are convinced that Jesus is the Messiah.

•**Further witnesses**

Peter (Joh. 6,68 f.), the crowd in Jerusalem (Joh. 7,40-42), the blind man (Joh. 9,17), Martha (Joh. 11,27) and Thomas (Joh. 20,28). the faith confession of Thomas is the impressive peak of the whole record.

John had no doubts, to include **testimonies against Jesus** in his depictions as well (Joh. 7,52/ 8,52 f./ 9,16/ 10,20). This way he motivates his readers to judge according to evidences and witnesses, and make their own decision. .

John 20,30 and the purpose of John's gospel

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. "

John wanted to strengtehn the faith of the Christians and was aiming to accomplish the plan: „**that you may believe and keep your faith**“.

From John 20,30 f. 3 things can be said about his intentions:

📁👉 The "**signs**" play a central role in his plan to lead his readers to faith.

📖👉 **He especially thought of the Jews**, because they needed to be told above all, that Jesus was „the Christ“ or „the Messiah“.

📖👉 He wants **the faith of his readers to grow** by the intellectual conviction that Jesus is the Christ and then the experience of faith that „in His name“ you have life.

All the human witnesses were important, but Jesus does not only rely on their testimony to prove His point (Joh. 5,34). He even acknowledges the legal principle: „If I only testify by myself, my testimony is not true” (Joh. 5,31).

A testimony was only valid before a Jewish court if it was confirmed by a second witness. This is what the Pharisees held against Jesus: „**You alone testify of yourself / your testimony is not true**” (Joh. 8,13). Jesus accepts this argument and answered: „**In your law it is written, that the testimony of two is true. It is my giving account for myself / and the Father who sent me also testifies of me.**” (Joh. 8,17 f.).

Jesus also calls God as a witness (s. Joh. 5,37/ 8,18/ vgl. 8,50/ 10,32).

The self testimony of Jesus was so Divine that only God Himself could confirm and prove its truth: Jesus claimed to be the Son of god, the only One who has the authority to give life and hold judgment – both are privileges that belong to God alone. (Joh. 5,19-23).

The Father gives His testimony through Jesus. Jesus denies over and over, that He speaks out of Himself. The originator is rather the father who gave Him authority to speak. If Jesus Himself is the incarnated Word of God (Joh. 1,1. 14), then His words are the Words of God at the same time. (Joh. 3,34/ Joh. 7,16/ 8,29/ 12,49/ 17,8,14)

Jesus expects that everybody who hears His words believes Him because they are the words of God (Deut. 18,18/ Joh. 1. 21). To John Jesus is „**the word**“, a remarkable term for God. In the gospel of John Jesus says 36 times „**the One who sent me**”.

This description of the names „Father“ and „Son” usually appear in circumstances where the authority of the Son was questioned or claimed (Joh. 3,34/ 8,26/ 7,28). The Father confirmed the words of Jesus in a supernatural way and by wonders, so that He could say: „My doctrine is not of me, but of the One who sent me” (Joh. 7,16/ Joh. 5,36/ 5,19-30/ 10,31- 39/ 10,32,38/ 14,10).

Nicodemus thought Jesus could only work such „miracles”, **because God was with Him** (Joh. 3,2).

The brothers of Jesus for example saw His signs, but they did not esteem them high (Joh. 7,3-5).

Even if people believed Jesus because of His signs and wonders, Jesus was careful to judge their quality of faith (Joh. 2,23-25).

As a matter of fact, the signs could only reveal their message, **if they were interpreted.**

John wants to offer this interpretation. For example the healing of the lame (Joh. 5,1-9) is not only the result supernatural power and Jesus’ compassion, but it also shows that He has the authority to tell the people of God, what they should and should not do on the Sabbath day. In addition it also reveals the unique relationship to His father, because Jesus reveals the works of God in all of His actions (Joh. 5,9-20). At the same time the feeding of the 5000 (Joh. 6,1-14) is explained in a long dialogue, where Jesus calls Himself „the bread of life” (Joh. 6,25-59).

John chose the signs he mentioned (Joh. 20,30), according to their expressive effect and with regard to the message he wanted to portray through the sign.

But how could John convince his readers, that he interpreted the signs of Jesus the right way? Of course the Holy Spirit had to do the translation work (Joh. 16,8-11). But especially for Jewish readers there was an important factor: **the Old Testament.**

The testimony of the Father can be found in the Old Testament (Joh. 5,39+46). In the course of his gospel John refers to quotations from the Old Testament (Joh. 2,17/ 12,37-41/ 19,36 f.) and he often makes allusions to OT texts and themes. John shows that the purpose of the OT is only pointing to Jesus.

The statement of John 5,46 which introduces the 6th chapter says: „Moses wrote about me“ where the role of Moses as the redeemer of Israel – he had lead the people out of Egypt – is compared to Jesus work in the present era. Jesus guides the people, just like Moses once did when he brought the people out of Egypt (Joh. 6. 4) and he also provides them with supernatural food, etc (Joh. 6,14,25-59). Furthermore he claims that a man needs more than what Moses had to offer (Joh. 6,45/ Is. 54,13), and therefore John shows that this time has come.

Overview of the gospel of John

In John the „signs“ that Jesus worked were the center of his message.

With the sign of the turning of water into wine John interprets the beginning of a new order of salvation. It was a prophetic act, especially because he also says: „My hour has not yet come to reveal my glory“ (Joh. 2, 3-11). This refers to His hour of death (Joh. 7,30/ 8,20/ 13,1/ 7,1). When Jesus rebuked his mother in a harsh way, it was not because He was hard-hearted, but He is actually explaining to her: (Mother) the wonder that is working within me is not birthed of you“. But when He was at the cross in the hour of His lowliness He acknowledged her again. His rejective attitude towards His mother originated from His purpose to reveal it only to the ones which were prepared (His disciples). In addition Jesus' rejection did not fail, because her faith grew stronger since He did not reject her request and cleansed her from her nervous eagerness.

The following speech of the bridegroom shows that nobody but the servants and the disciples ever heard of the miracle. Because the impression of the guests is not mentioned at all. This miracle is not wondrous to the ones who know that it is the Lord God Jesus who was at work. Because the one who created wine out of those 6 jars of water is no one but the one who created the vine. The transformation is nothing less than a creative work of Jesus. And so is every miracle of Jesus, whether the healing of the sick or a raising of the dead, or a feeding a creative miracle. It is an indication that in the complete world of God (Kingdom of God) there is not need and no lack of any kind.

In John 1 Jesus is introduced as „the word“. Before that God had spoken through prophets like John the Baptist. But now His word had become flesh (1, 14). This is a new chapter of the story of salvation and revelation: „The law was given by Moses, the grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (Joh. 1,17). And this is explained through the turning of water (an untameable element) into wine (Joh. 2,1-11). Jesus used the jars, that were used for the cleansing by the Jews (Joh. 2,6), and turns it into something that is able to meet real needs. This message is also transported into the following chapters. After that Jesus purged the temple, the former center of the ancient order of salvation and speaks of the new temple, His body (Joh. 2,21). Then He told Nicodemus „the teacher of Israel“ (Joh. 3,10), who was acquainted with the deepest secrets of Judaism, that he needs to be turned into a new creature. In the following the same message was told to the Samaritans. With the help of a woman He offers them „a source of water where eternal life is flowing“ (Joh. 4,14).

Two healings – a new life, a new judgment. The two signs in John 4,46-54 and 5,1-9 belong together and are interpreted in the long speech of Jesus (Joh. 5,19-47). In this speech Jesus makes bold claims: He claims to execute the rights of a Son, that only belong to God, especially to give life to whomever He chooses (Joh. 5,21) and to judge all people (Joh. 5,22).

In this context „to judge“ does not only mean to „condemn“ but rather the proclamation of a royal decision or a royal decree. As judge and Son Jesus is authorised to decide over life and death of all people (Joh. 5,25-30). He proves that He has the power to do so by His deeds (Joh. 4. 50/ 5,8-10/ 5,14).

The feeding of the 5000 – Jesus the bread of life. Jesus claims to be the bread of life 3 times (Joh. 6,35+48+51). When Jesus broke the bread and fed the fivethousand (Joh. 6,1-15) (the only account of a miracle that all the four gospels have in common), this was a metaphor how He would give His flesh for the life of the world (Joh. 6,51). He is definitely referring to the cross (Joh. 6, 47+54+57) as the „true meal“ and the „true drink“.

The healing of the blind – Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus came to fulfill Moses and the law. And because He fulfilled it, it is Him who brings something totally new. In John 6 Jesus replaces the Jewish Feast of Passover by The Lord's Supper.

In John 7-10 Jesus replaced the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. In the center of this action (Joh. 9) was the healing of the man who was born blind. An outward action displayed a spiritual truth. Two times Jesus said: „I am the light of the world“ (Joh. 8,12/ 9,5). He is referring to the famous celebration of lights that took place during the feast of tabernacles. At that time there were big lamps set up in the temple, that were supposed to represent the pillar of fire, that the people of Israel were supposed to follow in the desert. But now Jesus calls: „I am the light of the world, who follows me shall not walk in darkness but will have the light of the world“ (Joh. 8,12).

Since the feast of tabernacles could no longer be celebrated in the temple after 70 AD, this statement of Jesus also met a need that many Jews felt at that time. They also – just like the man who was born blind – had been cast out of the synagogue (Joh. 9,34) – their place of worship – and had lost it.

And yet Jesus heals the blind man and restores his service by giving Him spiritual light in addition to the physical light. While he is worshiping the Son of Man the man (Joh. 9,35-38) he gives hope to all who are in need of a similar restoration. Worship the Son of Man, **who is the light of the word** and then you will celebrate a real feast of tabernacles.

The light is the most delicate and spiritual of all earthly substances. From the outside and on the inside, always revealing. Light brings life. **Without light there is no life.** Light stands for the holiness and the glory of God, for the truth and the knowledge. Jesus is and was the true light (Joh. 1. 9). The people were supposed to come to the light and be enlightened by fellowshiping with Him (Phil. 21,5). And eventually as believers, also being children of light become light themselves and shine (Matth. 8,12/ 11,19).

The awakening of Lazarus – Jesus, the resurrection and the life. When He raised Lazarus from the dead (Joh. 11) it was the last great public act of Jesus before He died. John prepares his readers with the help of a speech about the „good sheperd“ in chapter 10 that the good sheperd will leave his life for the sheep (Joh. 10,11+14 f.). This **self-sacrifice** of Jesus is described in John 11 in a very dramatic way. He fled from the force of a hostile crowd in Jerusalem and crossed the Jordan for His own safety (Joh. 10,31+39 f.). Thomas recognizes that a return to Jerusalem would be like a suicide (Joh. 11,16). Nevertheless Jesus returns because He wants to raise Lazarus.

The raising of Lazarus is accompanied by **Jesus' statement:** „I am the resurrection and the life“ (Joh. 11,25). But it is obvious that Jesus can only be the resurrection and the life for Lazarus at the cost of His own life. Therefore we are not surprised when the Jewish High Council comes together and realizes that the raising of Lazarus was the straw to break the camel's back. If Jesus would continue such a ministry they would have to face tremendous consequences.

He had to die (Joh. 11,47-53). Therefore death and resurrection already overshadow chapter 10 and 11, where Jesus dies as the good sheperd for his sheep. From this point on the story of Jesus is taking an inevitable course. The death of Jesus is coming closer and closer (Joh. 13,1). He draws back with His disciples to pray and prepare them for a life, where the joy of His physical presence will be replaced by a spiritual connection with Him (chapter 14 bis 16). Darauf folgt die Erzählung von seiner Verhaftung, seinem Tod und seiner Auferstehung (Kapitel 18 to 21).

John longs to share with His readers the faith of the disciples in Jesus Christ to experience their lives and to also follow after them.

Like a common theme the terms "eternal word" and "eternal life" go through the gospel of John.

The word was from the beginning, it was never created and all that is created through it and stands until today (Col. 1,16). All beings without exception owe it their existence and are according to its will. This is how the creation was sustained and completed. And this is how substance becomes life and spirit. The eternal word gives all things a purpose and "eternal life" (vergl. Joh. 3,16+36/ 5,24+29+40/ 6,33+35+51+53/ 12,50/ 14,6/ 17,3/ Acts. 5,20/ 11,18/ Rom. 5,17+18/ 8,6+10/ Eph. 4,18/ Phil. 1,21/ Col. 3,4/ 1.Joh. 1,2/ 3,14+15/ 5,11+20).

John permanently expresses how a man can only become a child of God by personal revelation (1.Joh. 3,1/ Gal. 4,5). Just like the „accepting of Jesus“ (Joh. 1,12) and he emphasizes that you cannot be a partaker of the Divine nature by genealogy or origin (people) but by the new birth and the faith in Jesus alone (Joh. 5,1).

Other characteristics of the gospel of John:

In this gospel there is no significant stylistic difference between the speeches of Jesus, where He is speaking, and the reporting passages which were composed by the author. The author Himself reveals his carefulness concerning his gospel, by pointing to the choices he had to make: **„But Jesus worked many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not mentioned in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And by faith you may have life in His name“**(Joh. 20,30 f.).

These „signs“, of which all – but one – have to be counted as special material of John and were chosen with regard to a special aim: They were supposed to convince the reader, that Jesus is the Christ. This is illustrated so that the signs must have been chosen according to the special needs of the readers. The author wanted to show that the ministry of Jesus was the answer to all their needs.

The evangelist often uses **dualistic statements.** Light and darkness, above and under, the chosen One and the ones who belong to him are constantly contrasted.

Author

The author Himself does not mention his name. Whenever he speaks of himself he calls himself the „disciple whom Jesus loved“ (Joh. 13,23/ 1,26/ 20,2/ 21,7+20).

- He is the one who sat at the right side / lay in the bosom of the Lord (like the original text reads) during the last supper (Joh. 13,23).
- He is the one to whom Jesus entrusted His mother while He was dying.
- It was him and Peter to whom Mary reported the resurrection of the Lord.

The author says that he was an eye-witness of the events (Joh. 19,35), and he also makes a couple of detailed remarks that can only originate from such a person (Joh. 1,39/ 4,6+40/ 10,22/ 19,14). It is remarkable how the John the son of Zebedaeus is not mentioned by name, not even the Lord's brother James. But a lot of other disciples appear speaking and acting, who are only mentioned in the registers of Acts of all the synoptics: Philip (Joh. 1,43/ 6,5-7/ 12,20-22/ 14,8), Thomas (Joh. 11,16/ 14,5/ 20,24-29) Bartholomews oder Nathanael (Joh. 1,45/ 21,2), Andrew (Joh. 1,40/ 6,8/ 12,22).

Finally we can say that the self-testimony of **the anonymous author** distinctively leads us to John, the brother of James. Zebedaeus and Salome were their parents. He was born in Bethsaida (house of the fishermen) at the lake Genesareth. His father had a fishing company. The parents of John did not seem to be poor since they employed workers (Mark. 1,19-20). At the same time the acquaintance with the high priest (Joh. 18,15) points to a higher prestige of the family. In the year 44 AD, James the brother of John was beheaded in Jerusalem. The persecution continued and a couple of years later we find John in Ephesus. Perhaps he had an authorized position within the churches of Asia Minor. This can be proven by some of his letters and the seven sendings in the book of revelation. From all the ancient records it can be seen that he reached a high age. He died in Ephesus where he was also buried.

John was not the kind of man who wanted to be in the center of attention, or talked too much or behaved in a conspicuous way. He was a **mystic**, who was open and wanted to go to the bottom of the matter, who knows how to empathize with people and matters. Repeatedly they described him as an emotional dreamer or he was painted as a young boy with feminine lines. This does probably not apply to his true character. He was rather a man who wanted to give 100 % and who thought deeper and saw clearer than others and therefore was also closer with His Master than the other disciples.

Receipients

Some characteristics tell us that the gospel was destined for some churches that were already **well taught and informed** about the life and acts of Jesus Christ. How else would the author of the gospel speak of **the twelve** as of popular personalities (Joh. 6, 67-71), without mentioning their appointment at all? Or how could he talk about Bethany as the „stays of Mary and her sister Martha“ (Joh. 11,1), when he did not even mention these persons?

Therefore the gospel of John must have been written to churches in Asia Minor where the other gospels were already part of the teaching. It is not only a private book of encouragement, but a book for churches. This is more or less also the case with the synoptics. But here this purpose is even stronger. Let us only think how much room the fellowship of the disciples among each other takes in this gospel. The gospel was for the church but it was also created with the foundation being the church. John wrote as one, who was able to regard the life of Jesus in the light of the fellowship with the risen and exalted Lord that was accessible after Easter and Pentecost.

Composition

From old historical evidences we know that our fourth gospel of apostle John was authored upon inspiration of church elders in Asia Minor, towards the end of his life. At this moment he had access to the synoptical gospels which were already spread among the churches. We have no accounts of the exact date of composition, but it is assumed that it was between 85 and 98 AD (end of 1st century).

Authenticity

The old church fathers do not doubt the authenticity of the gospel of John. Eusebius, who knew all the religious literature of his time, said in the beginning of the 4th century about this gospel: *„in all churches underneath the heaven this needs to be considered approved“*. It was acknowledged and accepted by the ancient church with one accord.

Purpose and goal

The **two purposes** of the gospel are clearly stated:

„These things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that you may have life in His name“ (Joh. 20, 31).

John emphasizes the **„real man and real God“** side of Him. With the picture that he draws of the Son of God, he indirectly rejects the false teachings that started to come up about the person Jesus in the area of Asia Minor:

- The *disciples of John the baptist* esteemed their Master (John) higher than Jesus.
- The *Ebionites* only saw in Him the son of Joseph and Mary, who was exalted as Messiah because of honor.
- The *Kerinthians* turned Jesus into a mere human who was united with the heavenly Christ in a moment of time.
- The *Docetists* claimed that the body of Christ would only be a pretended body_ and a display of wrong facts (compare Christian science).

Content and Division

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the main topic of this gospel. We will let this thought guide us to divide the book into chapters.

John 1,1-51 Jesus is the Son of God (Logos) in His incarnation

Joh. 1,1-18 – The word became flesh and dwelled among us.

Joh. 1,29-36 – Behold, the Lamb of God.

Joh. 1,37-51 – We have found the one the scriptures testified of.

John 2,1 to 12,50 – The Son of God before the world

Joh. 2 – Fill the jars with water (wedding at Canaan)

Joh. 3 – Unless a man is a new creature (Nicodemus)

Joh. 4 – Who will drink of this water shall never thirst again (Samaritan woman)

Joh. 5 – Rise up, take you bed and go (Bethesda).

Joh. 6 – I am the bread of life (feeding).

Joh. 7-8 – I am the water of life (feast of tabernacles).

Joh. 9 – I am the light of the world (blind man).

Joh. 10 – I am the good shepherd (speech of Jesus)

Joh. 11 – I am the resurrection and the life (Lazarus).

Joh. 12 – Your king comes to you (last visitation at Jerusalem)

John 13, 1 to 17,26 – The Son of God before His disciples

Joh. 13 – An example I have given you (washing of feet)

Joh. 14 – Let not your heart be afraid (comforter, Holy Spirit)

Joh. 15 – Abide in me, you cannot do anything without me (the vine).

Joh. 16 – In the world you might be scared, but be of good courage.

Joh. 17 – I have given them the glory.

John 18,1 to 19,42 – The Son of God in His suffering

Joh. 18,1-11 – Not mine but your will be done (Gethsemane).

Joh. 18,12-27 – It is better one man died on behalf of a people (Caiaphas)

Joh. 18,28-19,15 – Ecce Homo – Behold what a man (Pilate).

Joh. 19,16-42 – It is finished (Golgotha).

John 20,1-21, 25 – The Son of God as the Resurrected

Joh. 20,1-23 – The Lord has risen.

Joh. 20,24-31 – Blessed are the ones who do not see and yet believe.

Joh. 21,1-14 – Cast out the net.

Joh. 21,15-25 – Simon Peter, do you love me?

Key word: **„Son of God“**

Key verse: **„And the word of God became flesh and dwelled among us so we could see His glory, His glory as the begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth“** (Joh. 1,14).

Miscellaneous

Reports that only occur in the gospel of John:

Personal conversations

With Nicodemus Joh. 3
With the Samaritan woman Joh. 4
With the disciples Joh. 13-16
With Pilate Joh. 18, 28-19, 16
With Peter Joh. 21

Speeches of Jesus

His Divine sending Joh. 5, 7, 8
The bread of life Joh. 6
The good shepherd Joh. 10

Miracles

Turning water into wine (Cana) Joh. 2
Healin of the Son of a royal officer Joh. 4
Healing of a man with infirmities at Bethesda Joh. 5
Healing of the blind Joh. 9
Raising of Joh. 11
Second miraculous fish catch Joh. 21

Images

Of the door to the sheepfold Joh. 10, 1
Of the good shepherd Joh. 10, 12-21
Of the vine Joh. 15, 1-8

Events

Jesus and the adulteress Joh. 8, 1-11
Jesus and the Greeks Joh. 12, 20-22
The washing of the feet Joh. 13, 1-17
The prayer of the high priest Joh. 17
Jesus and Annas. Joh. 18, 12-14
Four words at the cross. Joh. 19, 26, 27, . 28. 30
The pierced side. Joh. 19, 31-37
Peter and John at the grave. Joh. 20, 1-10
The risen One and Thomas. , Joh. 20, 24-29
Appearance at the lake of Genezareth. Joh. 21, 1-23

Special characteristics of John's gospel

The gospel of John is the gospel of love.

It starts with a love confession of God (chap. 3) and closes with the question: Do you love me?

It is the gospel of intimacy. While the other gospels show Jesus surrounded by a crowd, John dedicates whole chapters to private conversations between Jesus and single persons:

- With Nicodemus (Joh. 3),
- With the Samaritan woman (Joh. 4),
- With the twelve (Joh. 13-16),
- With God (Joh. 17),
- With Pilate (Joh. 18-19),
- With Peter (Joh. 21).

It is the gospel of simplicity. The vocabulary of this gospel does not contain more than 700 words. This is just as much as the vocabulary of a little child. There are no theological terminology and it does not depart from the common language.

The gospel of John is the gospel of the Godhead of Christ.

Jesus is Divine

- in His eternity 1,1+2/ 12,34/ 8,58
- in His omniscience 1,46-50/ 4,17-19
- in His creation power 1,3+10
- in His doctrine 7,45+46
- in His equality with God 10,28-30/ 5,18
- in His resurrection 20,8+27+28
- in His omnipresence 17,11+ 26

Terminologies that John preferred to use

● The Father	over	100 times
● Faith		98 times
● The word		78 times
● Recognize		55 times
● Life		52 times
● Love		46 times
● Verily, verily (Greek: Amen, amen)		25 times
● Light		23 times
● Work		23 times
● Testimony, testify		17 times

John 1, 1-51 – Jesus is the Son of God (Logos) in His incarnation

Johannes 1, 1-18 – The word became flesh and dwelled among us

Johannes 1, 1-5 – In the beginning was the word

The gospel of John starts totally different from the gospels of Matthew and Luke, which start with the Genealogy. John starts his gospel with “eternity”. Because to him this is Jesus true origin (compare Hebr. 7,3). According to John Jesus’ source is not (as in Luke) the bosom of His mother, but the bosom of His father.

Jesus was with the father before the world was (Heb. 1,2+10). Jesus was before all beginning (Heb. 1,8/ 7,3/ Col. 1, 15/ Rev. 1,8). The one who spoke from the beginning “Let there be light” has no beginning Himself (Gen 1,3).

The terminology „In the beginning“ goes far beyond Gen 1,1. This is only the beginning of the (New-) Creation. Long before “our” creation the fall of Lucifer took place. Actually Gen. 1,1. should read: And God „separated heaven and earth, as the separated light and darkness, etc. Jesus says: I saw Satan fall from heaven (throne of God) as lightning (Luk. 10,18). Our current creation (Gen) is actually not the actual creation. All things already existed in „secret“. The earth only brings it forth and God blesses. The only thing that God truly created from the substance of the earth is the human being (Gen 1. 26-31).

The starting words of the gospel of John are inexhaustible.

They contain the **whole story of Jesus** and how He existed in God (as the wisdom of God, that was incarnated amongst the people (Prov. 8,22-31). This wisdom took part in the creation and maintaining of the world (Col. 1,16-17). John transports the wisdom to the Logos (word) and illustrates Jesus as the wisdom of God, who says: “I am”. This Divine wisdom invites the people to the “supper of God” (Joh. 6,35/ Prov 9. 1). And the word was with God „ in intimate fellowship with Him“ (Prov. 8,30/ Joh. 10,30), in such glory, which He yearned for after He completed His work (Joh. 17,5), in the place where all angels serve Him (Heb. 1,6 f.). From this glory Jesus came forth to reveal the Father to us and to bring us back to God (1.Petr. 3,18).

Because „in Him there was life“ (Joh. 1, 4, Acts. 17,25/ Joh. 14,9/ 3,16/ Col. 3,4/ 1.Thess. 3,13/ Rev. 19,14).

He dwelled among us.. (Joh. 1,14), which means he camped / established His tent among us. This points to the „tent“ the „tabernacle“, that was filled with the glory of God (Ex. 40,34/ Lev. 26. 11,12/ Ez. 37,27). After the destruction of the temple many prophets prophesied about the return of the glory, the habitation of God (Is. 40,5/ Ez. 37,27/ 43,7). But after the restoration of the temple under Ezra and Nehemia it did not happen. After that Malachi prophesied (Mal. 3,1), that the angel of covenant, the Messiah would come. This was Jesus. In Him (Jesus) God Himself dwelled (Rev. 7,15/ 21,3). This glory of God does not show up in a building like a temple, but in the **body of Christ, a temple** not made by human hands. This way „**He dwelled in the midst of us in grace and truth**“ (Joh. 1,15). Those are terms that are often used for the character of God in the Old Testament (Ps. 117,2/ 89,2+3). During the first proclamation of God by Moses these terms are used for the first time (Ex. 34,6).

It is the same God, that once gave the law to the people of Israel, and at this point He offered grace (Joh. 1,17). The **law** preaches the anger and the condemnation of God (Rom. 4,15/ 2.Cor. 3,9) and the gospel proclaims the **grace**. And because grace and truth are personal character traits of God and not gifts to the people John concludes simply: The **law** „it is given“ and **grace and truth** „have become“.

When John wrote his gospel the body of Christ consisting of the new church of the Lord established by the believers, had already been separated from the **ancient Judaism**. In addition the Jews themselves had been scattered for a long time without a godly covenant (the temple and the altar were destroyed, the priesthood and the sacrifices abolished). And thus they were not part of the “new covenant”. Therefore John often calls the ones outside the new covenant just „**the Jews**“ (Joh. 2,18/ 5,10+15+16+18/ 6, 41/ 7,11+13).

Jesus is the light (Joh. 1,5/ 8,12). God Himself brought light to the darkness (Gen. 1,3). Right when Jesus was born the light surrounded the shepherds (Luk. 2,8+9). In the light that surrounded Saul of Tarsus on the way to Damascus it was also the presence of Jesus (Apg. 9,3-6). When we confess God, we come out of the darkness and into the light (Acts 26,18/ Col. 1,13). The heavenly city is not in need of a lamp, because the Lord is her light (Rev. 21,23). He, the light of the world, went back to the world of eternal light.

Jesus „origin“ lies in secret (Joh. 7,27-29/ 8,14+19/ Hiob 28,20-28). He alone knows the secrets of God and reveals them to us people as the living bread (Joh. 3,11-12+31-32), that truly satisfies the hunger of men (Joh. 6,35/ Prov. 9,1-6/ Matth. 4,4.) He is the Alpha and Omega (Joh. 1, 5).

The term „**world**“ applies for „universe“ and the whole earth and humanity (Joh. 7,7/ 15,18+19/ 17,14). In this prologue also the creature, the glory and the reception / rejection is contained (Joh. 1,11). He came into His possession (His creation, the cosmos, and His people) but they did not receive Him. This is also the reason for the unbridgeable gap between light and darkness, life and death (Joh. 1, 5).

Jesus has many different names, especially in the first chapter of the gospel.

He is: „The word“, „God“ the „begotten Son“, „the Lamb of God“, „the Messiha“, the „King of Israel“ (Rev. 19,13). Every knee will bow before this name (Phil. 2,10+11).

John the baptist was the witness of this word, **that became flesh.**

The evangelist wants to underline, that all of this is not just an idea or a myth, etc, but rather that it is a reality. Therefore He mentions a man (John the baptist) as the God sent witness.

John the baptist was the prophet „Elijah“ that was prophesied by the last prophet of the OT Malachi (Mal. 4,5), in whose spirit and power he performed (Luk. 1,17/ Matth. 11,14/ 17,11+12). He proclaimed with great conviction that Jesus was the coming Messiah (Joh. 1,29-31).

With his message of repentance and the baptism he prepared the people for Jesus.

John the baptist was the first human to whom Jesus talked first after his public performance.

He is the one who prepared the way for Jesus and suddenly appeared – just like Elijah (Mal. 3,1). This forerunner is greater than all the previous prophets, even greater than Moses, David and Elijah. Jesus confirms that in Matthew 11,11. Luke reports **of 7 prophecies** about John the baptist which the angel Gabriel gives to Zacharias. Of no other servant of God we read **similar** things in the bible (Luk. 1,13 17).

Jesus is greater than the angels. Jesus said to Nathanael that they will see greater things, an open heaven and Gods' angels ascending and descending over the Son of God (Joh. 1,50+51).

According to Joh. 1,51 the angels have a special relationship with Jesus: And the angels came and served Him.

In all important events of Jesus' life we see angels serving Him. Starting with the proclamation of His birth (Luk. 1,26/ 2,9-15) as well as the protection of Jesus (Matth. 2,13+19). After the temptations – the angels of God served Him (Matth. 4,11). In the story of His passion the service of angels appears over and over (Luk. 22,43), as well in His resurrection and ascension (Matth. 26,53/ 28,2/ Mark. 6,58/ Acts 1,10-11). Also during His Second Coming the angels will be ministering to Him (blow the trumpets, gather the chosen ones and He Himself will appear with His holy angels – Rev 9,14).

The purpose of angels

- Angels are sent out into ministry on behalf of those who inherit the blessedness (Hebr. 1,14).
- They care for our physical health (1.Kin. 19,5/ Ps. 34,7).
- They protect us from the deceitfulness of people (Acts 5,19).
- An angel guarded paradise.
- They have a responsibility towards children (Matth. 18,10).
- They form a wall against Satan (1.Petr. 5,8/ Ps. 34,7).
- God protects his children through angels (2.Cor. 11,24 26).

Angels are very numerous, mighty and glorious.

- They are also called Myriads (Hebr. 12, 22).
- Jesus speaks of twelve legions (Matth. 26, 33).
- Elisha saw armies for His protection (2.Kin. 6,17/ Ps. 68,17/ Dan. 7,10/ Matth. 16,27/ Rev. 19,14).
- One angel beat 185 000 men of the hostile army (2.Kin. 19,35).
- One angel killed Herod (Acts 12,23).
- **Angels rejoice over our conversion** (Luk. 15,10).
- An angel caused the earthquake at Golgotha (Matth. 28,2+3+5 8).
- Another one turned the stone in front of the grave (Mark. 16,2 5).
- They surround us and see us (1.Cor. 4,9/ Eph. 3,10).

- An angel delivered Peter from prison
- When we die they bring us home to God (Luk. 16, 22).
- The angels will bring in the harvest and go through it (Matth. 13,39+41+49).
- An angel will bind Satan when Jesus returns (Rev. 20,1 3).
- Angels will be there when God rewards the works of His children (Luk. 12,8+9).
- Angels stand around the throne of God and are His guards (1.Kin. 22,19/ Job 1,6/ Matth. 22,30/ Rev. 5,11/ 7,11).

John 2,1 to 12,50 – The Son of God before the world

John 2 – Wedding to Cana

After a long time of waiting, serving and proving Jesus was publicly declared the Messiah (Lamb of God) by John (Luk. 2,19+51). Therewith Jesus started to gather disciples to reveal His glory to them. Jesus started His ministry in Israel by taking away Nathanael's doubts, who was a religious Israelite (Joh. 1,49-51). This one therefore becomes the first Jewish witness of Jesus.

Surprisingly there were many guests attending the wedding of Cana. It was not only Jesus, but also all of His disciples. It might even have been the wedding of Nathanael himself, because he came from Cana. Nathanael translated means „**God has given**“. Later he became one of Jesus' disciples and is usually called Bartholomew (Son of Tholomaeus) (Matth. 10,3).

John 3 – The conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus

Nicodemus was a member of the High Council (Matth. 5,22/ 21,23/ Joh. 7,48+50/ 19,39). He was the most courageous and dared to speak to Jesus privately. The miracles of Jesus had prompted him. But Jesus did not respond to his questions.

Jesus always saw what was hidden in the heart (Joh. 6,70/ 13,18+38/ 16,31+32). This can be seen especially in the conversation with Nicodemus where he revealed what was necessary to enter the Kingdom of God. The doubts of Nicodemus gives Jesus the opportunity to explain to him the „**new birth**“.

Also the new birth according to the gospel of John is a creative miracle. To him it is a miracle of God, that everyone who wants to be a part of God's Kingdom can experience the new birth by simply believing in the testimony of God's Son. Therefore the new birth is the „second birth“ of a man (comp. Tit. 3,5/ 1.Pet. 1,3+23). It has the same meaning as „renewal“ (Eph. 4,34/ Hebr. 6,6/ Col. 3,9+10). New birth is the birth from God, a new heavenly birth. Through it you enter the Kingdom of God, or – expressed in another way – the inner direction of the heart is turned around (if a return (repentance) has taken place). Without the new birth you cannot even take part in the beginning of God's blessings. It is not even possible to “see” the Kingdom of God. It excludes any kind of personal experience (Ps. 36,10/ 90,16).

John 4 – Who drinks of this water will never thirst again (Samaritan woman)

But also here Jesus looks at that which is „hidden“. Joh. 4 starts by saying that Jesus knew what the Pharisees were speaking and thinking, because they were jealous of Him. The **withdrawal of Jesus from Galilee through Samaria** is the first turning point of His official life. The Pharisees start to observe Jesus critically, therefore He withdraws because He was being careful and not frightened. If he would have been scared He would have avoided Samaria. Jesus knew no national or racial hat.

Jesus deliberately walks through Samaria. Anxious and religious Jews avoided Samaria. To them the Samaritans (mixed people) were unclean. They also took offense at them because the Samaritans had already separated themselves from the temple cult in Jerusalem quite early (Joh. 16,24). Furthermore they were followers of Baal (especially under Jezebel and Ahab – Ez.16,46/ Ezra 4,2/ 2.Kin. 27,24-25/ Neh. 10,28). Very soon the **Samaritans** were called descendants of Israel and the house of Joseph (Jos. Aniq. 11,8,6). They wanted to be called „Israelites“ but never „Jews“. Therefore the woman differs between „you Jews“ and „we“. The Samaritans were separated from the Gentiles at a very early stage after their return from the Babylonian captivity (1.Makk. 3,10). During the reign of Hiskia (2.Chron. 30,6+10) and under Josia (2.Chron. 34,9) there were descendants from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasse. Jesus and the apostles regarded the Samaritans as a people between Gentiles and Jews (Acts. 1,8/ 8,5). But for the religious Jews in Jerusalem the Samaritans were not consequent enough in their religious attitude. They had kept their own canon (Pentateuch, containing the 5 books of Moses) and remained with a simple hope for the Messiah and the law. From their religious viewpoint they can be compared to the Saducees. They adhered to the 5 books of Moses and were not as dogmatic and petty with their stubborn, ceremonial statutes and rules of cleanness as the Jews in Jerusalem. This was also the reason why they were not allowed to participate in the restoration of the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 4,1-4/ Neh. 4,1).

They were considered „heretics“ but not „Gentiles“. Due to the rejection of the Jews they established their own temple at Garizim and Manasse, a son of Jojada who was not mentioned because he married the daughter of the Sanballat and was therefore excommunicated, became their first high priest (Neh. 13, 28).

Jesus ignored the evil enmity of the Samaritans by the Jews. He still went to Sichem to continue the tradition of the patriarchs (Gen. 33,19). This land was bought by Jacob from the children of Hemor. In Gen 48,22 he offered the property as a prophetic gift to Joseph. This is where the bones of Joseph were buried (Jos. 24,32). Jacob had dug a well and inherited it to His descendants. The Samaritan emphasized at the well: „Our father Jacob“ had dug it for us. She considered herself to be an Israelite. And at the same time this encounter is an image of Jesus being the true source of life. This woman recognizes Jesus as a prophet (Joh. 4,19). And Jesus Himself testifies that a prophet is not highly esteemed in his own village (Joh. 4,43).

For the second time Jesus went to Cana (Joh. 4,46-54). He healed the son of a royal officer. It was an officer of Herod Antipas, who was considered a king by the common crowd and they also called him king (Matth. 14,1+9). This healing took place in Cana before Jesus went to Capernaum. Jesus also teaches the faith in the spoken word (Joh. 4,50). He just had to believe and trust in the words of Jesus. John emphasizes that this was the second “sign” of Jesus (Joh. 4,54/ s. a. Joh. 2,11).

John 5,1 to 7,9 – The first rebellion against the revelation

John 5,1-18 – Healing at the lake Bethesda

Jesus said: Rise up, take your bed and go. Bethesda means: „House of mercy“. For 38 years this man had already been lying at the water of healing and had given up on healing. This healing is a symbolic indication for the „mercy of God“ for the people of Israel. Israel could not enter the promised land because of a lack of faith for 38 years and had to stay in the desert (Gen. 2,14), until the old generation had died. With the coming of Jesus the spiritual „old generation“ was already dying. With the fall of Jerusalem (70 AD) and the fall of Madaba the Old Israel no longer existed. Therefore the coming of Jesus and His works was the last great grant of grace to the people of Israel who were still left.

John 5,19-46 – Speech about the works of the Son

This speech includes two themes:

1. the Father has given the son authority to give life (Joh. 5,19-30).
2. the Father has testified of the Son:
 - a) by John the baptist.
 - b) by the works he accomplished through him.
 - c) by the scriptures, such as Moses (Joh. 5,31-47).

To the Jews judgment is one of the most powerful Divine acts of God.

And this office has been given to Jesus (Joh. 5,26-30/ 12,48/ Matth. 25,31-46/ Acts 17,31/ Rom. 2,6). It is the day of the Lord (Amos. 5,18/ 1.Cor. 1,8) On this day the dead will rise (Matth. 10,15/ 11,22+24/ 12,36/ 2.Pet. 2,9/ 3,7/ 1.Joh. 4,17). And all people will have to stand before the judge Jesus Christ (Matth. 25,31). You cannot escape the judgment (Rom. 2,3/ Gal. 5,10/ 1.Thess. 5,3). The judgment is impartial (Col. 3,25/ 1.Pet. 1,17). According to 2.Timothy 4,1 this expresses the incomparable Sovereignty of God (Joh. 3,11). The people will be judged according to their belief in the Son of God (Joh. 3,12/ 16,8-11). He is the Saviour and judge at the same time. He is the Saviour of all and shall not be resisted (Joh. 3,18/ 8,15/ 12,47).

The fact that this healing happened on a Sabbath gave the Pharisees reason for wrath. To them it was a clear violation of the Sabbath. This healing was supposed to demonstrate, that God was not finished with the creation yet, and that all of creation is longing for the redemption of the children of God. **Only with their completion the creation will be complete** and not before. This was a problem for the Jews. The deliberate work of Jesus on a Sabbath, the rest of God. They believed that God finished His work on the seventh day and that creation was complete. That Jesus would perform creative miracles on Sabbath days, means that the creation was not complete on the seventh day and that it still needed work. This upset the Jews and Jesus has to justify His claim (Luk. 6,5/ Matth. 12,1-8/ Mark. 2,27-28).

The Jews were also offended because Jesus simply called God „**my Father**“ (Joh. 5,18), and not „**our Father**“. Jesus emphasizes His total (eternal) unity of the Father and the Son, the Son is the eternal revealer of the hidden God, the complete reflection of the Divine being.

The unity of the Father and the Son of God is not based on an outward relationship but on a deep Divine love. The Father does nothing without the Son and the Son does nothing without the Father. Therefore also the healing on the Sabbath is in alignment with the will of the Father and an image of the Divine intervention of the Father. The Father does not do anything without the son (Joh. 1,3). **What the Father does, the Son also does.** He raises the dead, casts out death and brings them back to life, creates life in them. This is the highest privilege of Divine omnipotence (Deut. 32,39/ 1.Sam. 2,6/ 1.Kin. 17,21-23). The same works the Son also performed. The Father created all things (Col. 1,16) and the Son receives it (Hebr. 1,3). Just like the father is a source of life Himself, He also gave it to His son, to carry a source of life within Himself.

Who does not honor the Son, does not honor the father (Joh. 5,23). There is no other godly admiration of the Father but through His Son. The people will be judged whether they believed Jesus or rejected Him (Joh. 3,12,18-21/ 16,8-11).

John 6, 1-15 – The multiplication of the loaves

Many pilgrims followed Jesus when He travelled. They wanted to hear and experience Him. Part of this miracle is that the people called Him prophet and wanted to make Him king. In this miracle Jesus proves that He is the promised Messiah, who teaches and feeds the people just like Moses once did in the wilderness (Deut 18,15).

The miracle of the multiplication of bread happened at the time of the Jewish pass over (the Israelites left Egypt and went into the wilderness) (Joh. 6,4).

At this point Jesus introduces Himself as the true bread who came down from heaven (Joh. 6,51-58). According to its nature, Manna was an earthly nourishment even though it was brought forth by God in a miraculous way. It came up from the earth (Joh. 3,31) and could not produce life itself (Joh. 5,26), since it did not have life. Manna was only an image / role model for the coming true bread (1.Cor. 10,3). The „multiplication of bread“ belongs to the typical „stories of saturation“ in the bible (Ex. 16/ Numb. 11/ 1.Kin. 17,8-16/ 2.Kin. 4,42), which repeatedly occur in Jesus' history and the history of the first church (Mark. 6,32-44/ 8,1-10/ Luk. 9,10-17/ Matth. 14,13-21/ 15,32-39). It is an image of the deliverance in a time of need. In ancient Christianity it was a role model for the Lord's supper and therewith reached its peak (Joh. 6,32+48-59), when Jesus Himself said, that His „body and blood are the true food“ (Joh. 6,51), where a man can feed on the incarnated word (Joh. 1,14/ 1.Cor. 11,24/ Luk. 22,19). The Jews were totally alienated by this teaching. They do not understand this statement, with an exception of the disciples (Joh. 6,60-69). The words of Jesus can only be understood if the spirit reveals to them (Joh. 1,33), that He came wrapped up in flesh (1.Joh. 4,2/ 2.Joh. 7), which means: in the carnal flesh (Joh. 1,14). In the NT the word „flesh“ is not a term for the word „body“. It is rather referring to the substance that the earthly body is made of. It is rather a spiritual description and is speaking of the nature of the spiritual human, for example the sin, carnality and the lack of power. .

To **eat His flesh** (Joh. 6,53+54) is described to have the same effect as to believe in Him (Joh. 6,35+40) and to drink His blood is as coming to Him. And doing this is what continuously renews the “substance” (soul) (Joh. 6,51).

The miracles of Jesus increase. People are looking for Him (Joh 5,24). He knows that they are excited about Him and what they really want. Jesus deliberately separates Himself from people who have the wrong motives. He draws back to teach His disciples. At the synagogue in Capernaum He continued to teach (Joh. 6, 22-66).

John 7,1 to 10,21 – The great Messianic revelation of Jesus and His rejection

John 7,1-24 – Jesus joins the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem

The „feast of tabernacles“ belonged to the 3 feasts of the Jewish pilgrimage (Ex. 23,14).

The bible calls the feast different names: „feast of tabernacles“ (Deut. 16,13), the „feast of sowing“ (Ex. 23,16) or simply „the feast“ (1. Kin. 8,65) or „the feast of God“ (Deut. 23,29). The „feast of tabernacles“ was celebrated for 8 days in Israel – according to the Diaspora 9 days. The feast of tabernacles reminds of the time when they lived in tents after they left Egypt (Numb. 23,42). In one of the symbolically rebuild tabernacle all meals were taken during the feast, according to the Jewish tradition. The religious Jews also slept in the tent. During the era of the tabernacle on the second night of the feast they brought water from the lake Siloah and poured it on the altar. This „sacrifice of water“ which has no biblical foundation, was supposed to ask God for a fertile year and a lot of rain. It was accompanied by great shouts of joy in the temple. In general the time of the feast was supposed to be a time of joy (Numb. 23,40). The feast of tabernacles was a feast of thanksgiving for the vintage and a remembrance of the time Israel spent in the desert. The journey through the wilderness was a time of great hardship and thirst.

Jesus applies all customs (and symbols) of the feast to Himself (1.Cor. 10,4). For

example: "He is the water of life".

The bothers of Jesus urged Him, to go to Jerusalem so that also the disciples (followers) of Jesus, who lived in Judea (and Jerusalem) could see His works and believe in His sending (Joh. 2,23/ 3,26/ 4,1/ Joh. 7,3). The word „believe“ does not apply for some inner conviction (other than in John 2,23). He was supposed to honor his disciples by a public demonstration of His power and glory, just like the crowd in Nazareth demanded (Luk. 4,23).

Jesus denies to be put under pressure. He is waiting for „Kairos“, the right „moment“, the hour of God. In the middle of the feast Jesus starts to minister as a teacher. (Joh. 7,14).

John 7,25-30 – The argument about the origin of the Messiah

His human origin conceals His divine roots. Jesus is speaking to Scribes, members of the high Council (Joh. 7,13). They had to testify by themselves that He knew the scripture very well and was also able to interpret and teach it. The evidences are His sharp and correct answers, even though He was not trained to be a Rabbi (Joh. 7,15). He Himself explains that His doctrine is not of men and that all of this cannot be learned or taught by a human, but it was a direct revelation of God Himself (Matth. 19,17). Since the people could not know of His miraculous birth, they believed that He was a Nazarene, (Joh. 7,25-30) and therefore they were convinced that He could not be the Messiah (Joh. 7,40-52).

Jesus arguments about His "going away" (Joh. 7,33-36/ 8,21-23) is closely related to His divine origin. He clearly states: The Messiah as a human will go to the place where He has always belonged due to His Godliness (Joh. 7,29+34). The Jews believed that the Messiah had to be born in Bethlehem (city of David) (Joh. 7,42/ Matth. 2,5) and had to be hidden in a secret place until God shows up (Matth. 24,26). Jesus totally fulfilled all those requirements of the traditional imagination but how where they supposed to know? Jesus does not tell them about the virgin birth, and does not teach them about His Godhead. This probably remained a secret until the resurrection of Jesus and Pentecost. Jesus also says, **„that He did not come by Himself“** (Joh. 7,28+29), but he does not correct their lack of knowledge. He remains a hidden secret until the revelation of the Holy spirit confirmed Him. In this chapter Jesus uses typical Rabbi teachings. For example „circumcision“ (Joh. 7,22-24). The Jews considered the „circumcision“ a sanctification of a special body part. So if it was allowed to sanctify (circumcise) on a Sabbath, how much more should it be allowed to heal a man?

John 8,1-11 – Jesus and the adulteress

A number of Pharisees bring to Him a woman who was caught cheating on her husband. They were not the lawful judges of this woman but their zeal for judgment brought them to carry her before a judge. But before they do that, they use this event to set up a trap for Jesus. The crime of adultery had to be taken to court. But the Pharisees themselves had no right to judge her.

Jesus answer smashed their cruel intentions with one sentence, in which He neither violated the law or the love. He hits the Pharisees with their own words, because their motive was not their zeal for God's law and His honor, but their self-exaltation and addiction to judge was leading them. To chase away the hypocrites a simple word of Jesus was enough to reveal their character and put them to shame. This is how Jesus reveals heart conditions and enlightens the most inner thoughts of a man.

John 8,12-20 – For He is the light of the world.

At the feast of tabernacles it was not only that **they drew water with joy** (Joh. 7,37), but they also set up lights in the court of the temple and lit them (a seven-armed lampstand is the national symbol of Israel) The lighting of the lampstand was the highlight of the feast. The high priest, the eldest and all who wanted to join were going on a torchlight procession around the lampstand and were singing psalms of joy. **The lighting of the lampstand** was supposed to symbolize the enlightenment of the world through Israel (Mic. 4,2/ Is. 2,2/ 60,3+5/ 55,5/ Zach. 14,7+17). In all of this celebrating Jesus turns to the crowd, who were in the courts of the temple. This was a different audience than the ones who wanted to arrest Him (Joh. 7,45-46). There were probably followers of Jesus from Judew (Joh. 7,3).

The light reveals itself at first before it enlightens other things. **Here Jesus reveals Himself** (Joh. 8,13-18).

Jesus applies all of the customs of the feast to Himself, by showing that all things are fulfilled through Him. He then emphasizes: „Who follows me will not walk in darkness...“.

Jesus is the light of the world (Joh. 1,9/ 9,1-39/ 12,35/ 1.Joh. 2,8-11/ 2.Cor. 4,6). He is like the cloud by day when the Israelites left Egypt. (Joh. 8,12/ Ex. 13,21).

The light is also the „symbol of life, luck and joy“, while „the darkness“ is a symbol of death, misfortune and tears (Job 30,26/ Is. 45,7). The hours of the first rays of light in the morning are the preferred moments of Divine intervention (Ps. 17,15/ 5,4/ 30,6/ 46,6/ 49,15/ 57,9/ 73,20/ 90,14/ 130,6/ 143,8). The red sky and light symbolize the salvation (Is. 8,20/ 9,1/ 33,2/ 58,10), while „**the evening and darkness**“ are images of oppression and misfortune (Ps. 30,6/ 59,7/ 88,19/ 107,10/ Is. 17,14/ 50,10).

Jesus arguments about the light are also a part of His „**self revelation**“. Here he says that Divine truths can not be proven with superficial testimonies like human, carnal things. The Pharisees did not want to see the spiritual (1.Cor. 2,13+14), they dealt with the messenger of God and His Kingdom – and therefore also God – according to earthly measures. Thus their judgment about Jesus was ungodly and superficial (not spiritual).

The sentence: **“It is also written in YOUR LAW”** (Joh. 8,17) sounds like a clear renouncement of the Jewish law of which the Pharisees are so proud of. Even though the Law once was of God He dissociates Himself from it deliberately („**in your law**“). He recognized the Jewish law as something human and totally different from what it used to be. In this conversation he wants to show the Pharisees that Divine testimonies are special. And other witnesses are called. There is the testimony of the Father (the voice from heaven) and the testimony of John the Baptist. Furthermore there are the Divine works such as healing, casting out demons, etc and the many appearances and revelations around the birth of Jesus (virgin birth, appearance of angels, the shepherds, Simon and Hannah, the star of Bethlehem, die Wise men, etc.) Furthermore the many written testimonies of the OT that refer to Him and can be applied (comp. Joh. 5,31-39). And in addition all the disciples of Jesus who followed Him, testified by their personal experience, conviction and enlightenment that He was sent from God and would have been able to testify of it before the Pharisees (Joh. 1,6+16+19-49/ Matth. 3,1-11). But the intimate and personal testimony of the Father, which Jesus recalls repeatedly, seems ridiculous to them. They still wanted to see the „witness“ that He calls upon as His evidence with their own eyes. Jesus tells them that the father can only be recognized with the inner eye and in the spirit and that they would see them, if they would recognize and accept the Son (Joh. 8,19). But because they do not receive Him they sin „against the truth“ (Joh. 8,40+45), which according to John is the sin against the Holy Spirit (comp. Matth. 12,31/ Joh. 7,34). They might die „in their sins“ (Joh. 8. 21), that they could die without the hope of redemption and would therefore perish without salvation.

When the gospel of John was written the words of Jesus had already come true (Joh. 10,16/ 12,20+21+35/ 19,37/ Acts 10,2/ 3,19), which is that all people of all nations (Non-Jews) had come to the faith of Jesus Christ and found salvation in Him. For the Jews the Divine time of grace had expired, which was demonstrated by the destruction of the temple (70 AD).

John 8,30-58 – The true children of Abraham

Jesus denies the Jewish decendants of Abraham. They are decendants of Abraham just like Ismael etc., but because the people had turned away from the true God, the prophets already called them Sons of the adulteress (Is. 57, 3/ Ez. 16,15/ 20,30/ Hos. 2,4). That is why the story of the adulteress (Joh. 8,1-11) was used as an introduction by the evangelist. Und just like Ismael, the son of the slave was once rejected (Joh. 8,34+35/ Gal. 4,30), they were as well rejected because they did not believe in Jesus (Joh. 1,12/ 3,7-9). But those who believe in Him shall become sons of God (Matth. 5,9/ 6,9/ Rom. 8,14/ Gal. 3,26/ 4,5/ Jam. 1,27/ 1.Joh. 3,1). The Jews simply did not want to accept Jesus. They believed that He was just exaggerated everything (Joh. 8,54-58), when He said: **„Even before Abraham became, I am...“**. Here Jesus speaks of His pre-existence (Joh. 3,17+31/ 6,33+38+42+50+51+58+62/ 7,29/ 8,23+42). He does not say **“I was”**, but uses the present term „I am“, which underlines the aspect of eternity. We find the existence of our Lord before the **creation of the world (Joh. 17,5+24/ Eph 1,4). Only an eternal God is God! Only if the pre-existence of Jesus goes back to eternity, He is truly God (Col. 1,16-17). In these verses we read that all things were made through Him. Therefore He Himself was not created. He is eternal – without beginning and end (Hebr. 7,3). This amazing fact was proclaimed in the OT and proved in the NT and confirmed by our Lord Jesus (Micah 5,1/ Joh. 1,1).** The Jews understood that He was considering Himself **equal with God** when He said that (Ex 3,14).

In the New Testament **a new era started**, the time of grace, that Abraham was longing for, like it is expressed in Luke 17,22 (1.Cor. 1,8+9/ 5,5/ 2.Cor. 1,14/ 1.Thess. 5,2/ 2.Thess. 2,2/ 2.Petr. 3,10/ Phil. 1,6+10/ 2,16/ 1.Cor. 3,1/ Hebr. 10+ 25/ Luk. 10,12/ 21,34/ 17,24). This day is the fulfillment of the era that the prophets prophesied, the era of salvation which started when Jesus came (Luk. 17,20-24) and will be completed when Jesus returns (1.Cor. 1,7/ 15,23/ 1.Tim. 6,14).

Such a claim that Jesus made, to be a divine being, was plain blasphemy for the Jews, and was to be sentenced to death (Lev. 24,16).

John 9 – The healing of the blind

When He passed by a man who was born blind on the Sabbath He healed him. Jesus, the light of the world is facing the blind. The healing of this man took place on a Sabbath under the symbolic contribution of the temple well „Siloah“. It was probably at the end of the feast of tabernacles, to emphasize and highlight what was said about the light of the world (Joh. 8,12), similar to the healing of the two blind men Matth. 9,2-34, „**where their eyes were opened**“, as an image of the inner enlightenment. Also this healing of the blind, wants to open the eyes for the grace of God. At this point the disciples of Jesus asked who was the one who sinned. If it was him or his parents (Joh. 9,2). Who had committed the crime, so that he was born blind (Ex. 20,5/ Deut. 5,9). Jesus explains that all work together to glorify the grace of God. For He came to cancel all consequences of sin, so that a question of blame or punishment is not an option anymore (Matth. 9,2/ Luk. 13,1/ Joh. 5,14).

Jesus is concerned about the healing of the whole being. The physical healing is an outward sign of a deeper „becoming whole“. In the promise of forgiveness of sins there was always a promise of salvation, because at that time all sickness was counted a result of a sin that the person or the parents committed (Matth. 8,29/ Joh. 5,14/ 9,2). But then Jesus gave them a whole new point of view about sin and its results, as for example: sickness. He abolishes the consequences of sin and therefore turns them into a glorification of God. He said something similar about the sickness and the death of Lazarus, ***it is not unto death, but unto the glory of God***“ (Joh. 11,4). But the Jews rejected the one who was healed (Joh. 9,34), and did not want to accept this truth. Their pride did not allow it. It is also interesting to see how the attacks of the Pharisees only strengthened the faith of the one who received the healing. This man who was blind before acknowledges Jesus as the true Messiah, while at the same time the Pharisees who know the scriptures are not able to recognize Him.

The healing of the blind was **legally interrogated**, at first they asked neighbours and acquaintances who had known the blind man before. Then they asked him himself, how he received sight. But they did not want to believe him, that he was ever really blind. Later the Pharisees called his parents. They confirmed that their son was born blind. Therefore the Pharisees called the man in again and commanded: „Give the honor to God. We know that this man (Jesus) is a sinner“ (Joh. 9,24). And then the man who was born blind said: „If He is a sinner I don't know. But I know one thing: I have been blind and now I see (Joh. 9,24-34).

During the trial they found out, that the Pharisees could not deny the miracle. Therefore Jesus said: I came to the court of this world to cause the blind to see, and the ones who see to become blind (Joh. 9,39-41).

John 10,1-21 – Jesus is the good shepherd. A speech of Jesus that is especially addressing the Pharisees. Here Jesus continues his speech about the former healing of the blind (Joh. 9,39): „**so that all who cannot see may see, and those who can see become blind...**“. Just like the blind received His sight through Jesus, the Pharisees stand before Jesus with eyes that can see, but because of their stubbornness they are blinded (Matth. 13,14), so that they do not understand. The Pharisees were able to „see“ in a certain aspect, but this kind of „seeing“ should have served them to recognize Jesus, but they were blind on a higher level. They believed and also called themselves able to see, **therefore their sins could not be forgiven** (Joh. 9,40-41). Their self-righteousness turned them into sinners even more (Matth. 9,12-13/ Luk. 7,41-49) and rendered them unable to understand salvation.

At this point Jesus also speaks of „**the true flock**“, the ones who know the voice of the good shepherd. Here an image is used, where the sheep (at night for reasons of safety) are gathered into a **great flock** and all the sheep are getting „mixed“. But as soon as the morning dawns and the new day starts every shepherd is getting his own sheep. To call the sheep on the next day every shepherd is using a **very special mating call**, that only the sheep that belong to him are acquainted with (Joh. 10,3-5).

If Jesus is speaking of a „**shepherd**“, he is especially speaking of the Pharisees and scribes. He speaks of the teachers and the spiritual leaders of the people. Because through them and their obstinate teaching Judaism survived after the fall of Israel (70 AD) and later even developed to Judaism as we know it today. This was evident to the evangelists at that time. Therefore he dedicates almost a whole chapter to the shepherds, and sharply criticises the „**hirelings**“. A hireling is a hired (payed) shepherd who does not own the sheep. He is also not interested in the destiny of the sheep. The sheep do not know his voice, because they do not belong to him. This is speaking of the spiritual relationship between the shepherd and the sheep. The hireling is only a servant fulfilling a duty. But opposed to that, the shepherd knows the ones who belong to him, and they know him / his voice (Matth. 7,23/ 2.Tim. 2,19).

The true shepherd knew His sheep from the beginning, and from the first moment there is a **relationship of love**. This is how Jesus describes His intimate relationship to His heavenly father and to the ones who belong to him here on earth. The Jews were took offense at that. They did not want to understand that and therefore they decided to kill Him (Joh. 10,17-21). Others claimed He had a demon, which rose the question what demons can or cannot do: „Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?“ (referring to Joh. 9,30-33). A devil can never perform **blessing miracles**, but only **destructive miracles**. (He can only tempt, confuse, blind, enslave, destroy, alienate, etc.).

John 10,22-39 – The feast of the temple

This celebration was a memory of the rededication of the temple and the altar after the defilement of Antiochus Epiphanes, Judas the Maccabee (1.Macc. 4,56+59/ 2.Macc 1,18). This is where Jesus **publicly confesses**, that He is the Messiah (Joh. 10,24-25).

Jesus argues with the present Jews in the usual attitude of a rabbi (Joh. 10,34-36), **„...does it not say in YOUR LAW: I told you: you are gods?“**. At this point Jesus is addressing the judges, who were called „gods“ to reflect an image, because judgment is a work of God (Deut. 1,17/ 19,17/ Ex 21,6/ Ps. 58). Therefore Jesus concludes that He, **the messenger of God** cannot be charged for blasphemy. This title **„Son of God“** soon determines His destiny (Joh. 19,7). He also tells them, that He revealed Himself as the **chosen one of God** expressly enough (Joh. 10,25/ Joh. 2,19/ 5,17+39/ 6,31/ 8,24+28+56/ 9,37). But **to believe in Jesus**, you had to be connected with Him, which means that you had to be „born again“ and from „above“ (Joh. 8,23), „of God“ (Joh. 8,47), „of the truth“ (Joh. 18,37) and „belong to his flock“ (Joh. 10,14). Faith requires an inner relationship with the truth (Joh. 3,17-21/ Acts 13,48/ Rom. 8,29). Only those will understand the truth, whose names are written in heaven, in **„the book of life“** (Luk. 10,20/ Phil. 4,3/ Offb. 20,12).

The Jews had clearly heard and understood that Jesus was of **divine nature** (Joh. 10, 33), but they did not want to understand (Joh. 8,16+29/ 10,38/ 14,9-10/ 17,11+21). Also in John 2,11: Jesus revealed His glory / credibility as a prophet by signs and wonders and proved to be sent from God (Joh. 3,2/ 6,29+30/ 7,3+31/ 9,16+33). He clearly renewed the miracles of Moses and Elijah (Joh. 1,21-23/ Mal. 3,23-24/ Matth. 17,10-13/ Joh. 3,14-15/ 6,14+30+31+58/ 7,40+52/ 13,1/ Acts 3,22+23/ 7,20-44/ Hebr. 3,1-11).

This is when the Jews decide to kill Jesus. But Jesus escaped. The number of the believers grew, also the embarrassment and anger of His opponents. During the council the opinions were shared and in the end they caused themselves to be scared to deal with the Romans, who could only intervene on behalf of the security of the state.

Johannes 11,1-54 – the raising of Lazarus

This miracle takes place shortly before the end of Jesus carnal life. The first three evangelists did not mention this great miracle on purpose, perhaps in order to protect Lazarus who was still alive. But when John wrote his gospel, Lazarus had probably already died. .

It is amazing how detailed the evangelist describes the emotions of Jesus, **„that Jesus cried and that he was sad and shaken“**. He cried with the ones who cried.

This is where Jesus shows that He has authority over death, and that even death cannot snatch anybody out of God's hand. Again Jesus acknowledges the instruction of the father and is in no hurry (like in the wedding of Cana).

This miracle that happened so close to Jerusalem rose the attention of the high council more than any other of his works. **This miracle of Jesus they did not deny at all**, but they hated Him the more. They were afraid that He might work more such miracles. But they actually feared that He would crown Himself king of Israel and therefore provoke the Romans to fight against them.

The miracles of Jesus

Jesus performed different kinds of miracles, such as healing wonders, casting out of demons, raising the dead, miracles of resistance (wonder-working power over the enemies) nature miracles. Throughout the gospels we count **twenty** miracles of healing, **seven** casting out of demons, **three** raisings from the dead, **four** miracles of resistance and **eight** nature miracles during the public life of Jesus, and **one** after His resurrection, which are described in detail.

The life of Jesus was accompanied and determined by signs and miracles. Apart from the outstanding signs which happened at His birth, the baptism and His death, the four evangelists report of many miracles that Jesus performed to approve His Divine Sending. **79 miracles of Jesus** are expressly accounted in the gospels. Jesus delivered many of evil spirits (Acts 10,38). **Eight** such miracles do the gospels tell us about (Mark. 1,23-28/ Luk. 4,33-37/ Matth. 8,28/ Mark. 5,1/ Luk. 8,26/ Matth. 17,14/ Matth. 9,32/ 12,22/ 15,21/ 13,11).

It is told that Jesus cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene (Mark. 16,9), „and they brought many who had evil spirits“ (Matth. 8,16). Furthermore angels served Jesus, which also needs to be counted among the signs and miracles (Matth. 4,11/ Luk. 22,43).

Jesus lived a downright wondrous life:

- the miracle of water turning into wine (Joh. 2),
- the wondrous fish catch (Luk.1-11/ Joh. 21,1. 13),
- to find the coin in the mouth of the fish (Matth. 17,24-27),
- the two multiplication of the loaves (Matth. 14,15-21/ Mark. 6,34-44/ Luk. 9,12-17),
- to quiet a storm (Matth. 8,23-27/ Mark. 4,35-40),
- the walking on the water (Matth. 14,23-33),
- the sudden drying up of the figtree (Matth. 21,18-21).

Jesus gave authority to His apostles, to also work miracles (Luk. 10,9/ Matth. 10,8/ Mark. 16,17/ Joh. 14,12). After the first sending the 72 disciples returned with great joy and told Him: „Lord, even the demons are subject to your name“ (Luk. 10,17). The apostles continued to work divine wonders after Pentecost.

All important miracles of Jesus were performed in public, in cities, on the streets, many in Jerusalem, even in front of the people. Among the eye-witnesses there were teachers, who defined themselves by their knowledge and position, as for example Nicodemus, Jairus, the centurion, Zaccaeus, Lazarus, the scribes and Pharisees, priests, members of the high council, Not all admitted those miracles, especially the Pharisees and scribes tried by all means to deny the existence of the miracles. About certain miracles the opponents of Jesus even commissioned legal investigations, for example about the healing of a **38-year old sick man** (Joh. 5,10-16) and the **one born blind** (Joh. 9,1-34).

If the Jews could not deny the miracles or did not want to acknowledge them, they therewith denied the whole life story of Jesus. Many times we read, that many believed on His name when they saw the signs He performed (Joh. 2,23/ 11,45/ 12,42/ 20,29). This explains several conversions, i.e. the conversion of Nicodemus (Joh. 3,3), and the unshakeable faith of the apostles (Joh. 2,11/ Mark. 4,41). Furthermore Jesus used some miracles as the key to His speech, as for example after the healing of the gout-ridden man, to tell the Jews something about His divine mission and His sonship (Joh. 5). And after the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves Jesus calls Himself „bread of life“ (Joh. 6). After the raising of Lazarus the Pharisees and scribes counselled, „***what to do with Jesus? For this man works many signs...***“ (Joh. 11,47/ Matth. 12,14/ Mark. 3,6). Also the apostles confirmed full of confidence: „Jesus, the Nazarene, a man to whom was given a testimony through deeds, miracles and signs, which God performed through Him in your midst, as you yourself know“ (Acts 2,22).

If the miracles of Jesus would only be invented by the disciples, the opponents of Christianity would have openly proclaimed that, But the Jews did not dare to deny a single one of His miracles in their **Talmud** (was created shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem). They admitted them but tried to explain them by the help of magical power or art.

The Pharisees did absolutely not want to acknowledge the miracles of Jesus, even though they could not deny them after legal investigations (Joh. 9). Furthermore Jesus publicly explained several times, that His miracles prove His divine sending, His answer to the question of John the baptist, if Jesus is the Messiah clearly reveals it (Matth. 11,4-6/ Luk. 7,22-23). Especially these signs were announced by Isaiah 35,6 and 61,1 as the Messianic sign. Jesus also said in the temple: „***The works I do in the name of my father bear testimony of me***“ (Joh. 10,24+25+37+38).

In the life of Jesus even spectacular natural events are mentioned as signs and wonders: The **star of Bethlehem** (Matth. 2,2) and the **great solar eclipse** from the sixth to the ninth hour (Luk. 23,44).

John 12,1-11 – Anointing in Bethany

This is where the last week of Jesus life on earth took place (Joh. 12,12/ 13,1/ 18,28/ 19,31) and it ends with the resurrection on Easter Monday and His 40 days of revelations. **The anointing of Bethany** was His only „anointing“ that He received of men and all 4 gospels give account of this event. It was an honoring and a credit that was bestowed on His corpse in advance.

This symbolical act was a preparation to the true funeral of Jesus, where it was not possible to anoint Him anymore (Joh. 12,7/ 19,38). Before the beginning of one of His hardest battles and suffering, Jesus was supposed to be strengthened as a human being by the most intimate evidence of love He ever experienced by another person. That which is the „anointing“ to complete Jesus, caused Judas Ischariot to rebellion and betrayal..

John 12,12-19 – Jesu's entry into Jerusalem

Jesus has never been as famous as after the raising of Lazarus. People already missed Him at the celebration in Jerusalem and asked about Him. The people firmly believed that Jesus would finally fulfill the old prophecies of the promised Messiah. The crowd – and especially the pilgrims were amazed by this work of Jesus (Joh. 12,9-11).

Jesus entered Jerusalem several times. Those entries (stays) differed from each other in several aspects, as for example the number of animals that Jesus used.

- Joh. 12,1-11 - the day before the Passover (8. Nisan): a meal in Bethany at Lazarus' house, Mary anointed Jesus feet, Judas took offense at it, many followed Jesus, the high priest determine to kill Lazarus
- Joh. 12,12-19/ Luk. 19,29-44/ Mark. 11,1-11 – the next day (9. Nisan): Jesus enters Jerusalem riding on a young colt, lamentation over Jerusalem, the disciples spread the message in Jerusalem; Jesus goes into the temple and sees everything, at night He returned to Bethany.
- Mark. 11,12-19/ Matth. 21,1-17/ Luk. 19,45+46: the next morning (10. Nisan): The entry into Jerusalem on two animals, casting out of merchants and trade men from the temple, teaching in the temple, at night He goes back into town.
- Matth. 21,18 bis 26,5/ Mark. 11,20 bis 14,2/ Luk 20,1 bis 22,2 – the next day (11. Nisan): Jesus preaches in the temple, argument with the religious leaders, after leaving the temple He spoke with his disciples on the mount of olives, went back to Bethany.
- Matth. 26,6-13/ Mark. 14,3-9 – That night He took His meal at Simons's house in Bethany, an unknown woman anoints the head of Jesus, this time the other disciples take offense at it – just like Judas/ Judas leaves the group to betray Jesus.

John 12,30-50 - Jesus proclaimed His glorification through His death.

This was a revelation from a higher world. The answer to Jesus' prayer (Joh. 12,28-29), was a voice from heaven. Jesus like once during the **covenant** on the Mount of Sinai (Ex. 19,19) this is how they ceremonially closed the **new covenant**, by the son sacrificing Himself to the Father and the Father receiving the sacrifice. The others heard the voices of thunder, but Jesus explains what had happened (Joh. 12,30). This event was very similar to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9,7/ 22,9), some heard and could not see, and some saw the light and heard nothing.

And therefore His public performance among the Jews was finished (Joh. 12,37-50) and leaves them blind and stubborn, for they loved the darkness more than the light.

John 13,1- 17,26 – The son of God before His disciples

Here we obtain a clear insight into the inner life of Jesus. He reveals us the foundation that He lived upon and takes us to the secret of His divine being, how He submits to His father.

John 13,1-30 – The feet washing

According to the gospel of John Jesus finished His public work at this point. He finally turns to minister to His disciple only, purges, strengthens and comforts them. John puts the life and death of Jesus in the center of attention for the first time (Joh. 13,1). This is a secret that He kept to reveal during the past moments of His carnal ministry (Joh. 13,34/ 15,9+13/ 17,23/ 1.Joh. 3,16/ Gal. 2,20/ Rom. 8,35/ Eph. 3,19/ 5,2+25). With the feet washing Jesus (symbolically) took on the full **„image of a servant“**, humbled Himself and served His disciples as a slave (Luk. 22,24). He was not ashamed to wash His feet. Also the betrayer lets Jesus wash His feet (Joh. 13,10-11). The feet washing of Jesus (Joh. 13,1-30) can firstly interpreted as His work of salvation, that finds its end at the cross (Joh. 13,7-11), and finally the act of love among the disciples (Joh. 13,12-17).

The feet washing has a primarily practical purpose. Stressed feet are in need of a thorough care and cleansing. A feet bath with well tempered water helps to relax, clean and blood supply. In those days the feet washing was offered to a visitor as a gesture of hospitality (Luk. 7,44). In 1. Timothy 5,10 we read that about the feet washing of the Saints, how foreigners find shelter and help. Furthermore the feet washing is a divine lesson of humility and servanthood. Jesus gave them a memory about the importance of serving in humility unto the brethren.

The scene of the feet washing is the introduction of a long speech with His disciples (Joh. 1,13-17). His passion starts at this moment (Joh. 13,31), when Judas leaves, driven by Satan. But Jesus celebrates His victory as though He was already glorified (Joh. 16,33). To Him His glorification was connected to His going away. For the Jews this separation would be final (Joh. 8,21), for His disciples only temporary (Joh. 14,2-3).

Three times Jesus gives the command to love (Joh. 13,34). To Jesus love is the most important thing. Life is a school to learn the love of God. Jesus has fulfilled God's command of love and sealed it with His life.

The conversation of Jesus with His disciples starts in Joh. 13 with the verse 31 and takes its course over John 14,15 and 16 and closes in the high priest prayer in John 17. He addresses His disciples with the term „my dear children“. In John 13 Peter does not understand Jesus. He is asking: „LORD, where are you going?“ (Joh. 13,36). Still he had the desire to be with Jesus. But He told His disciples, that **this time** they cannot follow Him. Jesus is God revealed in the flesh. All attributes of God is incarnated in Him. Therefore He can say: „Who saw me, has seen the father“ (Joh. 14,9).

John 14 - Jesus walks ahead of us to prepare a dwelling place.

„Heaven“, like Jesus calls His Father's home, is the true home. Jesus walks ahead of us to purchase, buy and then prepare this place for us. By nature we do not have a civil right to heaven. The crucified has redeemed from sin, death and the devil by His blood and bought for us the heavenly civil rights (Eph. 2,15-19). To prepare for us this place, was the reason of His coming and His death on the cross. He has taken possession of the Father's house on our behalf. The Holy Spirit prepares houses for us. In this part He promises His return to the disciples. This is what the church of the Lord expects and waits for (1.Thess. 4,16/ 1.Cor. 4,5/ 11,26/ 16,22/ Rev. 22,17+20/ 1.Joh. 2,28).

In his final talk with His disciples **Jesus was interrupted three times** (Joh. 14,5-31). At first it was **Thomas**, who wanted to know the way, then **Philip**, who wanted to see the Father and finally **Judas** (not Judas Iscariot) who desired an answer to the question: „Lord, what is it that you want to reveal to us and not to the world?“.

In the eyes of the world Jesus will be „dead and gone“ (Joh. 7,34/ 8,21), but the disciples will see Him alive and risen, and will be connected to Him spiritually and on the inside by faith (Joh. 20,29). The relationship between Jesus and His disciples will be similar to the relationship between Jesus and His father (Joh. 6,57/ 10,14-15/ 15,9).

Three different ways of faith are being introduced. The faith in His works, the faith in His words and the faith in Him. It is even promised to the disciples that they will do even greater works than the ones that already happened (Joh. 14,12), as soon as they are able to connect with His inner man. It is spoken of **two kinds of works** that the believer will do from then on. He will also do the works that I do and he will do even greater things than these. The greater works can only be done because Jesus Himself goes to the Father. He was only an example of all those things.

One of the important assignments of Jesus here on earth was, to prepare us for the coming of the Holy Spirit and ask the Father for the sending of the Holy Spirit (Joh. 14,16). Pentecost was an answer of Jesus prayer. The Holy Spirit is the replacement of Jesus the other, that He sent to help us.

There are many similarities between Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

• **Both (Jesus as well as the Holy Spirit) have been before the foundation of the earth**

The Holy Spirit was already hovering over the void (Gen. 1,2). He punished the people before the flood, He commanded the Saints to write down the scriptures, He equipped kings and prophets for their assignments, etc. His influence back then was rather on the outside than on the inside. He performed rather in the form of gifting than in the form of grace. He only worked on a few chosen ones.

• **The coming of both was proclaimed a long time before.** Ever since the fall of men there was the promise of a Saviour (Jesus). His birth and His coming was prophesied by the prophets of the ancient days. The same thing with the holy spirit: The prophet Joel clearly speaks about the things that the other prophets (Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc) had spoken of.

• **Both were revealed in one body.** Jesus was revealed in the body that the Father had prepared for Him and He took on the form of a servant (Phil. 2,7). In a similar way the holy spirit was revealed in a mystical body of the church, of which Jesus Christ represents the head. On Pentecost the 120 believers formed a body, a church, that melted together as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.

• **Each of them receives a name before appearance.** The angel said: „You shall call Him Jesus“ (Matth. 1,21). „And He will be called wonderful counselor (Is. 9,5-6). Also the Holy Spirit had a name before His coming: „spirit of truth“, „holy spirit“, „the comforter“, etc.

• **Both are depending on one another.** Jesus says expressly: „The son does not do anything except what he sees the Father do“. And of the holy spirit Jesus said: „He will not talk out of Himself, whatever He hears He will speak. The spirit explores all things, even the depth of the Godhead (1.Kor. 2,10).

•**Both of them received a testimony.** The Father testified of the son on three different occasions: at the day of His baptism (Matth. 3,16-17), on the Mount of transfiguration (Matth. 17,5-6) and for the third time when the „Greeks“ wanted to see Him (Joh. 12,28-29). The same thing happened with the holy spirit. Jesus tells us: „who has ears, hear what the spirit is saying...“.

•**The presence of both (Jesus and the holy spirit) was promised to us for the present time.** Jesus said: „I am with you until the end of the world“ (Matth. 28,20), and the holy spirit was promised to us with similar words: „that He will stay with us forever“ (Joh. 14,16). The „oil jar“ of the holy spirit is the church.

The world cannot receive the holy spirit (Joh. 14,17). Because the world is lacking the tool to receive it. Thomas is only able to believe after he saw and touched Jesus' wounds. **Jesus speaks of contrasts in John 14.** He said: „I will not leave you as orphans, I will return to you. The world shall not see me, but you shall see me. Like I live you shall also live.“(Joh. 14,18+19).

We can live with a steady confidence in Jesus return, that He is always present and that He will always intervene when we need Him the most. Furthermore we know, that sometimes His coming is surprising to us. Sometimes He is not waiting for us to ask Him. He arrives at a time when we do not even expect Him. He is also with us whenever we gather in His name. The presence of Jesus is promised to us at all times and in all things „**The world cannot see me, but you shall see me**“ We live because He lives. From the moment we were born again he started to dwell within us, and who has the son also has life (1.Joh.5,10-12). God wants to have a habitation among us (dwell live inside of us) (Joh. 14,23). Jesus says here: „**WE will come...**“ That means it is going to be more than one. The requirement of God living on the inside of you is Jesus. And the natural result of this indwelling is going to be the piece of God (Joh. 14,27). It is His peace, the quietness of heart, that keeps us even during the times of a storm. When Jesus went away the holy spirit was supposed to take His place among the believers (Joh. 14,16+17/ 16,7).

John 15 - Jesus is the true vine.

Nature is a parable of God (the creator) in it God is revealed. To call Himself the „vine“ was an expression of Jesus deeply rooted humility. He did not compare Himself with a mighty oak tree a large cedar or a royal palm tree. These would have been images that would have shown his greatness and His power. But a vine is not a very beautiful or majestic thing. This is how the incarnated Jesus was (Is. 53,2).

Jesus compares Himself to the vine and its branches, they form a natural unity (Jer. 2,21/ Is. 5,1). However his expressions of power and strength of the different members may be, roots, branches and leaves they all from an organic unity. That is Jesus for all who belong to Him. All those who are one with Jesus are also one with each other. The whole church of Christ is submitted to this principle. The vine and its value is depending upon the branches, and in return the branch also from the vine. The root and the tribe are not enough just by themselves. They also need the branches. Only over the branches the vine can bring forth fruit. A requirement to bear fruit is to remain in Christ (Joh. 15,4). Jesus emphasizes the „**remaining**“, because this determines the answers to our prayers, the glorification of God and all of our spiritual life (Joh. 15,7).

John 16 – Jesus enlightens His disciples:

„You may be scared in the world, but be of good courage...“ During the speech before He revealed His perfect love to the disciples. Now He reveals to them what they will have to face in the world. It is sheer hatred, and it is inevitable. The total sum of unredeemed, unbelievers, not born again is „the world“ which is opposing the disciples of Jesus. **Jesus explains to them the reason for their hatred:** „If you were of the world, the world would love you, but since you are not of the world they hate you“ (Joh. 15,19/1.Petr. 4,4).

Jesus draws a sharp line between His disciples and the world.

„The world“ is ruled by unrighteousness and hatred. „The world“ is in enmity with God ever since the fall of men. And this hate has characterized each era since. Abel was hated by Cain, Joseph was hated by his brothers, David was persecuted by Saul. The reason and cause of this hatred is not the evil that the world discovers in the saints. God said: „They hate me for no reason“.

The world hates the believers not because of negative attributes, but because of their good will. The source and origin of this hatred of the world is the enmity of Satan against God. It is natural to evil, to hate the good. The aim of their hate is to overcome the good.

During this period of massive opposition and trials the disciples of Jesus were supposed to have a powerful helper to defend them in their tribulations and stand by their side. This was the holy spirit. Jesus still had so much to say. The holy spirit complements the silence of Christ (Joh. 16,12). Jesus, there is still so much He wants to tell us.

A comparison between the **gospels** and the **epistles** (letters, etc.) shows us how many things remained to be unsaid. The apostles were yet lacking the ability for further revelation. Jesus said: **„You are not able to bear it yet“**. Their spirit could only carry a certain measure, but therefore it was promised to them, that the Holy Spirit would come and guide them in all truth.

The Holy Spirit has a threefold office (Joh. 16. 1-15), to comfort us, punish the world and to teach us. In addition to that to remind us of all things, to glorify God and to speak before God on our behalf.

John 17 – The prayer of Jesus

Jesus said, „I sacrifice myself for them“ (Joh. 19,19). He consecrated us for God, identified with us and offered Himself as the sacrifice (Lev. 22,2+3/ Deut. 15,19-21). This is how He became for us mediator and intercessor. He took care of everything and paid for everything in advance. At first Jesus asks the Father for His perfection / glorification. Without the help of the Holy Spirit Jesus would not have been able to resurrect. The Father and the Son glorify and serve themselves in return (Joh. 14,10/ 8,14+18). It is only in the end of His ministry that Jesus starts to praise His father by giving Him titles (Joh. 17,25+26).

At this point Jesus prays for unity among the ones who belong to Him (Joh. 17,21-23). The „unity of the believers“ is a spiritual unity. The role model is the „Father and the Son“, a unity that is only possible through the power and the work of the Holy Spirit. This unity also allows a great multitude of forms (Eph. 1,23). This unity is indestructible, and nobody can separate us from the Lord and His love. This unity and connection is the glory that He left for His disciples.

John 18,1 to 19,42 – The son of God in His suffering

The passion of Jesus, which started with His battle in the soul at Gethsemane takes a lot of room in the gospels. With great detail every single event is described. John emphasizes especially the free will of Jesus (Joh. 18,2-11).

The betrayal and arrest of Jesus. Both happened in the garden of Gethsemane. In a garden the sin started (Paradise) and in a garden redemption begins (Matth. 26,36/ Luk. 22,39). At this place Jesus is engaging in spiritual warfare. Jesus prayed because His soul was troubled unto death (Hebr. 5,7), because the sin of the world was clinging unto Him and the power of darkness was tormenting Him with all of their power. The devil knew, that **his hour had come**, to lose or to win.

Judas lead a strange group of people, **the Roman soldiers** (they were armed, Jews were not allowed to carry weapons and **the servants of the high priest** (the temple guards, were only armed with sticks). They looked like they were searching for a criminal they had to arrest. But Jesus was a lamb and even surrendered to them. Even though at that time there was a full moon (Matth. 26,47), Judas gave Jesus a kiss, to reveal who was Jesus. When Jesus said „It is me“ everybody fell to the floor, also Judas (Joh. 18,4-6). Their falling down happened to prove to everybody present that it was Jesus free will to allow the arresting. It was a definite manifestation of His divine majesty which proves that ***all powers of the world are powerless against Him.***

John 18, 1-11 – Jesus surrenders to the enemy and protects His disciples (Joh. 18,4).

He stands before them without thinking of Himself first. His enemies have no power over Him. They will do whatever He said. Here Jesus commands: **„Let them go“**, His enemies obey and do it. They were really on the palm of His hand. Peter wanted to defend Jesus with His sword. But Jesus does not allow that to happen (Joh. 18,10-11). On their behalf He drinks from the cup of bitterness. He is their substitute. Freely He took our suffering and paid for our sin with His death. He said: **„Take me and let them go“**. This scene reveals to us how the author of the gospel of John wanted to show Jesus sovereignty during the passion. Jesus had to command the soldiers who had fallen to the ground **to arrest Him** (Joh. 18,8). The love of Jesus to us alone was the reason to take Him to the cross. In all things He submitted to the divine plan.

John 18,12-27 – Jesus before the high priest Caiphas

The high priest *Caiphas* had been high priest for about 10 years. He wanted to save the people from perishing. He thought he knew God's plan for the Jews. This is why he was so afraid of the attack of the Romans. He sensed the coming **„scattering of the Jews“** into all the world and wanted to stop this from happening with all means.

Caiphas, the high priest of the old „people of God“ on earth, becomes very active once more. He is acting on behalf of the Jews and prophecies, and thus decides to kill the „king of the Jews“ / hands them over into the hands of the „unjust“. During the hearing Jesus remains silent, which is His answer to the false witnesses. **His silence is more powerful than His speech.** This was a terrible punishment for the whole trial and the hearing.

By His silence Jesus is guiding the hearing to its actual peak, the question about who He really is and the Sonship of God. Whole Israel was supposed to know that they did not kill a criminal but their own God-sent Messiah.

By tearing His robe He is acting against Himself and His office and therefore puts an end to the old testament office of a high priest (Lev.10,6).

The hearing (interrogation) of Caiphas (Joh. 18,24), that went until the early morning hours shows how massively they were fighting Jesus in Jerusalem, where the fight finds its final peak. The condemnation and rejection of Jesus was not an accident or by coincidence. It was purposefully desired by the Jewish leaders and has been prepared in advance. **It was a systematic denial of Jesus that the Jews set up.**

- Joh. 4,1-3: the Pharisees were so jealous of Jesus that He had to leave Judea. And this already happened in the first year of Jesus public performance.
- Joh. 5,18: in the second year of His work, after the healing of the gout-ridden man, the Jews had already determined how they could kill Jesus. Therefore Jesus had to withdraw from Judea.
- Joh. 7,17: Jesus is facing such a hatred among the Jews a couple of months later, that He publicly asked them „**Why are you trying to kill me?**“ Even the simple folk knew the plans of the leaders against Jesus (Joh. 7,25+26). And finally they already sent guards out to arrest Him (Joh. 7,30+32)
- Joh. 8,59: the Jews (this is always referring to the high council) were always so irritated by the words of Jesus that they even started to pick up stones to stone Him to death.
- Joh. 9,34: the former blind man was banned, because he was healed by Jesus whom the Jews hated, and He even spoke on His behalf.
- Joh. 10,31: the Jews picked up stones to stone Jesus again. In vers 39 we read, that He escaped from them to Bethabara and stays there until Martha and Mary called Him to Bethany.
- Joh. 11,47: the Jews (this is referring to the high priests, Pharisees and scribes) formed a council after the raising of Lazarus and decided to arrest and kill Jesus.
- Joh. 12,10: the anger against Jesus is so great, that they even decided to kill the resurrected Lazarus. The offer Judas made was the solution to their problem and they willingly accepted it (Joh. 18,2).

It is reported, that the high priests and the council decided together how to kill Jesus and called together many „false witnesses“. But their testimonies were so contradictory that they could not use them and had to release one witness after the other. Finally they found two witnesses. At least they thought so. They claimed to have heard two years ago, how He was threatening the maintenance of the temple. But also these testimonies were of no value. Finally they only used the „self-testimony“ of Jesus, because they had no other statement, where He made Himself equal to God (Joh. 5,18). Even back then they wanted to stone Him because of that statement (Joh. 10,31-33). The high priest Caiphas was already in His office at that time and summarized these statements of Jesus and urged Him to admit that He was the Messiah, the son of God (Matth. 26,63).

Jesus said: „**You say that I am**“. That was enough for Him to sentence Jesus to death: „**He is guilty**“. And therewith the hearing was over.

The denial of Peter (Joh. 18,16). John was known to the high priest and was allowed to the court, Peter was not. But a maiden recognized him as one of the disciples and did not say it to harm him. Peter was still offended.

John 18, 28 to 19,15 – Jesus was brought before Pilate and was supposed to be judged by Him. Pilate knew the men who brought Jesus to him and asked clear evidence for their charges against Jesus (Joh. 18,29). Their Jewish pride was so offended, that now they even had to defend their death sentence. Their argument was: „**If He was no sinner we would not have brought Him before you**“ (Joh. 18,30), which means as much as: it is not necessary for you to know any details. We have heard Him and are fully convinced by *evidence* that He is guilty. You can be sure that men like us would not have come so early in the morning if there were not enough reasons. Pilate saw through the Jews and also realized that they were very keen to deny further questions. He commanded them to explain to him the crime of which He was supposed to be guilty. Now they had to find different „charges“ to justify a legal death sentence.

It was hard to find such a charge against Jesus, and they came up with the claim that He kept people from paying taxes to the Emperor and that He claimed to be the Messiah and King of the Jews. That sounded more than suspicious to Pilate, because the Jews had always tried to get rid of the Roman yoke and the Romans were actually hated by the Jews, especially by the priests.

Pilate asked Jesus: **„Are you the king of the Jews?“** And Jesus asked him: **„Do you ask of yourself or have others told you that about me?“** And then Jesus says: **„My kingdom is not of this world“**. Pilate answers: **„So you are a king.“** And Jesus says: **„You are right. I am a king. I was born into this world to testify the truth“** (Joh. 18,35-37). Pilate confesses in front of the excited Jews (the religious leaders): „I cannot find any guilt in Him“ He found no reason to sentence Him to death (Luk. 23,22/ Acts 13,28). Pilate had such a strong and deep impression of Jesus „holiness“ and „His innocence“ that he wanted to declare Him blameless right away.

Pilate wants to release Jesus but the Jews forced him to crucify Jesus. They even stirred up the crowd to demand that. Thus Jesus experienced through Pilate a celebrational **„blameless declaration“** which did not lead to the release of Jesus but to his arrest and His crucifixion. All of this only happened because of the Jew's hate, who pretended to have a zeal for God's honor and therefore had to take revenge on Him.

John 19, 16-42 – Jesus speaks seven words on the cross.

The high priests, the scribes and the elders, the crowd and the viewers mocked Him and commanded Him to climb down from the cross.

And this was Jesus' reaction:

- Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.
- Woman, this is your son (these words were directed to His mother)
- Today you will be with me in Paradise (to the thief who changed his mind about Jesus)
- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- I am thirsty (Jesus was suffering physically and spiritually).
- It is finished.
- Father, I commit my spirit into your hands (words from psalms).

When He spoke these words He lowered His head and died. Nobody took His life from Him. It was His own decision and His free will.

When Jesus died...

- **there was a great earth quake.** The stones were splitted, old graves opened, many saints were raised again. The centurion who was near the cross to watch the execution of the death sentence became scared and publicly confessed **„This was truly the Son of God.“** Because this was not a usual man dying.
- **The curtain of the temple was torn,** where the holiest of holies was divided from the other part of the tabernacle. The high priest was only allowed to go in there once a year.
- From the pierced side of Jesus came flowing blood and water. A sign that Jesus was working a double healing: **blood for reconciliation and water for the cleansing** (Joh. 19,34-36).
- **heaven darkened,** in the middle of the day it became dark for a couple of hours.
- they did not break His bones gebrochen (Ps. 34,20+21/ Joh. 19,31).

Joh. 19,40 – The funeral of Jesus

The death of Jesus was officiall confirmed by Pilate. Jesus corpse was not simply buried in the ground, like His enemies would have like it. He was buried in a grave. Jesus grave was cut in stone. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took the corpse from the cross and buried Him with honor. They were both members of the high council and did not participate in the Passover celebration, because whoever buried a dead was ceremonially unclean for seven days. Whoever touched a dead during the Easter days had to refrain from the celebration during the week of Passover and was not allowed to take part in the Jewish customs and celebrations. This shows a **strong symbolic character.** Every one who touched the crucified Jesus was not allowed to participate in the tradition of the Passover ceremony. He had to withdraw himself.

The high priests did not even enter the house of a Gentile **to arrest Jesus** (Joh. 18,28/ Acts 11,2), so that would not become unclean before the Passover. But they were not afraid to crucify the Son of God. scheuten sie sich nicht.

John 20,1-21, 25 – The Son of God resurrected

John 20,1-23 – The Lord is risen.

Jesus was clothed with the resurrected body, the spiritual body. He was no longer subject to the laws that rule our natural life. He was able to go through closed doors and reveal Himself to whomever He chose. The resurrected Christ taught His disciples for 40 days. Here they received all the great teachings for their future ministry.

John 20, 24-31 – Jesus meets Thomal., ***Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe.***“ Jesus Himself goes and visits His disciples. He reveals Himself to Thomas. Thomas had lost the physical touch of the Lord and had to be touched anew so that he might believe again.

John 21, 1-14 – The revelation of Jesus at Tiberias

It is the third time that Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples. The first time on the days of Easter, the second time to Thomas and at this point it is the third time. As we can see here, a failure can still be useful. In the dawn of the day Jesus came to the shore of the lake Genezareth and welcomes His disciples as a fish merchant, pretending to purchase their fish. But the disciples recognize Jesus right away.

The great fish catch (Joh. 21,6) was supposed to remind the disciples that the Lord will help them in their needs and trials, if they do whatever He tells them. Just like once in Cana (Joh. 2,6) or during the multiplication of loaves (Joh. 6,11) etc. There were **153 fish**, that Peter caught. In the ancient times they said there were 153 different kinds of fish. In each case the number defines a totality. All is gathered in this net, that does not burst. All comes home into the perfection, into divine unity. Everything is included in this dynamic of Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

John 21,15-25 – Jesus asked a universal question“Do you love me?”

This question after the great fish catch was especially addressing Peter, but it is also addressing all of us. Before Jesus employs us in His ministry He has to ask this question first. If you do not love Him from the bottom of the heart, you cannot serve Him. The last answer of Peter is very important: „**You know all things.**“ If you want to serve Jesus you must not try to fool Him, you are supposed to trust Him.

John 21,22 – Jesus rebukes Peter

„Do not mind about the others.“ God has a unique plan for every single one. Jesus said, „**If I will**“ (Joh. 21,22), that he stays until I come, what does it bother you? Jesus is saying: Peter, you have nothing to do with the others.“

John 21. 25 „**There are so many things that Jesus did, If you would try to write it down... books could not hold it...**“ In 1. Corinthians 15,6-8 it is accounted that Jesus also appeared to many other people. This includes also the miracles that the Lord worked through the apostles and therefore confirmed them as His disciples (Acts 5,12/ 4,33).

Test

1. What was Jesus able to „detect“ from the beginning?
2. When, from where and to whom did Jesus perform the second miracle in John?
3. How many and what kind of Jesus' miracles are mentioned in all of the gospels?
4. From what moment on can the signs reveal their message?
5. What is the common theme in the gospel of John?
6. Who do you have to be in order to believe in Jesus?
7. What is the message of the law, and what is the message of the gospel?
8. Why were the Jews so offended by Jesus?
9. What was the foundation of the communion supper?
10. Name the symbols of the feast of tabernacles.
11. Why could the Pharisees not receive forgiveness of sin?

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