**Introduction to John’s Gospel**

**Week 2 – Jesus’ Public Ministry**

**Chapters 2-12**

***Study Notes:***

**John 2:1** The Wedding at Cana

* This is Jesus’ first miracle in John’s Gospel – Strange distancing from Mary – “woman”
* It is a sign that shows tremendous abundance and hints at Jesus being the messiah.
  + Amos 9:11,13; Joel 3:18; Isaiah 25:6
* “My hour has not yet come” – We will see that Mary is standing next to Jesus when his hour comes.
* Disciples response is belief

**John 2:13** Jesus Cleanses the Temple

* When God comes the temple will “no longer be a house of trade” – Zechariah 14:20
* “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.”
  + Jesus makes himself the center of worship – people don’t understand
* Foreshadowing of Jesus’ eventual death and resurrection
* Disciples response is belief (after he was raised from the dead)
  + John was likely written after the temple was destroyed in 70 AD

**John 3:1** Nicodemus Visits Jesus

* Nicodemus comes by night – clue about his faith/understanding – represents Pharisees and Jews
* “No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born a;nwqen
  + Greek word means (again, a new, or from above)
  + Nicodemus hears – “Again” - What does Jesus mean?
  + Response: “How can these things be?”
* Verse 14: Just as Moses lifted up the serpent…
  + Jesus hints at both his glorification and his crucifixion
  + Numbers 21 – Moses lifts up an image of the thing that was killing the people and when they looked at the serpent (the image of their death) they were healed.
    - Jesus takes our sin upon himself – to look at Jesus “lifted up” is to look at the sin that is killing you – and be healed.
* Verses 18 – 21 – Remember when Nicodemus visited Jesus
  + There is a connection between beliefs and practices

**John 3:22** Jesus and John the Baptist

* Here and 4:1 are the only times in the New Testament that Jesus is said to be baptizing
  + 4:2 – clarifies that Jesus wasn’t doing the baptizing… his disciples were.
* John hears/believes/rejoices/testifies

**John 4:1** Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

* Setting: Jacob’s well about Noon (odd time to draw water)
  + Rachel also came to well at noon
  + OT pattern- boy and girl meet at a well – water is given – girl goes home and tells family about boy. Boy is invited to stay and betrothal is arranged.
* Samaritan woman is an outsider in many ways – serves as a spokes person for the Samaritan people
* Living Water – more than physical H2O – living water was the revelation that Jesus was the messiah
* 5 husbands – story is at best tragic at worst sinful
  + Assyrian’s conquered Samaria in 722 bc – resettled 5 foreign nations there.
* Debate turns to worship – Samaritans also waiting for messiah – Jesus “I am he”
  + Response: Woman Believes – tells town – many more believed

**John 4:46** Jesus Heals an Official's Son

* Royal official asks for healing for son – Jesus is critical – Royal official persists – Jesus announces healing and the man believes without seeing – has faith confirmed later – whole household believed

**John 5:1** Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

* Mirror image of Royal official – Jesus asks the man if he wants healing – Man is critical - Jesus persists healing the man but there is no belief – Jesus approaches the man later - the man reports Jesus to the authorities who persecute Jesus.

**John 5:19** The Authority of the Son & Witnesses to Jesus

* Long discourse about Jesus’ authority coming from God and life being found in the life giver (Jesus) not in the scriptures/law of Moses
* This is all in response to the attacks that Jesus was elevating himself to be equal with God.
* They will not accept/**receive** Jesus in God’s name (5:43) compare to disciples in 6:21

**John 6:1** Feeding the Five Thousand

* Timing is important – 6:4 tells us that it is almost the Passover
  + Following the Passover Moses led the people into the wilderness & they ate Manna
    - Manna was known as “bread from Heaven”
* Elijah & Elisha also fed people and did miraculous healings.
  + Crowd calls Jesus a prophet and sees him as the fulfillment of prophesy
* Jesus withdraws because the crowd want to make him king by force
  + Later Jesus dialogues with Pilate about who gives authority to be king (God not people)
    - Demanding that Jesus function according to our expectations is a form of unbelief.

**John 6:16** Jesus Walks on the Water

* Compared to the other gospels there is less focus on the miraculous and more focus on Jesus’ words.
  + “I am; do not be afraid”
  + “I am” – is a form of God’s name – each time it is used by John there is divine significance.
* Disciples want to take/**receive** Jesus into the boat (in contrast to Jesus’ opponents 5:43)

**John 6:22** The Bread from Heaven

* The crowd that Jesus just fed goes looking for more. When they were hungry Jesus fed them but now that their needs are met they are looking for more.
* Question is whether they can just see the sign (lots of bread) or will they see the thing that the sign points to namely abundant life in Jesus.
* 34,35 – Crowd associates Jesus with Moses – Jesus shifts and identifies himself with the bread
  + I am the bread of life. (metaphor can’t be taken literally- forces us to ask what he means).
  + Bread is a staple – you have to have it if you are going to stay alive – provides nourishment.
  + **To eat of the bread = to believe in the crucified Jesus = to have eternal life.** 
    - Eternal life is a relationship with God that begins in faith now and continues beyond the grave into eternity.
* How does the crowd respond to Jesus?
  + 34- “Sir give us this bread always” – the crowd wants things on their terms
  + 51 – “The bread I will give for the life of the world is my flesh”
    - He is speaking of crucifixion but the crowd misses the metaphor
    - 52 -“How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”
  + Many disciples (followers) were offended (61) and turned back (67).

**John 6:60** The Words of Eternal Life

* By contrast the 12 (Peter) respond in faith – “You have the words of eternal life.”

**John 7:1** The Unbelief of Jesus' Brothers

* The brothers like Mary before are trying to force Jesus to reveal himself – demonstration of unbelief.

**John 7 & 8** Jesus at the Festival of Booths

* Following extended debate with the leaders Jesus makes bold proclamations about his identity.
* Festival of Booths
  + A festival remembering the time of sojourn in the wilderness during the time of Moses.
  + People would build simple shelters (booths) and camp out for a week to remember.
  + In the wilderness God went with the people in a pillar of fire by day
    - To remember the light is to remember the presence of God.
    - 8:12 – Jesus said: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the lift of life”
  + In the wilderness Moses strikes the rock and the people drink
    - To remember the water is to remember the gifts of God.
    - **John 7:37-38** "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, 38 and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"
* People had gathered to celebrate, remember, and seek a sign of God’s presence and God’s salvation. Jesus says – God gives all of this to you in me.
* Response: Division among the people
* Notice that Nicodemus shows up again – yet faith is still ambiguous

**John 9:1** A Man Born Blind Receives Sight

* There is a contrast between the man born blind and the Pharisees.
  + What does it mean to see the light of the world?
* The man bears witness to a Christ he has never seen while the Pharisees attack Jesus (and his followers) even though they have seen him.
* “You were born in utter sin” – assumption blindness is a result of someone’s sin.
  + Being born blind did not determine the man’s relationship to God
    - 39 – Jesus said, “ I came into this world so that those who do not see may see…”

**John 10:1** Jesus the Good Shepherd

* There is no break in the conversation between chapters 9 & 10… Jesus is still speaking.
* John 10 is the closest thing to a parable in John.
  + Jesus uses a series of images 10:1-6
    - Comments 10:7-18
      * I AM the Door/Gate
        + Gates are permeable – they open and close – allow protection and access to the pasture.
        + Jesus is claiming that he is the legitimate way to access the community
      * I AM the Good Shepherd
        + Jesus uses multiple images – thief, bandit, wolf…

What are the things that threaten to harm your life and dignity?

Who can you trust?

* + - * + Jesus claims himself as the one who lays down his life for the sheep
        + Jesus also claims fulfillment of OT prophesy – messiah as shepherd.
  + Response 10:19- 21
    - The Jews were divided. God doesn’t work through sinners – Jesus opened the eyes of a blind man – yet what he says sounds blasphemous (unless it is true).
* Festival of Dedication – Hanukah
  + Are you the Messiah (we thought Judas Maccabeus was)
    - Some try to stone him others who had heard Johns testimony about Jesus believed.

**John 11:1** The Death of Lazarus

* “Lord the one whom you love is ill” – even Jesus’ beloved can and do get sick and die.
* “Son of God glorified through it”
  + Glory of God shows up in giving life – God’s answer to death is resurrection
  + This is the sign that prepares us for Crucifixion – Son of God glorified on the cross.
* Verse 16 – Thomas shows up for the first time – Let us go… so that we might die with him.
  + Is this courageous loyalty or cynicism? We don’t know.
  + Thomas is certain of one thing; death will get the last word

**John 11:17** Jesus the Resurrection and the Life

* Mary and Martha come to Jesus in different ways – Jesus is able to meet their needs
  + Martha wants to talk faith & theology – resurrection from the dead
    - I AM the resurrection and the Life
      * Death happens – faith in Jesus is the assurance of resurrection
    - “everyone who believes will never die.”
      * Jesus just said that people Do die.
      * He is speaking on two different levels.
        + Death has a relational side
        + Even though your heart stops… in Jesus… your relationship with God does not end. – Relationship has a future because of resurrection.
        + Death is real – But it is not Final
  + Mary greets Jesus in a similar way (If you had been here…) but she stops short.
    - Mary is deep in grief – Mary is weeping
    - Jesus Weeps

**John 11:38** Jesus Raises Lazarus to Life

* Response: Varied depending upon faith
  + Many people believed
  + Pharisees and leaders of the Jews are fearful that people will believe.
  + Fearful of Roman retaliation
    - Height of absurdity – preserve life by killing the one who brings life.

**John 12:1** Mary Anoints Jesus

* Culturally – when someone enters your home you give them a wash basin and some oil to rub on their feet after they are clean. It is hospitality. They do it – the host does not (sometimes a slave)
  + Mary is showing extreme devotion
  + 300 denari is one years wages
* Leave her alone… you will always have the poor with you…
  + This is an extraordinary act at an extraordinary time. Mary’s action does not negate the need to daily care for others in need.

**John 12:9** The Plot to Kill Lazarus & Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

* Double assassination planned – Death must get the last word according to the authorities
* The crowd roles out the red carpet (waves palm branches) and Jesus heightens the expectations
* Riding on the colt of a donkey – Jesus affirms ‘kingship’
  + In John’s gospel this is not a humble gesture

**John 12:27** Jesus Speaks about His Death

* Those who love their life… Movement – Love = moving toward Hate = moving away
* Moving away from self means moving toward others – toward serving God – there is Life.