

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

(revised 10/09/2024)

Week 43: Just Believe! - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. John seems to be more personal, more intimate and involved in his stories. John has less miracles (only seven signs) and more theology on atonement, especially a high view of Christology. John includes unique stories like the encounter with the Samaritan woman, the adulterous woman, the raising of Lazarus from the dead and the washing of the disciple's feet. In alignment with his purpose, John uses these stories to point to the divinity of Jesus and His Lordship.

2. The seven signs Jesus performed that are recorded in John are:

- 1) Turning water into wine (2:1-12)
- 2) Healing an Official's son (4:46-54)
- 3) Healing lame man at Bethsaida (5:1-15)
- 4) Feeding the 5,000 (6:1-15)
- 5) Walking on water (6:16-21)
- 6) Healing blind man at Siloam (9:1-41)
- 7) Raising Lazarus from the dead (11:17-27)

Five of the Seven are unique to John. Their purpose is to illustrate the divinity of Jesus in the flesh and to point unbelievers to Christ as the source of their redemption from sin.

3. The four witnesses are the work of the Father, the acts of John the Baptist, Jesus' works/miracles and Scripture. In chapter 5, Jesus says His personal testimony isn't valid simply because Jewish Law prohibited the testimony of the accused. However, because of Jesus' unique divine nature (compare 5:31 with 8:14) one could count His personal testimony as the 5th witness. The Greek word "martyreo" is used to describe the attestation of Jesus' character and power and occurs 33 times in John.

4. This story is all about forgiveness, even to the vilest and dirtiest offender. Before casting judgement, one must clean themselves up via repentance and forgiveness. What makes this story so intriguing is not knowing what Jesus wrote in the dirt. Whatever it was it is the source of the people leaving the scene, starting with the eldest. Note that ALL her accusers left the scene. Could it be that Jesus was exposing their sins to the crowd and their convictions moved them to flee? We can only speculate.

5. He started with the washing of the disciple's feet which illustrated humility and set the example of servanthood the disciples were to follow. A New Commandment Jesus introduced to His flock was "love one another" which can only begin when one loves God. By this new commandment others will know they were Jesus' followers. The mansions in heaven are an allusion to the Jewish wedding where the groom goes to add on an addition to the Father's house for the newlyweds. The vine and branch illustration encouraged his followers to always be plugged into (trusting) Jesus. He is the source of our very being carrying out His mission on earth.

6. This prayer is not the same as the prayer in Gethsemane recorded in the synoptic gospels. It may have been spoken in the Upper Room before their departure or as they made their way out of the city. It's broken up into three parts: prayer for Himself, prayer for His disciples and prayer for all believers, both present and future. The "time has come" (compare 2:4, 7:30, 8:20) for Jesus to recognize His calling and purpose on earth, to glorify the Father with the redemption of His chosen ones.

7. The trial was obviously rigged in favor of the accusers. However, there are a couple of ironies to be seen. First, the irony before Pilate (who represents the worldview of unbelievers) is his asking Jesus "What is truth?" when absolute truth was standing before him! Truth doesn't change according to circumstances, but remains truth.

Barabbas, in Hebrew, means "Son of A Father" (bar = son, abbas = father). Jesus, whom Barabbas was exchanged for, means "salvation" and is **THE** Son of the Father. The irony is the people chose the Son of a father (an allusion to Satan) over the true Son of **THE** Father (Jesus).

8. Some of the many Old Testament prophecies regarding Jesus' trial, crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection are:

- 1) John 19:24 vs. Psalms 22:18 - the dividing of His garments
- 2) John 19:28 vs. Psalms 22:15; 69:21 - Jesus being thirsty upon the cross
- 3) John 19:36 vs. Psalms 34:20 - no bones broken
- 4) John 19:37 vs. Zechariah 12:10 - they look upon the one they pierced

John certainly knew his Old Testament, especially the fulfilled prophecies, probably revealed to him while Jesus lived. He prefaces most of these Old Testament fulfillments with the words that are similar to "to fulfill the Scriptures."

9. Peter had denied Jesus three times as foretold by Jesus. Jesus' glancing stare at Peter during His arrest mentioned in Luke (Luke 22:61) is undoubtedly a defining moment in Peter's life and must have incurred a tremendous amount of guilt and shame upon him. For three long days Peter must have felt remorse for denying his Jesus. It's important to note that here John records Jesus taking the initiative to go to Peter and reconcile. This was a deliberate act of Jesus to seek out His trusted friend.

10. Evidence suggests and supports that after Jesus' resurrection Lazarus fled to the island of Cyprus. He was sought by the Sanhedrin and most likely had a bounty on his head since he was a testimony to Christ. Rumor has it that he became the Bishop of Cyprus ordained by Paul on his 1st Missionary journey. A church was erected in his name to honor him many years later in the city of Larnaca, Cyprus and still stands today. It holds many artifacts that point to Lazarus.

Additional Questions:

1. When Jesus quotes John 3:16 he is speaking to Nicodemus, a ruler of men and a Pharisee, who was struggling to believe in Him. It is as if Jesus is speaking to us when we did not believe in Him. John 3:16 is an expression of deep, committed love the Father has for His people.

2. The author of the Gospel of John calls himself, "the one Jesus loved" (13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20). In his epistles, John writes as if one who spent close, intimate time with Jesus, convinced beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus was the Messiah sent by God the Father to redeem mankind. Reference 1 John 3:1. He ends his epistles with a fatherly sentiment towards his audience. In Revelation, John writes with confidence of the vision Jesus has shown him and with a passion to convey the message laid upon his heart to his audience.

The takeaway from all of John's writings is to spend time with Jesus on a daily basis to build your relationship with Him.

3. Answers will vary depending on personal experience.

At first glance (John 11:16), Thomas exhibits zeal, passion and commitment to following Jesus, even to the point of death. However, later, after experiences dictate his faith, he begins to doubt the reality of Jesus' resurrection (John 20:24-29). As Jesus quotes after revealing Himself to doubting Thomas, "blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

