

Low Budget Theology Daily Reflection Series:  
**The Seven Signs of the Gospel of John**  
Presented by: Father Nathan Reesman  
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***Presenter Notes and Outline for Each Video Session***

**Session One: Introduction to the Series**

**Welcome to the series**

- Why do a series?
- A new way to do adult formation in our digital and personal-preference driven age.

**What is the format?**

- 16 videos, around 20 to 25 minutes each.
- You do not need to watch them, you can listen- there will not be visual aids or maps.
- I will be focusing mainly on seven signs or events given to us in John's Gospel.
- Some of the content is straight theology
- Other portions are more homily-type reflections, lessons, meditations
- You may have the videos emailed to each day as the series is unveiled, you can find them on the web, you can re-listen, you can email them to friends and to your enemies.

**What is required?**

- Nothing. But, you might like a Bible because I am not going to read aloud the Scripture passages that I will be talking about, I will only provide the citations.
- If you want written notes to follow, they will be on the website to download.

**Opening Prayer: Hail Mary**

**Some Points on How the Gospels came to be and how to understand them**

- The 4 Gospels are the inspired word of God and they provide our most treasured literary portraits of Jesus Christ.
- The Church has preserved and protected them because we believe they present Jesus in a way that is critical for how the community of faith must know him then and now.
- Bear in mind that they are not really eye-witness reporting stories. They are works of literature which means that they were crafted by authors in such a way as to capture the Jesus who the authors knew with the faith of the Church.
- Therefore, each Gospel writer is going to emphasize different points about Jesus because they feel it is important that their convictions about the truth of Jesus' identity come through.
- The Church has always believed that the process of listening to Jesus, preaching about Jesus, and then crafting these literary portraits of Jesus was protected and inspired by God to give us the picture of him that we need for salvation and faith.
- The Four Gospels share a tremendous amount in common about Jesus, but they do not line up on every detail. But that is okay- all of it is part of our rich, combined portrait of the Savior.

- *This all means that we can learn a lot by studying what is unique about each Gospel writer to understand how they intentionally craft their story to show us what is important to them, and therefore to us, about who Jesus is.*

### **Some points about John's Gospel as a Whole:**

*John is unique:*

- John has a different approach to portraying Jesus than Matthew, Mark, and Luke
- Possibly written the latest of the four Gospels and is the product of more extended reflection on the events themselves
- John is a mix of very historical with precise details, and also deeply theological, and heavily symbolic.

### **What Are Some Key Attributes of Jesus as John Presents him?**

*In John, Jesus' ministry is marked by a series of feasts and festivals of the Temple*

- Three years of time is covered in his Gospel, as marked by the festivals that are observed.
- Jesus will show himself to be the one who fulfills and replaces the major feasts, and who also fulfills and replaces the temple.

*In John, Jesus has strong opposition to "the Jews"*

- "The Jews" means the leaders of the Temple- the establishment

*In John, Jesus is always being misunderstood*

- Jesus is the revealer of the Father and the Holy Spirit and the plan of God in a radical and unrepeatable way.
- Humanity does not understand or accept Jesus
- Various characters and events in John's Gospel represent different types of responses to Jesus.
- Jesus is going to show that we are loved anyway even in our misunderstandings.
- *One must read John on several layers at once, with every detail and event communicating multiple meanings about the person of Jesus Christ and our response to him.*

*In John, salvation means being in friendship with Jesus*

*In John, this friendship means believing his word, and it means sacramental life: Baptism and Eucharist especially.*

*In John, Jesus is the bringer of indestructible life that he wants to give to us all.*

*In John, Jesus spends his public ministry leading up to his greatest act of love, namely, his death and resurrection, which Jesus calls his hour*

*This is how Jesus completes and perfects the salvation offered to the Jews, and then expands it to the whole world.*

### **The signs:**

- In John, Jesus is going to reveal himself in a very important way through the working of a series of signs, which will all lead up to the ultimate act of revelation of the Cross and Resurrection.

- These seven signs and the dialogue around them make up the largest portion of the Gospel of John, and they will be the central focus of this series.
- What are they? How do we understand them? What lessons do we learn from them? How are we saved by them?

**End of Session One**

## Session Two: An Overview of the Signs of John's Gospel

- [the book of signs: the largest section of the Gospel]
- Revolves around seven signs and all of the dialogue that connects to them

### What are "signs" in John? How should we understand them?

- Signs are more than mere miracles or works of wonder: they are acts of self-revelation and they are pointers to the nature of God as a loving Father
- They are Jesus showing God to the world in calculated ways
- They are key interventions in the history of man that John raises up in order to show a pattern of intervention in history that will be ongoing in the age of the Messiah until the end of time.

### A clue: "The Third Day" and Exodus

- John Chapter Two which presents the wedding at Cana and this first sign opens with "On the Third Day there was a wedding at Cana."
- "Third Day" for John is a link to the story of Exodus chapter 19 where Moses prepares to receive the Law on the mountain top in a dramatic act of divine revelation and intervention in history.
- That Exodus story is the origin of the Jewish Feast of Pentecost which celebrates the giving of the Law to the people; the Law is the source of life for them.
- For John, the coming of Jesus, his performing the seven signs, his words surrounding them, are a re-playing of the Moses event on the Mountain top, and a re-interpreting of the Jewish feast of Pentecost.
- One must read the signs as a new inbreaking of God into human life to show us who he is, to draw us into friendship with him, and thereby to give us life.
- The ultimate sign of revelation of God's nature and love (call it the 8<sup>th</sup> sign) will be Jesus' own death and resurrection.
- Each of the seven that lead up to his death and resurrection are mini versions of his own death and resurrection- pointers to it. They all point to his "hour."
- When the reader arrives at Holy Week, the signs now become the reality.

### The Book of Genesis re-told?

- By raising up seven signs, scholars think John was attempting to re-tell the Genesis story of the creation of the world in seven days.
- Jesus' coming among us is a re-creation of the human race in the new life of grace.

### Fulfillment and Replacement

- Many of the seven signs take place with connections to major Jewish festivals and liturgical rituals.
- In working these wonders during the major festivals, Jesus is shown to be bringing the old feasts to a new level of completion, and replacing them (and the Temple) with himself.

### What are the Seven Signs?

- One: The Wedding at Cana, chapter 2
- Two: Curing the royal official's son at Cana, chapter 4
- Three: Curing the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda, chapter 5

- Four: The multiplying of the loaves, chapter 6
- Five: The walking on water, chapter 6
- Six: the curing of the man born blind, chapter 9
- Seven: the raising of Lazarus from the dead, chapter 11

With that, we now unpack “the Third Day” that are the Seven Signs of John, one at a time.

**End of Session Two**

## Session Three: Sign Number One: The Wedding at Cana

### Opening Prayer

#### Re-cap:

- John sees the public ministry of Jesus, the signs, as an extended Pentecost or 3<sup>rd</sup> day event, culminating in his hour.
- Each sign is a mini pointer to the hour and participation in it.
- In this session, we will walk our way through the details of the wedding at Cana
- Next session, we will unpack some of the lessons from this great story

#### The Wedding at Cana: see John 2:1-11

##### Context:

- As mentioned, this is on “the Third day.” This is simply John’s way of saying: “and now the curtain will rise”
- Jesus has now called his first disciples, he opens his ministry here at Cana.
- After this story we will find him in Jerusalem for the cleansing of the Temple.

##### Cana then and now:

- Cana is located in Galilee which is “up north” in the Holy Land. A territory in the orbit of the Temple but also a place of some independent thinking and a mixing of Jewish and Gentile customs.
- It is only a couple of towns up from Nazareth where Jesus grew up. Would have been very familiar to him.
- The next hilltop over from Cana is the Roman city of Sepphoris where Mary’s parents were from, which was being built up and expanded as Jesus was in his teens and twenties, where most likely he and Joseph would have done their construction work.
- Today one can stop to pray at the Church of the Wedding, built over the traditional place of this first sign of John’s Gospel. Around the corner one can purchase gallons and gallons of Cana wine.

##### The story:

- Jesus, his mother, the disciples are invited to a wedding.
- Weddings in his day were multi-day, extended celebrations, so highly did the Jews celebrate and value marriage.
- During the celebrations in this Gospel story, the embarrassing situation develops wherein the wine starts to run short. This is a humiliating situation for a new couple and their families.
- The Mother of Jesus brings this fact to the attention of Jesus. Perhaps she notices because in those days the women would have worked together in the serving areas of the party, and his Mother would have seen this coming first.
- Perhaps it is because his Mother is remarkably attentive to the needs of the human condition
- Perhaps it is because his Mother is aware that Jesus has the ability to intervene.
- She will appear again most prominently at the foot of the cross: during the hour.
- John sees her as a pivotal figure in God’s saving plan.

##### The Hour:

- The Lord appears to rebuff his Mother by explaining that his hour is not yet here. In other words, the time has not yet arrived for the dramatic acts of the dying and the rising of the Son of Man.

- He acts anyway in order to begin to show his glory, to offer the first glimpse of “the hour.”
- He begins to show just who he is.

***So who is he and how does he show it?***

*He is the fulfillment of the existing Mosaic rituals and customs.*

- He chooses to use a bunch of jars used for Jewish ritual purity as a means to do his sign.
- He is now the new guarantee of purity before the Father to the extent that one is a friend of him, and that one believes in him.
- There are only 6 jars, one short of the perfect number of seven. The existing Jewish customs are incomplete on their own.

*He is the one who re-creates the fallen world.*

- Water, the most basic of elements, is now elevated to wine, an element of human labor and creativity, an element of celebration, an element of glory and festivity.
- This is what he wants to do to the fallen, basic human condition- to elevate it in joy.
- Water and blood will flow from his side on the cross... something of a fulfillment of this story.

*He is the bringer of abundance:*

- The prophets spoke of the banquet of the end times, of a generous God, a lavish God, a God who ushers in the fullness of life.
- Jesus transforms 180 gallons of water into 180 gallons of wine.
- Not only that, but it is shown to be the BEST wine, and it comes LAST, as in: in the fullness of time. The final age.
- We are all now living in the final age, the age of grace, the age of perfection of grace in Christ.

*He is the bridegroom:*

- He does all of this in the context of a wedding celebration, showing himself to be what the prophets long spoke of and John the Baptist also will explain: the divine spouse of the chosen people.
- He seeks to enter into a marriage partnership with humanity in a new way.

*His word is to be perfectly obeyed for salvation to happen*

- His mother: do whatever he tells you. Perhaps a reference to the Exodus story once the law was given, and the people of Israel say to Moses: we will do whatever God tells us to do.
- The servants: they follow his instructions to the letter.
- The servants are the heroes of the story who follow the Word precisely to bring about the gift of grace.

*He is faithful to the plan of salvation by beginning with the people of Israel*

- We know this because the 2<sup>nd</sup> sign of John’s Gospel is going to occur in the exact same place, Cana, a couple chapters later, and it will be done for a non-Jew.
- This sign and the second sign are to be understood as an intentional pair that shows the progression of salvation. First to Israel, and then to the nations.
- After the first Cana sign, Jesus encounters the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (the Temple), Nicodemus a leading Jew, and a Samaritan woman at the well... he has made the encounter with his own people, including the Samaritans who would be on the margins. The result? A lack of true belief in all those cases.
- Next attempts for him: the Gentiles at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cana miracle.

- Jesus continues to search for a faithful response to who he is.

How does it end?

- Verse 11: Jesus did this to reveal his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.
- This is the point of the sign. To show who he is, and to generate the needed response of understanding who he is.

What does it mean for us to know him and believe him based on this story? Pick up there next session.

**End of Session Three**



## Session Four: Lessons of the Wedding at Cana

### Opening Prayer

#### Re-cap:

- Jesus is: the fulfiller, the purifier, the bringer of abundance, the bridegroom, the Word that has power.
- His mother is pivotal in the story
- It is faith and obedience that he is seeking.

#### Reflections on the themes for us today

In life, the wine runs out. This is the inadequacy of our merely earthly systems and ideas.

His word is to be obeyed.

The model of obedience: the Mother of God. The servants in this story.

- We need to find ourselves in the same position in life.

The Mother of God knows our needs and offers direction.

Marriage between a man and a woman is at the heart of God's plan for the world.

- God's way of relating to us is spousal and is a communion of complements and differences.
- The image of the Messiah as the Bridegroom is not an accident and it is not open to adaptation.
- His presence at a wedding links earthly marriage between one man and one woman to the critical symbolism of creation that points the world to God who is also our spouse.
- Marriage rightly understood and lived is a sign, a symbol, that makes God manifest.
- As we attempt to alter marriage and gender, we directly undermine a key pathway of God's entry into the world.
- We fail to listen to his word, fail to be his servants, and we fail to allow for the wine of grace.

Jesus brings the better wine. To us, to the world: when we realize our own efforts have come up empty, we have only to turn to his Word, to his mother, to the sacraments. He comes to our rescue.

#### End of Session Four

## Session Five: The Cure of the Royal Official's Son

### Opening Prayer

### Recap

- Similar themes of above will be here as well

**Where is the story in John?** The curing of the royal official's son at Cana: John 4:46-54

### Context within John itself:

- We have been to Cana once already for the wedding feast at the beginning of Chapter 2.
- Jesus has been to Jerusalem for Passover and to drive out what is impure in the Temple
- The leaders of the Temple have not understood his reasons for this.
- Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night to try and understand who Jesus is, but his understanding is only partial.
  
- Jesus makes his way back to Galilee by way of Samaria and meets the woman at the well.
- There he encounters faith but not initially, and he does so among people who are marginally Jewish.
- The woman's faith leads to a growth in the faith of others.
  
- After all those encounters, Jesus is back in Cana again where he will encounter a non-Jew. This sets up this 2<sup>nd</sup> sign.
- If we can trust John's festival chronology, this puts us late into the spring of the first year of Jesus' public ministry.
- Once Jesus is done here, John has him traveling back down to Jerusalem for another feast, possibly Pentecost, and to the next sign Jesus will perform.

### The story:

- This is probably the least well-known of the signs of John in the manner that he specifically tells it.
- Though it is probably still well known as a story in general simply because Matthew and Luke have a very similar story.
  
- While Jesus is in Cana, a royal official comes to see Jesus to ask for his son to be cured.
- His son is near death.
- The royal official and his son live in Capernaum which is about a day or two journey from Cana, down along the Sea of Galilee.
- The man walks to Cana to meet Jesus and asks Jesus to accompany him back for the desired cure.
  
- Jesus offers an initial rebuff, explaining that "you people" require signs in order to believe. This is a corrective move: "do not reduce me to merely a wonder-worker."
- The official is not deterred and asks again, showing deeper belief.
- Jesus explains that his son will live and that the official can go back without Jesus coming along.
- The spoken word of Jesus, even from a distance, not in-person, is powerful enough to heal.

- The official accepts Jesus' word on faith and walks back to Capernaum.
- He meets his slaves on the way back who explain that the boy began to recover at 1pm the day before, the very hour that Jesus had spoken of the cure.
- As a result, the entire household of the official came to believe in Jesus.
- The belief in Jesus' word by one person leads the faith to spread to others.

#### **Who is Jesus based on this sign?**

- As we already saw, he is the giver of powerful words.
- His word can cure and it gives life.
- He exists in close communion with the God of Israel whose word moves mountains.
- Jesus is also a savior for the non-Jews. His word is what unites all peoples.

#### **Lessons and Reflections for today:**

- the power of the Word
- the faith of the royal official who accepts what Jesus says and walks back home
- the presence of faith in those who are outside of the regular community of believers
- Faith must spread to new believers through our own faith
- The word of God is what binds nations, groups, and races together most authentically.
- This is the answer to identity politics.

#### **End of Session Five**

## Session Six: The Sabbath Cure at the Pool of Bethesda

### Opening Prayer

#### Re-Cap:

- John has been trying to show us who Jesus is, seeing his public ministry as a long “third day” event, an extended original Pentecost.

#### Who is Jesus so far?

- Bridegroom, giver of abundance, the re-creator of humanity, the giver of a powerful word that must be obeyed in faith.
- He is the fulfillment of the prophecies and rituals of old, he is the new temple.
- He comes in search of faith and he has encountered it to varying degrees.
  
- He has changed vast quantities of water into wine and he has cured a royal official’s son.

In this session we meet him in sign number three: the cure at the pools of Bethesda.

We will cover this sign in two sessions: this one on the theology of the story itself, and the next one on the lessons from this story.

#### The story:

the cure of the man at Bethesda, or the pool of five porticoes, or the cure on the sabbath- all the same: John 5:1-18, with dialogue that follows all the way through verse 47, the end of the chapter.

#### Context

*Two contextual things to note:*

One: Mere water:

- The stories of the wedding at Cana and the Samaritan woman at the well in prior chapters have now established the inadequacy of mere, earthly water.
- We seek and we need living water, and we often seek it in the wrong places- merely earthly sources of life or healing.
- Jesus will show himself to be real, living water- the real giver of life. Baptism will be real, living, water.

Two: the festivals

- This sign, this cure takes place on a sabbath and will set up the argument about how Jesus is the new sabbath.
- It takes place on an unnamed feast, but most likely it is Pentecost given the time of the year and the reference at the very end of the chapter to Moses who is central to the original Pentecost story.
- John will continue his theme of showing how Jesus shows himself to be the replacement of the old feasts and of the temple.

#### About the Location then and now:

- This story takes place in Jerusalem, near the northeast corner of the Temple plaza, where there were located the Pools of Bethesda.

- They are near a northeast gate in the Temple walls through which the sheep were brought in for the temple sacrifices: the Sheep Gate.
- The pools were fed by what are called intermittent springs. These are common in that part of the world.
- The Gihon Spring which feeds the pool of Siloam is the same type: it spurts for awhile and then stops, all based on rain fall and rising/falling water levels in the rock pores that feed the springs.
- The intermittent spring stirred up the water in the Pools of Bethesda on an irregular basis.
- The tradition was that the person who got to the water and touched it first when it started moving would be cured.
- It is here that the paralyzed man had been sitting for years, trying to get to the waters that had not brought him life.

Today:

- These pools have been excavated and one can see their old ruins. Access to them is via the courtyard of the Church of Saint Anne which is the traditional location of the birth house of the Blessed Mother.
- Across the street from the entry is the edge of the existing Temple Mount.

### **The Main Parts of the Story:**

*Jesus encounters the crippled man:*

- Jesus comes to Jerusalem as a pilgrim for the festival, probably Pentecost, and encounters the crippled man at the pool of Bethesda. He has been there for 38 years.
- Jesus takes the initiative by walking to the man and posing the key question: do you want to be well?

*The answer of the man betrays a lack of understanding:*

- He resorts immediately to the problem of the pool and a lack of a person to get him there, without recognizing the one in front of him has more power than the pool is ever going to have.
- He fails to recognize the living water.

*Jesus cures him anyway by telling him to rise, take up his mat, and walk.*

- In so doing, he is commanding the man to violate the sabbath rule that forbids carrying objects as a form of work.

*Enter the Jews*

- The Temple leadership appears again for the first time since the cleansing and the conversation with Nicodemus. They do not understand who Jesus is and they interrogate the cured man.
- The crippled man now cured does not defend Jesus or demonstrate that the cure has had any impact on his lack of understanding.

*Jesus finds him later:*

- You are well. Do not sin anymore. Jesus has linked the healing of the man with his authority to remove sins, two acts that only God himself can do.

*Back to the Authorities:*

- The cured man goes to the temple leaders and tells them who cured him.
- The authorities begin to persecute Jesus because they see him as standing in opposition to the faithful understanding of the Old Testament God.

- He is taking on himself an authority that belongs to God alone.

*The dialogue that follows:*

- the Son is doing the work of the Father. Either he is God, or he is not.
- From here forward, Jesus will be put on an ongoing public trial by the Temple leaders, culminating in his death roughly two years later.

### **Who is Jesus?**

- The initiator
- Living water and living word
- He identifies himself with the God of Israel who “works” on the sabbath by giving life
- He is the new Pentecost, the new Moses, the new Law, the new Sabbath.
- He is the forgiver of sins in communion with his Father

**End of Session Six**

## Session Seven: Lessons from the Sabbath Cure at Bethesda

### Opening Prayer

With this sign and with each new sign now, the question of the identity of Jesus is going to become all the more pressing, and one that demands a true choice, then and now.

- Does he do his Father's work or not?
- Do we accept him to be the Son of God, or, if not, he is a blasphemer and we must reject him. There is no middle ground.

*We as Christians accept him as God. Good news for us! With that, what are some further lessons?*

- Do you want to be well?
- Do we recognize who is in front of us? Do we instead chase after empty solutions.
- Jesus cures even the ungrateful: that is us most of the time.
- How do we respond to the cures he offers us? Gratitude? Or indifference?
- How do we respond when we see good done to others? The authorities resorted to jealousy. Us?
- Do we understand that sin is the worst thing that can happen to us?

### End of Session Seven

## Session Eight: Signs of Bread and Water

### Opening Prayer

Introduction to signs four and five: Multiplying the Loaves and the Walking on the Water

- Consider the two signs together because:
  - they can be seen as a unified theme in light of the Exodus story, and
  - sign number five is very short.
- This is the “3<sup>rd</sup> day” and “Pentecost event” continued: Jesus will show his identity through these signs in order to invite the response of faith.
- Multiplying the Loaves: John 6:1-15. Sign 4
- Walking on the Water: John 6:16-21. Sign 5
- There is also a long discourse that follows all the way to the end of Chapter 6, to verse 71.

### Context- before and after these stories in John’s Gospel

- This continues the book of festivals: the prior sign was sabbath cure, possibly the feast of Pentecost.
- The time of the year for this sign: It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Passover that John notes in his Gospel.
- This puts us one year further out now from the prior sign. We have leapt one year.
- It continues the portrayal of Jesus as a fulfiller of the Moses and Exodus story
- Continues to raise the point that Jesus is doing things that only the unseen God of Israel can do.

### Context in light of the Exodus Story

- The Israelites came to know the God who controls the winds and the waves in the creation stories and especially at the crossing of the Red Sea
- After the Law is given, in their desert years, God gives them, through Moses, bread from heaven to sustain them.

### Context of Other Three Gospels as a parallel: we can KNOW these stories are real:

- All four Gospels have the story of the multiplying of the loaves
- This event must have left heavy impressions on the Christian community and was seen by them as a key to interpreting the origins and the practice of their regular Eucharistic celebrations.

### Location of this sign then and now:

- Shores of the Sea of Galilee, Tabgha, Capernaum, the Mount of the Beatitudes
- The church of the multiplication of the loaves
- Strong wind shifts are common even today on the Sea of Galilee

### The Story: Multiplying the Loaves

- Jesus returns to the Sea of Galilee, and large crowds follow him.
- They have seen his works of healing and they are captivated by him.
- But is their faith and response truly authentic? Or do they just want a wonder-worker?



Jesus goes up the mountain and looks up to see the large crowd.

- This is a Moses gesture, like Moses going up to receive the Law.
- Jesus takes the initiative to assist the people who are hungry- he sees there is want, lack, and need.
- He knows their hearts are hungry.
- He asks Philip and the others what should be done (in the other Gospels the apostles are the first to raise the issue).
- John says that Jesus knows what he is going to do which sets up the reason for the story: he does it all to show them who he is and to look for faith.

Earthly solutions, mere earthly means will fail:

- We do not have enough money to feed them all, say the apostles. They represent the worldly response to this test of their faith.

The Lord uses what is offered: five barley loaves and two fish.

- Barley is the food of the poor, and the food of Passover which is the time of the barley harvest.
- The 5000 men recline.
- To count entire households, multiply this number to get to 20 to 30 thousand people.

Jesus offers what is given to his Father in thanksgiving.

- Uses what becomes the classic Eucharistic formula: takes loaves, gives thanks, and distributes them.
- Bread and fish are given out and “they had their fill.”
- There is no lacking with God- abundant.
- The abundance of bread and fish is similar to the excessive gallons of wine at Cana: abundance.

There are leftovers

- They fill 12 wicker baskets with the food that was more than they could eat
- Jesus wants nothing lost or wasted- gather up all the fragments.
- Recalls gathering up the mana in the desert, especially on the day before the sabbath to have enough for the next day as well.
- But mana could not be stored for long or it would perish.
- These fragments may be maintained. They are the graces, the morsels of the Word of Jesus which the Apostles as leaders are responsible for collecting, storing, preserving, and handing on.

The crowds go wild:

- He is proclaimed as a prophet
- They attempt to make him king
- This is no merely ordinary prodding to make everyone share what they brought in their lunch pails. This was a legitimate work of wonder- a miracle.
- This appears to be faith, but the response is not accurate.
- The dialogue that follows will show the inadequacy of their response.
- They, like Samaritan woman before, have a faith that is based only on signs. They want a wonder worker.

**End of Session Eight**

## Session Nine: Signs of Bread and Water Continued

### Opening Prayer

**John 6:1-15, multiplying the loaves John 6:16-21: walking on the water**

#### Re:cap:

- Jesus has just fed thousands and thousands of people.
- They have reacted to him as a wonder worker which looks good at first but actually shows a less than sufficient faith.
- Evening falls. Now comes the crossing on the sea.
- The crowds stay, the disciples go into the boat, Jesus goes elsewhere
- The sign that is about to happen is not going to be shown to all the crowds- they do not have the benefit of it. The closest disciples will have this extra gift of a showing of his identity

#### The story:

- The evening hour, a time of gathering darkness and therefore a reminder of darkened understanding
- Jesus sends the disciples in the boat ahead of him over to Capernaum which is down the shore.

Once dark, the sea is stirred up and Jesus is not yet with them.

- After rowing for awhile they encounter Jesus coming to them on top of the water.
- Jesus is in total control.
- They are afraid: a lack of faithful understanding.
- Once he identifies himself and commands them not to fear, the boat arrives at the shore. The test is over.
- Jesus has shown himself firmly in command of the forces of nature: wind and water.
- Jesus has revealed to this smaller group his identification with the powerful unseen God of the Old Testament. He is I Am. "It is I."

Question is: how is everyone's faith? Where are they at? The discourse of the following morning will offer the answer.

#### **The Bread of Life Discourse:**

This is the one instance in this series where we are going to spend some time with the dialogue after the signs in order to complete our unpacking of it.

- The Bread of Life discourse takes place in Capernaum:
- It offers a further revealing of Jesus' identity as an implication of the signs as well as a revealing of the lack of faith of those around him.

*John 6:22-68: the Bread of Life Discourse.*

- The crowds go chasing him down, going across a section of the Sea, to intercept him in Capernaum at the Synagogue there.
- He calls them out on their insufficient faith. "You just want a wonder worker."

Better than the Nourishment of the Law and the Wonders that they are used to:

- He invites them to believe in the One that God has sent, and that he offers something greater than the sustenance of the Law and of Mosaic customs.
- And they respond by asking him to prove himself, forgetting completely the sign of the previous day. What can be greater than the Mosaic law?
- They respond by thinking they must DO something to please God. Works of the Law. They do not grasp that what he is offering is a GIFT and that it far surpasses the power of the Law to transform.
- Jesus: I am the Bread of Life
- Identifies himself with the Mana, with Moses, and the unseen God who provides and feeds.
- Jesus explains that one must eat his flesh and drink his blood in order to have life.
- This is his “hour” when he will spill his blood and offer his flesh on the cross. His death and resurrection will be sustenance and nourishment.
- How does one encounter this? In the Eucharist: real eating and drinking as a ritual.
- Here there are clear ties to the Eucharist and its integral place in the life of the Christian.
- The Jews begin to argue about what this can mean.
- Jesus does not attempt to soften what has been said, but instead repeats and reinforces the point.

The final result:

- The crowds and disciples question, doubt, and they turn away.
- This man is making himself greater than the Law as a nourisher, and his required means of receiving it (eating him) are unacceptable.
- the Twelve stay, but even then it is with an incomplete understanding.
- Peter does offer a correct response: Jesus is “of God.” His true origins are not about Bethlehem, or Nazareth, or anything earthly: he is of God.
- Jesus responds that even this sufficient act of faith is not above the possibility of failure, referencing that one of them (Judas) will fail.

**Who is Jesus from both of these signs and the discourse?**

- New Exodus, new liberator from slavery to sin.
- The new Passover: Christians saw Jesus, multiplication of the loaves, and the last supper all as one theme of him replacing the Jewish rituals they were now excluded from.
- New giver of sustenance and life: replaces the Mana
- God of abundance- the leftovers.
- The God of the wind and the waves who has power over all creation.
- The Bread of Life and the provider of indestructible life.

**End of Session Nine**

## **Session Ten: Lessons from the Bread and Water**

### **Opening Prayer**

Lessons from the water

- Calm in the face of rough seas, and faith is only deepened when we face challenges.

The Bread of Life:

- We are invited to offer ourselves to God completely, and hold nothing back, and see ourselves as the boy who had 5 loaves and 2 fish.

God, the Eucharist, must be understood on his terms and not on our own.

- Do we seek in God/the Mass/ the Eucharist some wonder-worker after our image, or do we let him shape us?
- The Eucharist is an essential means of union with the one who is the new Exodus, new Passover, fulfilled law, and the one who has died and risen. It cannot be watered down to a mere symbol.
- The Word of God, the Sacraments, etc, must be gathered up and protected- nothing lost or wasted.

To Whom Shall We Go?

- To cling to faith even when we do not always understand exactly what it all means. Peter.

The Eucharist and Sacraments are not magic: we are still free: Judas.

- The discourse ends with a reference to Judas and the fact that nothing overrides are freedom to walk away.

**End of Session Ten**

## Session Eleven: Introduction to The Cure of the Blind Man

### Opening Prayer

#### Introductory Points:

- We arrived at the sixth sign out of seven.
- This sign and the next sign are heard in church at least every third Lent so they are well known.
- They are dramatic, they are powerful.

#### Covering it in this series:

- This sign of the curing of the blind man we will again treat across three sessions.
  - This first session will be devoted almost entirely to context and background because if we don't understand a bit about what is going on around this sign, we miss a lot of what makes it so ingenious.
  - Second session (number 12) we will walk through main outlines of the story to learn what it, along with its background, reveals about who Jesus is and what our response should be to him.
  - Third session (13) will be lessons from this story.

#### Where are we at in the Bible?

- The sign itself takes up all of John Chapter 9.
- However, we will do a bit of background work on Chapters 7 and 8 as well because they set the stage for the main themes of this sign.
- We will omit the opening of Chapter 10 on the Good Shepherd even though it is technically the dialogue that concludes this sign.

#### Really quick re-cap:

- Recall that we are still working our way through festivals as John presents Jesus as the fulfillment and replacement of them.
- Jesus' origins are divine, and he brings the fullness of life, abundance, grace.
- His Word is powerful, and he does the Work of God, including the work of forgiving, healing, and feeding.

#### Critical Background One: The Pool of Siloam, Gihon Spring, Temple

- Earthly water that gives life and makes Jerusalem possible. Everyone knew what that pool meant.
- Intermittent spring; pool is a reservoir to catch the over flow. Name means "sent" because the spring's water is sent there.
- Part of the rituals of the temple
- The road down to the pool- some distance and some descent.

#### Critical Background Two: The Feast of Tabernacles

- Time of the year: harvest, the fall
- Multi day festival 7 days plus an extra 8<sup>th</sup> celebration day, like a sabbath. Required pilgrim festival along with Passover and Pentecost for which all adult males must come to Jerusalem annually.
- What is the feast? Booths, commemorate time in wilderness living in shelters, but also a rain festival for newly planted crops to bring in the rainy season (our winter time). Involves pouring water from the pool of Siloam (which gives life to the city) on the temple altar to thank God for rain, to ask God for rain). Priests would process down to the pool each day of the feast and bring water back up to the

temple altar in a golden pitcher. They pour the water into wine cups on the altar so that wine and water would flow out together.

- Involves lighting four enormous torches in the outer court of the temple to light up the night. Celebrates messianic promise of the end of time when the night shall be as clear as day- no more night or dark. Pillar of fire in the desert journey.
- Principle symbols of the feast:
- Rain, harvest, water
- Light: the torches and lamps lit up.

### **Critical Background Three: Key comments of Jesus in chapters 7 and 8.**

#### *At the Feast:*

- Chapter 7 opens by explaining Jesus goes to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, though he explains he is going to go in secret because the temple authorities have grown so forceful in their resistance to his message.
- This puts him now in the final Fall of the year before he dies in the coming spring.

#### *Origins and the Work of God*

- He teaches in the temple when the feast is already half over and starts arguments about his origins (where is he truly from), and about his authority to cure on the sabbath.
- "If you can circumcise on the sabbath, surely I can cure on a sabbath."

#### *Living Waters:*

- On the last, 8th day of the feast, after the water and light rituals cease the day prior, he exclaims in the temple: "if you are thirsty, come to me and drink! Rivers of living water will flow within the one who does."

#### *Light of the World:*

- Chapter 8 we find Jesus continuing his comments at the end of the Feast: I am the light of the world. I do not judge by appearances.
- I come to offer freedom from slavery to sin.
- He identifies himself with the same God of Abraham and says of himself "I am."
- That closes the chapter.

#### *Re-cap of key themes:*

- At a festival revolving around water for the harvest, and the torches of light,
- At the temple and its nearby pool of Siloam
- Jesus explains he is: water, he is light, he does the work of God to heal even on the sabbath, that he is from God, that he sets free from slavery to sin and the blindness of bad judgment.

With that we are ready for the events of chapter 9 which are the sign itself and the aftermath that follows.

### **End of Session Eleven**

## Session Twelve: The Cure of the Blind Man Continued

### Opening Prayer

Chapter 9: we come now to the 6<sup>th</sup> sign of John's Gospel, the curing of the man born blind, in the temple, at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, and on the sabbath.

Quick reminder of the prior themes that have led up to this:

- Living water, light of the world, doing the work of the Father, he is of heavenly origin.

### Chapter Nine: the opening actions of the curing of the man born blind

- This is a sabbath day (we learn a few verses in)
- Passes by a man blind from birth and his disciples asked whose fault is it that he is blind- which sin caused this suffering.
- Jesus answers and establishes the whole reason for all that is to come next:
- Neither he nor his parents sinned.
- This situation happened so that I could show you the works of God. When I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
- Jesus is going to do a sign in order to show who he is. Just like all the other stories.

### A reason for sickness?

- Here we have one key piece of Christian theology of suffering: it is allowed so that there can be love, compassion, and so that God can heal when necessary so as to be glorified.

What is Jesus going to do, and how SPECIFICALLY? In order to show his real identity, especially as a fulfiller of yet another festival?

- A man is going to move toward sight, while the Jewish leaders are going to slide further into blindness.

### The Healing:

The Healing in the waters of life for the city to bring light:

- Jesus makes mud and puts on the eyes of the blind man, adapting a traditional practice of the healing arts of the day, setting up a situation where the man must go wash.
- The man obeys without question; when the word of Jesus is obeyed, life is possible.
- He washes in the pool whose name means "the sent one." It is not the waters that do the healing, but contact with Jesus the one who is the truly sent.
- Here the symbolism of the feast of tabernacles finds its fulfillment in Jesus: living water, healing waters, light, the new temple, the new source of life. Jesus has replaced what the feast was for.

The argument that follows

- This should have been good news! But the healing leads to a fierce argument.
- The neighbors do not see the good work of God, and they turn the man over to the Pharisees.
- The Pharisees debate his work on the sabbath of making clay, not seeing his true work of healing as a divine act. They debate his origins, not understanding where he is from

- The temple leaders grow in blindness: they want facts, not faith.

The parents:

- They Interrogate the parents because they are hung up on trying to prove if the man was really blind from birth or not.
- The parents affirm the blindness of their son, and the newly cured man is not able to say who cured him. The facts have not disproved the identity of Jesus.
- The parents say their son can speak for himself. They are not willing to accept the authority of Jesus. Their son is on his own.

The cured man teaches the teachers:

- the newly cured man nicely summarizes how the Pharisees are blind and that as leaders of Israel they SHOULD know but they do not. He accurately explains that a sinner cannot do what Jesus is doing.
- They refuse to see that God is at work. They are too bound to their old way of thinking.
- They throw the cured man out of the temple. Much like the Christians were expelled after the resurrection.

Jesus finds the cured man

- Do you believe? The newly cured man who has now lost temple, ritual status, and family finds in Jesus the one who he acknowledges as Lord.
- He does him worship and is someone who truly sees.
- Jesus has revealed his identity and in this man, he has found a response of faith.

Good Shepherds vs Bad Shepherds

- Chapter 9 runs into Chapter 10 with a discourse about how Jesus is the Good Shepherd who truly cares for his sheep, as opposed to the pharisees who are thieves and robbers: who are blind.

Who is Jesus?

- He is the one who is sent. He is the compassion of God the most high who comes among us in person.
- He is of God and his origins are heavenly.
- He is what the Feast of Tabernacles had been praying for and waiting for:
- He is the living water that we seek, and the source of life inside of us. The life of grace.
- Like the springs in a desert, he is the giver of life itself.
- Baptism establishes a bond with him that generates living waters of goodness inside of us.
- He is the light of the world enabling us to see clearly by his teachings.
- He is the source of division over the question of how God enters the world and over what it means to accept and believe in him. He divides families.
- He is our consolation who will not abandon us if we believe in him.
- He is to be worshiped and adored as the cured man did.

Up next: lessons from this story.

**End of Session Twelve**



## Session Thirteen: Lessons from the Cure of the Blind Man

### Opening Prayer

Who sinned? This man or his parents?

- The danger of thinking that God punishes us with suffering and sickness.
- The condition of human lack or want opens up a space for God to operate and show himself.

God chooses his own means to heal: mud and water

- Sacraments are extensions of the actions of this story: God utilizing physical matter to facilitate grace and transformation.

The trust and obedience of the man to go and wash.

What does it mean to see? To be blind?

- Perhaps the pharisees of this story had arrived at a place where the Mosaic rituals replaced God rather than leading to God.
- They were so confident in their apparent insight that they did not see how little they understood.
- They do not listen to the voice of the cured man even though he states what is true. Their pride has blinded them.
- Wisdom often comes to us from unlikely places.

The relationship between facts and faith.

- What happens when our desire for evidence becomes an excuse not to stretch out our hearts in faith?

Good and Bad shepherds (John 10)

- A good shepherd lays down his life, risks his life, for his sheep.

**End of Session Thirteen**

## Session Fourteen: The Seventh Sign: The Raising of Lazarus

### Opening Prayer

Where is the raising of Lazarus at in the Scriptures? John 11:1-44.

### Background and Context

- We have been walking our way through the extended Pentecost and 3<sup>rd</sup> Day Event of the revelation of Jesus.
- He has been shown to be the bringer of abundance, the new Moses, the Word that is powerful, the same God who has command of the wind and waters.

*He is the one who will die....*

- In various ways the signs have also pointed to his “hour,” though it has been subtle.
- The hostilities of the Temple leadership towards Jesus have been building and building.
- After the major argument at the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus attends one more major festival during the winter before his death.
- Feast of the Dedication of the Temple, late in Chapter Ten.
- His presence at this feast is a statement that he has come as the new temple.
- He states to the crowds that: the Father and I are one in the same. They threaten to kill him.

*The Hour is approaching....*

- “The Hour” draws near now in chapter 11 which is where we find the story of the raising of Lazarus.
- All of this is permitted by God so that ultimately the only Son can perform his greatest “eighth sign,” the sign of ultimate revelation of God’s own nature and glory: he will freely die so that the world can have life.
- Raising one dead man to life will lead to the killing of the Son of Man.
- And: the sign that leads to his death will be one in which he displays God’s radical power over life and death. This is at the center of the raising of Lazarus.
- It is a precursor to what the Father will do for his dead Son, Jesus.
- It is yet another attempt to raise up a response of faith in Jesus’ followers.

### Who are Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and where is this story taking place?

- John tells us that Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were friends of Jesus. Possibly he stayed at their home during his many visits to Jerusalem.
- They live in the Town of Bethany which is only a short walk from Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.
- One can go to Bethany today to visit the Church built over the place of the Home of Lazarus and his raising.
- It is very likely that these are the same Martha and Mary that appear in Luke’s Gospel in the conversation about the house chores.
- It is also possible that this Lazarus is connected with the Lazarus mention in Luke’s Gospel of the poor man Lazarus who dies and is carried away to the bosom of Abraham while the rich man suffers torment. The rich man asks Lazarus to return in order to convince others to change and believe, but he does not return. In John’s story, the person named Lazarus does return; some believe others do not.

- After Lazarus is raised, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus will host a dinner for Jesus on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, and there his body will be anointed by Mary as a preparation for his burial. After that he will enter Jerusalem to die.
- The death and the raising of Lazarus therefore takes place shortly before Passover, likely in the early spring of the year that Jesus dies.

### **The Story and the Characters**

The Story of this last sign is long so it is best relayed and explained by briefly highlighting the main characters.

### **The Disciples/ Apostles' faith**

- The situation for a sign is set up by Mary and Martha requesting Jesus to come because their brother is near death.
- Jesus waits before going, because he loves them- he has a greater plan in mind than the merely immediate.
- He then explains to his Disciples that they are going to back to Judea to attend to this situation.
- The Disciples question this decision because they know it puts them all into danger. They call him "Rabbi" showing their continue misunderstanding of who he is.
- They continue to view Jesus and this situation from a merely earthly perspective, not understanding the power of Jesus or that he must go to die.
- Instead they still view him as a political leader who is going to do battle in the city in the manner of David or a warrior king.
- Jesus explains that he is glad they were not present so that this situation of human want or lack, in this case a dramatic one, can allow for belief.
- The apostles decide to go with him "to die with him"- they are speaking of a political campaign.
- Their faith and understanding is insufficient.

### **Martha's Faith**

- Martha appears on the surface to have more understanding than the Disciples/Apostles, but she will falter.
- She runs out to meet Jesus while Mary stays stationary at home; like in the Luke story, Mary is the more contemplative of the two. Martha is action oriented and takes the initiative.
- She explains that she knows Jesus is a wonder worker because if he had been there earlier, Lazarus would not be dead because Jesus could have cured him. She does not allow for the possibility that there was a greater plan at work and that Jesus is more than a mere wonder worker. He is master over death.
- Jesus attempts to correct her by explaining Lazarus will rise; as in: I have power even over this.
- She interrupts him and explains what SHE KNOWS, (as she teaches the teacher) namely that he will rise on the last day. This is in reference to the Pharisee tradition of a final resurrection.
- He corrects her again: I am the resurrection. Do you believe this he asks her?
- Yes, I have come to believe- as in- I knew this a long time ago. You are the messiah. This is the response of someone who thinks she knows everything, and she only succeeds in using the same labels that others before her have used who do not grasp who Jesus truly is.

Up to now, Jesus still has not encountered real faith.

### **End of Session Fourteen**

## Session Fifteen: The Raising of Lazarus Continued

### Opening Prayer

#### Quick re-cap:

- A situation of extreme human lack has been created with the presence of a dead man, allowing God room to act in a dramatic way in order to show who he is.
- The disciples have mistaken the desire of Jesus to return to Judea as a risky, political, military type campaign.
- Jesus' friend Martha has shown herself to be strongly self-reliant and with a faith that is insufficient.

#### Mary's Faith

- Mary is now summoned. Martha who does the summoning calls him "the teacher," which is again an inadequate title.
- Mary now comes but only because she has been called, and she comes quickly; she does not run out on her own authority.
- Mary approaches Jesus with more humility: she bows to the ground before him.
- The "Jews" accompany her as the weeping ones, focusing on the dead man rather than on the one who can give life. Mary goes straight to Jesus, not to the tomb, and they follow her in confusion.
- Mary repeats much of what Martha asserted earlier: if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But she does not add the piece about "because God does whatever you ask."
- This intentional difference suggests that Mary's understanding is deeper than Martha's- Jesus is not merely a wonder worker but his very presence itself brings life.
- However, Mary now begins to weep which means that she too has not fully grasped who Jesus is.

#### Jesus' reaction:

- Jesus displays consternation at the lack of faith of all those around him.
- He weeps, but the verb in Greek that John uses for Jesus' weeping is different than the one used to describe that of the crowds and of Mary.
- His weeping is not over loss of Lazarus because he knows how that situation will end. His weeping is instead over the failure of those around him to grasp the faith that truly saves.
- Think of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem in Luke's Gospel, "soon to be destroyed for its lack of faith."

#### What Jesus does:

- He takes himself to the tomb. He orders the stone to be taken away. He takes command.
- He prays aloud before the sign, first time he does so, in order for those listening to learn from HIS true faith in his father.
- He calls Lazarus out.
- "untie him and let him go."
- Lazarus appears in burial cloths and cannot free himself. As dramatic as his raising is, it is still less dramatic than the raising of the Son of Man whose burial cloths will be discovered neatly folded up on Easter Sunday morning.

#### Does this lead to faith?

- No and yes.
- The Sanhedrin decide to put him to death.
- The Jews who had been with Mary believed in the sign, others went to the Sanhedrin alarmed.

- They make no mention to the Sanhedrin about the prayer of Jesus or the context.
- He is presented merely as someone who is stirring up the crowds before Passover and therefore is a threat to the peace of the city under Rome.
- In the great plan of God, this work at the service of life will now lead to a death.
- In this way Jesus now stands firmly in the line of the prophets who were rejected before him.

However, Mary and Martha and Lazarus have come to a deeper faith as the next scene will show:

What's next?

- The Sanhedrin has decided that he has to die to save the people.
- Jesus leaves the area to go to Ephraim which is northeast of Jerusalem.
- He comes back for Passover, stopping first at Martha, Mary, Lazarus' home, and then into the city.
- He will die as Passover begins.
- Mary, Martha, and Lazarus have a dinner for him.
- Martha serves – she has been humbled.
- Mary anoints with the oil and the fragrance fills the house. It is the fragrance of true devotion and recognition of who he is and what he is about to do.
- It is contrasted with Judas who complains and grumbles from the position of a hardened heart.
- Faith has both grown, and it has also been rejected.

Who is Jesus?

- He is in full communion, conversation, and friendship with the unseen Israel God- who he shows more and more to be his Father.
- He is therefore the Word made flesh and the glory of the Father. He is God among us.
- He is the resurrection and the life. He identifies himself with these things.
- He is the bread of life- identified as such- and he is THE resurrection. Indestructible life.

**Is Jesus Annoyed at human weeping? Is there room for our mourning?**

- John presents Jesus in a very strong manner because he want to underscore the real identity of Jesus as the Word made flesh who has dwelt among us.
- When one assembles all the pieces of the puzzle to complete the New Testament portrait of the Savior, it is clear that Jesus is keenly attentive to human pain and weakness. His heart is moved with pity for us. He knows humanity well.
- There is room for mourning in the Christian experience.
- However, the Christian does have to always work to grasp it in the light of the greater plan of God so that mourning does give way to joy, a joy that the world and life cannot rob us of.
- An excessive mourning can present what might be the reality of a faith that needs to mature.
- Blessed are those who mourn: that Beatitude speaks most directly to reality of mourning over sin as the only true tragedy of the human condition. The comfort is found in conversion and the mercy of the redeemer who moves us beyond sin.
- Jesus weeps in John for the possibility of a humanity that refuses the gift of his grace. For the radical possibility of our human freedom that can in fact reject God.

**End of Session Fifteen**

## Session Sixteen: Lessons from the Raising of Lazarus and Series Conclusion

### Opening Prayer

#### Re-cap to the last sign:

- Jesus shows himself to be life itself- indestructible life itself.
- And all those around him, even those who should have known him best, show themselves to be mostly unable to grasp this truth.
- He does the sign anyway because it is his Father's plan to do so. The story is not really about Lazarus at all but about what Jesus demonstrates through him.
- The world must be shown the power and glory of God, and they are free to accept it or reject it.

#### Some quick lessons from Lazarus:

##### **God's greater designs are done out of love for us: because Jesus loved, he waits.**

- It is a deep and mature faith that rests on the providence and plan of God as the explanation to the hardships of life.
- But such faith is a gift, and it comes with the price of suffering, conversion, and as a result of grace.

##### **Untie him- untie us.**

- We do find ourselves dead at points in life and we must hear the voice (think John 10) of the Shepherd calling out to us to come out of our sinful behaviors.
- Ultimately we look forward to the day of the resurrection when he will untie us from the bonds of sin and death, and because of this we face the fears of life with faith.

##### **We are wise to pray like Jesus prayed:**

- Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me."

### Conclusion to the Series: The Seven Signs of the Gospel of John

#### Who is Jesus?

- We have walked through "the Third Day" and seen the revelation of God as John has painted the picture.
- We have seen Jesus as not merely a worker of wonders who simply responds to our wishes and whims:
- He is God. He is profoundly attentive to our needs, and he lavishes abundant life upon us.
- He does not expect us to earn anything because he knows that we are not capable of doing so.
- He wants us to receive his gifts of love and grace.
- He wants to act upon us in the sacraments and in the Word.
- He wants us to react by placing our trust in his word and by abiding in his friendship.

#### **Presented so that you may believe.**

- At the end of John chapter 20, the author explains that Jesus did many other signs that are not written in this book, but these signs are presented so that you / we may come to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that through this believe, we may have life in his name.

- This series on John's Gospel is offered with the same hope.
- Please pray for all the ways that my own inadequate explanations failed to do justice to the true and beautiful text of John, and to the glory and power of the God himself.

**Credit to resources:**

- I owe tremendous credit for the content of this series to a commentary on John's Gospel from the *Sacra Pagina* series, with the volume on John's Gospel written by Francis J Moloney. His work was used heavily as the basis for much of what I had to say about the text of John.
- Also great credit to Pope Benedict XVI and his three volume work: *Jesus of Nazareth*.
- My "thanks" is also in order to Tammy Waech our communications staff member at the parishes who kindly packaged the videos so that they could be organized on the web and shared.
- Know of my "thanks" to all of you who have listened to this series.

This has been a Low Budget Theology Series, offered by Father Nathan Reesman. 2021.

**End of Session Sixteen**