



Discovering Healing Accounts in the Gospels of John

We are praying for you as you continue this journey to discover truths from the healing accounts in the Gospel of John. We want to encourage you to take time to pray and ask God to help quiet your mind each day, set aside time to study, and read God's word. Use a personal journal to document your notes and answer the questions in each daily reading.

We've created an acrostic to help us remember some key points to turn this time of study into a time of spiritual growth and personal healing.

Honor God with your commitment of time to study His word.

Examine your heart and pray to invite Him into your study.

Ask God to reveal His truths in the passage.

Listen to what He says and write it down.

*Digging deeper into the Gospels will reveal truths that will change the way you view healing, and most important draw you closer to our Heavenly Father.
May God bless you as you commit your time and heart to study His word.*

HEAL Bible Study: John

(28 Day Study)

Introduction: Meeting John

Day 1

Today's tech savvy folks frequently employ initials to express a commonly-used phrase. One of the favorites used by those who share a bond of love is "B.F.F." (ie. Best Friend Forever). John was indeed Jesus' B.F.F.! And he proved himself faithful to His Lord, Savior, and divine Friend by fulfilling His mandate to "love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) It was in this spirit of love that he always addressed the recipients of his writings. John understood that the relationship between the divine Lord and those He calls to be His believers and followers was to be one of sacred friendship.

We glimpse a hint that our Lord well-knew what that was like in John's account of Jesus' final discussion with all of His disciples -- those he had chosen to be with Him, learn from Him, and carry on the work of His father's kingdom here on earth. Jesus said to them, without a hint of embarrassment: "until now, I have called you servants, but now I call you my friends." (John 15:15) Under the stress of anticipating what the coming days would bring, the Creator and Lord of mankind reached out to those closest to Him in this world for friendship.

Notice that it is only in the account of Jesus by John that we find this heartfelt need recorded. John got it! The bond of love forged between himself and his Lord was so solid that later, in his own Gospel, rather than referring to himself by names, John simply recounts that it was "the disciple whom He loved" that

Jesus entrusted the keeping of His own mother, as He felt His life ebbing away on the cross.

Questions:

1. Do I believe Jesus still desires to have friends here on earth?
2. How does my friendship with Jesus look?
3. Do I believe that He has sent His Holy Spirit to enable me to live in a loving, saving, healing, eternal friendship with God Himself?

Day 2

Read John 1: 1-14

TMI – Too Much Information

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the amount of information presented to you when you're going through an illness? Technology has made information much more accessible to us, but that doesn't necessarily make us more knowledgeable. The more information we gather, oftentimes we discover that much of it contradicts itself and we end up more confused and frustrated than when we first began. The first verse in the book of John (John 1:1) lets us know how to narrow the field; that is, where to find the most valuable information. "*In the beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word WAS God." (See also Genesis 1:1, "*In the beginning...*"). The tangible Bible we can hold in our hands, the one lying on our nightstand, or one of the several translations we may have on our favorite tech device, contain the words that provide a way for us to know THE WORD and THE WORD is GOD HIMSELF! Since He is the creator of our bodies, along with everything else that exists, it makes sense to consult Him when something goes awry. It's a good thing He's so available AND all in one book!

Hold on, it gets more amazing! In verse 14 of the same chapter, we learn that The Word, as God, became flesh and dwelt among us---John is referring to Jesus! Jesus is God in flesh form. He is the very WORD of God. Let that sink in today. Today's passage can be described visually as:

GOD = THE WORD = JESUS!

So, the Bible teaches us that the way to obtain information from the One who created our bodies, and the One who loves us more than we can comprehend, is to spend time with The Word. The enemy, however, wants to prevent us from knowing God, so he often tries to make us believe we can't understand The Word. That, my friend, is a lie! Why would God reveal Himself in the written word, yet make it so that we could not comprehend? Until the end of time, He will make sure that His Word is made available, to all who will pursue Him, in a language they can understand. Since the original texts were written thousands of years ago, we need to find a translation (e.g. NIV, ESV, NLT, etc.) we can understand, and get going. Similar to an earthly relationship between friends, the more time we spend with the Word, the more familiar we will become.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the most helpful source of information for my journey of healing?

2. Who wants me to be ignorant of The Word? Who dispels darkness, brings light, and made a way for me to be called "a child of God"?

3. What does the passage that proclaims the Word became flesh and dwelt among us mean to you? Does it change your perspective about the value of and loving His word? If so, how? What does this mean for you as you move forward in your walk with God?

Day 3

Read John 1: 15-34

Avoid the “it’s all about me” attitude

There’s no person who better exemplifies selflessness than John the Baptist. His whole ministry, even though short-lived, was to point people to someone else, Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah. Clearly, we see in the scriptures that John the Baptist never focused on himself. He wasn’t concerned with his appearance (unshaven, unkempt), his clothing (animal skins), or his provisions (locusts). He was driven solely by his passion to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah.

While on a healing journey, sometimes we may find ourselves being able to focus on nothing but ourselves, our health, our pain, our condition, etc. (Sometimes my “thought life” reminds me of an opera singer warming up his voice before going on stage....”me Me ME ME Me me me.”) Our whole lives can become dominated by “our condition.” As a child of God, we are encouraged by Jesus Himself to bring our concerns to Him, and He will lead and guide us along the way. Our purpose is similar to that of John the Baptist: to prepare others for the coming of the Messiah. If we bring our concerns to Him, He’ll provide for us so that we can passionately pursue our purpose, too. Let’s take time to look up from the circumstances that surround us and see what areas and opportunities Jesus is calling us to today.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did John the Baptist know for certain Jesus was the Messiah?
2. How can I be confident that Jesus is who He says He is?
3. How does my life live out His purpose to point others to Him and His glory, not my own? Are you focused on Me, Me, Me, or on Him, Him, Him? How will focusing on Him be more health inducing?

Day 4

Read John 1:35-42

Come and See

In this passage, we find Jesus spending an afternoon with His disciples, perhaps along the banks of the Jordan River where He recently had been baptized. John recorded for us the first two things Jesus said to the group in this particular “teaching” session. In fact, these are the first words of Jesus (the “red letters” in some translations) in the book of John. Let’s eavesdrop. Jesus first asked those with Him, “What do you want”? That’s a profound question. There’s no record of the various responses the group may have given, but John tells us that Jesus responded to them, regardless of their specific “wants,” with a beautiful invitation to “come and see.”

Is He asking us the same question today—what are we really seeking/wanting? Often times, our focus shifts from the journey of walking alongside Jesus to pursuing potential benefits we could gain from the relationship with Him, that is, pursuing Jesus with an agenda. Let’s honestly ask ourselves if we are solely pursuing Him to be healed physically. Healing shouldn’t be the central focus of our accepting His invitation to “come and see.” The Word teaches us that the ultimate “want” for a Christ-follower is: more intimacy with Him, to seek Him and His righteousness, and to share Him with others. Is that what we’re doing? If so, then the next step is simply to look into the face of the One who loves us most and accept His invitation to “come and see.” Who knows, maybe physical healing will manifest itself in the “come and see.”

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you considered what it is that you really want from Jesus? How might I need to re-prioritize my “wants”?
2. What would it mean for me to join with Jesus, to “come and see” what He has in store for me?
3. The scriptures tell us that when the two disciples saw Jesus they recognized Him and wanted to find out where he was staying. Then it says they spent the day getting to know Him. Recognizing Jesus as Messiah, that the Word IS Jesus. Should knowledge of Him alter our time priorities? If so, how will you make the adjustments?

Day 5

Read John 1:43-51

Read also Psalm 23

Creating Community

We're introduced to two more disciples in today's passage, Philip and Nathaniel. The scripture says Jesus found Philip, then Philip found Nathaniel. Jesus suggested both "follow Him." This sounds like joining a "small group."

Creating community is always important, but particularly during a healing journey. The Word teaches us: a cord of three strands is not easily broken, together we are much stronger against the lies of the enemy, and we're safer from the wolf when gathered in a herd. In a very famous passage, Psalm 23, we learn that if we stay in the herd, focused on the Shepherd, He will make us lie down in green pastures, lead us beside still waters, and restore our souls! Simply put, we're better together. While traveling this healing journey, let's find ourselves some like-minded believers who will encourage us as we encourage them. For example, reminding each other of the thousands of promises God has made to us in His Word can be the most helpful medicine.

Often times, illnesses can bring us together in community; however, it's important that the focus of that community should be on pursuit of wholeness, not glorifying the disease. Are you in a community that is helping you pursue spiritual and physical wholeness and wellness by knowing more of Him?

QUESTIONS:

1. How does focusing on my illness instead of His promises glorify the enemy?
2. How can I encourage a fellow journeyman/woman today?
3. What did Jesus promise Nathaniel at the end of this passage?

Day 6

Read John 2:1-12

Crisis Advice and Servant's Response

Mary, the mother of Jesus, doesn't "say" much in the scriptures, but when she does, we should certainly listen. Today's reading describes the first miracle Jesus performed during a wedding celebration in Cana – turning water into exceptionally good wine! When the news is whispered among those close to the host that the wine is gone, panic ensues. How did Mary, being a close friend of the host, respond to this "crisis"? She went to Jesus, had a conversation, then turned to those nearby and said, "Do whatever HE says to do." Good advice, Mary!

Obviously, suffering and sickness are far more serious than running out of wine, but Mary's sound advice applies to all occasions. Jesus has promised to be available to us 24/7 so that we can consult Him about everything in our lives. Certainly, we want His advice during times of crisis. Let's take advantage of that offer by spending time with Him (in the Word) so that we can hear His instruction, then take steps to follow His advice.

QUESTIONS:

1. What can I learn about Mary's reaction to a crisis?
2. We read in the passage that the servants had to go and fill the jars with water. Jesus could have filled the jars himself with wine straight away. Do you find it interesting or significant that the servants still had to "go and do" something that would play into the ultimate outcome? What are these actions a demonstration of?
3. What is our role today in service on God's team? What are some of the attributes that the servants demonstrated that are important for us to learn and put into action?

Day 7

Read John 4:43-54

(Read also 1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Seek Him for Who He Is

At this point, Jesus had just left Samaria and at the passages just before, we see that they now believe Jesus is the Savior of the world because they saw and heard for themselves. Jesus began His ministry by gathering His disciples and travelling throughout the land sharing the good news of God's Kingdom to all who would listen. In these passages, Jesus had left the Samaritan region and headed back toward his home turf, the area around the Sea of Galilee. He and the disciples ended up back in Cana, the place where He had performed his first public miracle, turning water into wine. Many people had heard of Him as a result of the "wine miracle," as well as witnessed the miracles He recently performed in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival. So, when He arrived back in the area, it was no surprise to see crowds gathering wherever He went. But, it would have been shocking, in those days, for a Roman Official to even speak to Jesus, much less beg Him for help. Remember, all of the area within which Jesus travelled was governed by the tyrannical Roman Regime at the time, and Jews were considered inferior in all aspects to Roman citizens. Despite all of that, Jesus healed the Roman's son immediately upon request.

An important truth revealed in this passage is that Jesus came for ALL people, not just the Jews, or any other select group. He came for whosoever! Another truth we see here is that Jesus' words are not constrained by time or space. The words Jesus spoke on earth thousands of years ago, have the same force and effect today. He spoke it and it was done! Both principles are mind-blowing; but, perhaps, we should also pay close attention to what Jesus said to the crowd when

the Roman's request for healing was made that day. Jesus audibly observed, "[U]nless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe." All of His words are important, so why did He say this?

Again, He's letting us know that we must be careful not to seek Him only for miracles and wonders. Of course, those are fantastic, supernatural characteristics of Him, but He is so much more. Seeking Him solely for physical healing, for example, may cause us to feel disappointed, if our "healing" doesn't manifest quickly or in the way we expect. He wants us to seek Him for Who He is---the creator of everything that exists and the One who loves us the most. While seeking ALL of Him, we may find that our whole being is in a much better place than if we simply seek "the miracle physical healing" part of Him. The Bible tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 that we were all created with three basic parts - a spirit, a soul, and a body: "And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Let's continue to seek all of Him so that our entire being (body, soul and spirit) will be whole.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you see Jesus ministry and His desire beyond physical healing? Why is wholeness important?
2. Beyond the offering of physical healings, Jesus desires for us to see the fullness of who He is and believe upon Him not just because of what we can see with our own eyes. That's faith. Why is this important to Him?
3. Who is Jesus to you?

DAY 8

Read John 5:1-15

We Must Participate

Jewish traditional customs often involve immersion in water for purposes of cleansing and/or healing. In these verses, we approach the Pool of Bethesda in the city of Jerusalem, a pool in which many believed they could be healed if they were able to enter the water at certain times. (Note: remains of this pool are still visible today.) Despite the likelihood of there being many folk at the pool that day with many different obvious ailments, John describes how Jesus directed His attention to one man, a man lying beside the pool who had been an invalid for 38 years! When Jesus approached the man, the one simple question He asked him was: “Do you want to get well?” This may seem to be a strange question to those nearby, because it seems obvious why the man is lying there. Maybe we should look closely at the man’s initial response, “Sir, I have no one to help me...someone else gets ahead of me.” The fellow made excuses that involved other people. Instead of responding to his excuses, Jesus simply commanded, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk!” Miraculously, the man did just that!

During our healing process, let’s do what we can to participate in our healing. Let’s not make excuses, or blame someone else, if there are things we can be doing for ourselves to promote healing. For example, God may encourage a Type II Diabetic to treat his/her body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit by eating “God-Made” foods and exercise to become stronger. It may not be in the Diabetic’s best interest for God to miraculously heal rather than coach and teach him/her along the path to a healthier future. What we feast on, body and soul, will make a remarkable impact on our overall well-being. Let’s be diligent in doing the

Day 9

Read John 5:16-47

Big Picture

In today's passage, Jesus is telling His audience who He is and what His purpose is. It's such a privilege to be able to hear from His own words! He tells us that He and The Father are together in all aspects. This is huge! Jesus and The Father act in the same way. They heal, they raise from the dead, they acknowledge those who honor them, and eternal life is freely given to those who believe in them! How beautiful and simple is that?

So, no matter what we experience during this brief time on earth, if we believe in the Father and The Son, we will have ETERNAL LIFE! If we suffer, even though for extended periods of time here on earth, what's that in comparison to the joys we'll experience in eternity?

QUESTIONS:

1. Who wants me to focus on the “here and now” only?
2. How may my perspective change if my focus is on eternity?
3. What meaning does verse 24 have for me? How can I commit this passage to memory?

Day 10

Read John 6:1-15

Thankful for What We Do Have

The disciples feeding thousands of people with only 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread one day on a hillside by the Sea of Galilee is described in the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It's a BIG event. There are many observations of importance in this passage, of course, but let's look at one in particular. John's passage says that a boy who had 5 loaves and 2 fish gave all he had to Andrew, then Andrew gave the same to Jesus, and Jesus gave thanks for what was given Him. Even though it was obvious to all that the food was insufficient in every way to feed so many people, Jesus gave thanks for what He had in His hand! The next thing we read is that the disciples began to distribute the food among the thousands of people! Imagine yourself in the crowd sitting with your family. (Note: It's a somewhat grassy hillside with a gentle slope leading to the water's edge. The acoustics on the hillside looking down upon the Sea of Galilee are excellent; likely all the people spread along the hillside could hear Jesus' voice clearly.) With a small amount of stinky fish and hard, crusty bread in His hand, Jesus was grateful!

None of Jesus' actions or words go without meaning. So, we must assume that it is important in the Kingdom of God that His children are continually grateful for the good things they have been given. If we're suffering in one part of our bodies, perhaps we should be grateful for the other properly functioning parts. We can always find plenty for which to be thankful if we simply try. After Jesus' sincere gratitude was displayed, manifestation of one of the most famous miracles ever began to unfold. Again, many believed in Him because of the miracles He performed. Purpose fulfilled!

QUESTIONS:

Day 11

Read John 6:16-24

Stormy Weather

After witnessing thousands of people being fed with only a small amount of food, and tons being left over after everyone was full, let's take a boat ride across the Sea of Galilee back over to Capernaum along with the disciples. The scripture says it's now dark so perhaps we can take turns rowing and napping while we glide over to the other side. We're thinking, "Too bad Jesus didn't get on the boat with us, we could have asked Him a hundred questions about today's miracle." Once we've rowed about halfway across, the winds begin to blow, the boat begins to rock, and the waves begin to roll. (Note: The current residents around the Sea of Galilee can describe how quickly a storm "all of a sudden" appears on that Sea, which is actually no bigger than a lake.) To make matters worse, we see what appears to be a person walking on top of the water coming straight toward us! To describe us as frightened is an understatement! We automatically assume we're going down, down, down. When we thought it couldn't get much worse, we heard His voice, even above the sound of the wind and waves, "It is I; don't be afraid." Confused, but relieved, we take Him into our boat, and the next thing we know is that there's no storm, no further journey, and we've reached the other side! What a relief.

Questions:

1. Do I invite Jesus and trust Him in my storms? How can this change my outcomes?
2. How can I listen for HIS voice above the sounds of my storm?
3. Do I know believe that my destination through the storm will be clearly revealed when I trust Jesus? Why?

Day 12

Read 6:22-59

Our Daily Bread

John is the only gospel writer who gives us the description of Jesus as *The Bread of Life*.

Although this passage has some concepts which, upon initial reading, may seem strange, the more we read and study, the clearer the message becomes. Bread was such an important part of daily life during the time in which Jesus spoke these words. It was likely served every meal. Everyone could understand the importance of having bread to sustain life. Jesus used this analogy to explain to the people that He is all that we need in every aspect of our lives. He is spiritually the Bread we need for the abundant life He died to give us. And, what do we have to do to obtain this Bread, they asked? His answer was, and still is, “Just BELIEVE...in Him, what He says, who He is, what He does, and who we are in Him!” Easier said than done, right? However, the more time we spend in His Word with Him, the more we will understand and can apply in our daily lives. Remember from John 1: 14 Jesus is the Word of God and His Word is going to provide our perfect Spiritual daily food.

QUESTIONS:

1. How much time do I spend with the Word of God to nourish my Spirit? Has my time become contaminated with other distractions? If so, what adjustments can I make some to receive His daily bread?
2. Is the “Bread of Life” something that I have to work to earn? Explain your thoughts.
3. How can I get better at simply receiving and believing what He has already said to me in His word?

Day 13

Read John 6:60-71

Where Else Are You Going to Go?

Jesus says in this passage: “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.” This is such an important passage because he addresses the significance of our spirit over our flesh. He says that His very Words are life. That’s good news! Psalm 107:20: He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction. Are you beginning to get the picture that God’s Word -- holding on to it, reading it, meditating on it, and BELIEVING IT is going to impact your life?

After Jesus spoke those words, He cautioned that there are some who do not believe Him. This passage lets us know that some “believers” will fall by the wayside during their journey. In other words, they may have never really believed in the first place. In times when God is teaching us a hard thing, should we just give up and go search for another? Absolutely not, if we are truly believers. An illness, or other difficulties in our lives, could be a “hard thing” that we’re experiencing and we will need to hold on tightly to the written promises in God’s Word. Let’s respond like Peter did, “Lord, to whom shall [I] go? You have the words of eternal life. [I] have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.” There’s no other way.

QUESTIONS:

1. How does knowing that Jesus is the Word of God and His word brings life impact how I read and receive God's word?
2. What do I do when I feel like giving up? Do I believe that the greatest source of love and compassion is from my Heavenly Father?
3. What do I need to do in order to spend time in His Word learning more about the nature of my Father?

Day 14

Read John 7

Listening to The Father or The Family

One of the more subtle messages we hear in this passage, which we may find helpful while travelling through difficult times, is that Jesus did not rely upon the advice of his own family in a particular situation; rather, He relied solely on the instructions of The Heavenly Father. In almost every situation, in good times and bad, everybody's got an opinion and sometimes those closest to us want to voice theirs the loudest. When we're facing an illness, for example, we may have a lot of people voicing a lot of opinions on a lot of topics a lot of the time! That's a lot to deal with! When those situations occur, maybe we should do as Jesus did. He listened to those around Him, then, calmly chose to follow His Heavenly Father's instructions. Godly advice from those who love us should always be welcomed; however, we should talk to our Father about the situation enough to hear His voice and ultimately follow His lead. Unequivocally, Father knows best.

Questions:

1. Am I listening to too many voices when trying to make decisions about my health?
2. Where is the best source of all wisdom and knowledge stored for my retrieval?
3. If I believe He will listen and guide me, what difference will that make in my feelings, attitude and health?

Day 15

Read John 8:1-11

He Doesn't Condemn Me

This is the famous story of when the religious leaders of the day brought a woman to Jesus who had, somehow, been caught in the very act of adultery. Jesus had a crowd around Him as usual, so the men probably broke through the crowd rudely and interrupted Jesus' conversation to throw the woman in front of everyone. She may have landed at the feet of Jesus. (In retrospect, not a bad place to be!) All dressed up in their self-righteousness, they asked Jesus what should be done with such a woman. They assumed Jesus only had two choices from which to pick: 1) He would condemn her under the Mosaic law and affirm the required punishment of death, or 2) He would violate the explicit commandments of Moses by suggesting she not be condemned, which would infuriate the crowd. While all awaited His response, John tells us that Jesus doodled with His hand in the sand. Then, the third option was spoken, "Whoever hasn't violated any of Moses' law should cast the first stone." This was followed by Jesus returning to doodling in the sand. The scripture tells us that one by one the accusers walked away from the scene. More importantly, after they were gone, Jesus looked into the eyes of this woman and spoke, "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more." There was no condemnation found in Jesus; instead, He gave her instructions for a better future.

Questions:

1. Do I believe God is condemning/punishing me for my sin by allowing this illness?
2. What does scripture say about God's condemnation of believers? How do I apply this to my own life?
3. Is there anyone that I can think of right now that I have accused and need to forgive? If so, who and are you ready to take steps ahead to release them and forgive?

DAY 16

Read John 8:12-20

It's Hard to See Clearly in the Dark

John introduces us to another descriptive name of Jesus, “the Light of the World,” in today’s scripture. A small candle, when lit, can dispel a great deal of darkness. It’s as though light swallows up the darkness in a room. Light will always conquer darkness. Imagine the darkness that can be dispelled by “THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!” When we’re going through a trying time, we often describe it as a dark time. We must remember that He can provide more than sufficient light to bring us out of the darkness. Take advantage of The Light and “fan the flame!”

Questions:

1. Who dispels darkness?
2. Can I deal with my situation better in the dark or in the light?
3. How can I open up to let more light in?

Day 17

Read John 8:21-59

Free Indeed

Let's look closer at one of the verses in today's passage to make sure we don't misunderstand an often-quoted verse. In John 8:32, Jesus said, "...[a]nd you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (KJV) We shouldn't read verse 32 without first reading 31, right? In verse 31, Jesus said "[i]f you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.... 32 then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Again, we are encouraged by Jesus to know His teachings; that is, study His Word. Being a disciple means that we have studied what He taught and we're making every effort to apply what we've learned to our own lives. When we do so, we will recognize truth and that truth will set us free from all kinds of things. Sometimes poor health and illnesses may be the result or consequences of wrong beliefs, or "untruths," we've had for years. But, He assures us that when we learn His Word, we will learn the truth of His Word and that Truth will set us free!

Day 18
Read John 9
“No fault” illness

Today, we read John’s recollection of an occasion during which Jesus, while travelling with His disciples, comes upon a blind man. The scripture says that “Jesus SAW a man blind from birth.” The disciples, being eager to learn, asked Jesus who had caused the blindness. In a “matter of fact” manner, Jesus answered that neither the blind man nor his parents were to “blame” for the blindness; rather, his blindness was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. This fellow had been blind since birth and the scripture refers to him as a man. So, he had been blind for a long time. Notice that Jesus did not seem apologetic that the man had been blind for a long time, He simply declared that the man’s ultimate purpose was about to be fulfilled. Once the blind man followed the strange instructions Jesus gave, he then had vision! This man couldn’t possibly have imagined that we would be reading about him over 2,000 years later!

If we find ourselves asking, “Why am I suffering this way?”, He may whisper that it is ultimately for the purpose of glorifying Him.

DAY 19

Read John 10

The GOOD Shepherd

Of all the animals God could have chosen to analogously represent His children, He chose sheep. There's no animal much dumber than a sheep! (Go ahead and research sheep yourself.) We can safely assume, then, that if He refers to us as sheep, He knew we could do little on our own! He wants us to rely solely on Him. He explains to us in this chapter that He is our Good Shepherd...not just our shepherd, but our GOOD Shepherd. If God calls something good, we should take Him at His word. Jesus said, "I came to give you life, and not just "regular" life, but ABUNDANT life! (See verse 10.) Who doesn't want ABUNDANT life as the Creator defines it?

It's also important to realize that if we don't allow Him to be our Good Shepherd, then apparently we're subjecting ourselves to our enemy (see verse 10 again). The choice is 1) Good Shepherd who will lay down His life for us, OR 2) the enemy also known as the one who comes to STEAL, KILL, and DESTROY! Luckily, we don't have to be very smart to make the choice to follow the Good Shepherd.

So, sometimes when we're going through a difficult time, we may just need to lighten up on ourselves a little bit. We can't figure everything out ourselves, and He never asked us to. Recognize that He has made Himself available to us, because we absolutely need Him, and we can rely solely on Him as our Good Shepherd to meet all our needs.

DAY 20

Read John 11

He's Never Too Late

The three siblings: Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were all friends of Jesus prior to Lazarus' fatal illness. In fact, the scripture tells us plainly that Jesus loved all three of them. However, notice that He didn't prevent them from suffering. Undoubtedly, as Lazarus' condition worsened, the more distraught the three became. The sisters desperately sent word for Jesus to come quickly. Notice Jesus' reaction to the call to come. Jesus told the messenger that the sickness was for God's glory. Jesus further explained to his disciples that Lazarus would die but that his death would benefit them because it would cause them to believe! Not only did Jesus not go to Lazarus, but he travelled toward Judea again, even though the religious leaders had threatened to kill Him if He came back there. Scripture tells us that God's ways are often not like our ways. Many times we can not possibly understand why things happen the way they do. But, at all times, we are told to trust Him and Him alone.

Jewish burials take place as quickly as possible after death, so Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days by the time Jesus finally arrived at his friends' home. They went straight to the tomb and despite Mary's fear of the smell, Jesus commanded the tombstone be rolled away and Lazarus to come forth. That's exactly what Lazarus did!

We are not always kept from pain, suffering, and heartache. In fact, the scriptures tell us that we will suffer. In this world, we will have troubles. But, He has overcome the world and ultimately, His children will come out of the tomb to live with Him forever.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do I doubt He loves me when I suffer? How does this account help my faith journey?

2. How might my suffering help someone else come to know Christ?

3. Am I willing to surrender to Him completely, including my physical health?

Day 21

Read John 12 *Purpose in Pain*

Thus far, the book of John has covered a time span of about three years, the length of Jesus' earthly ministry. But the rest of the book takes place over about 7-10 days. It's the week leading up to the annual Passover Festival and Jesus and His followers are headed back toward Jerusalem to "celebrate," as was their custom. Upon entering the city, Jesus' fame had caused the people to gather in anticipation of His arrival. The scripture describes the "hero-like" welcome He received with palm branches being placed in the path of the little donkey He was riding and the crowds being excited to see Him. Sadly, however, we see that the people likely flocked to Jesus solely for His miracle working power, because the scripture says that most people still didn't believe His message. Not being deterred from His purpose, Jesus continued to proclaim, "Whoever believes in Me does not believe in me only, but in the One who sent me...and those will be rescued from the darkness." Belief = Rescue.

Jesus was fulfilling His purpose even though the weight on His shoulders was getting so heavy. In verse 27, "Now my soul is troubled," He said, "and what shall I say: Father, save me from this hour?" It's so magnificent that by reading His Word, we are privy to Jesus' audible cry "Is there another way, Father?" The time of His great suffering had begun and He knew it was going to get much worse. Yet, He laid down His will for the will of the Father so that all of us could be rescued, brought into the Light, and receive eternal life! Jesus was not spared from pain and suffering in fulfilling His purpose, and neither are we.

QUESTIONS:

1. In my own experience, have I ever seen a purpose in pain?
2. Under my present circumstances, am I willing to cry out to my Heavenly Father and exchange my will for His?
3. How might unbelievers be brought to the Light as a result of my suffering?

DAY 22

Read John 13

WWJD (What would Jesus do?)

John, of course, being with Jesus continuously throughout His ministry, had first-hand knowledge of Jesus' pain and suffering. He could have given us a minute by minute account of being with Jesus. In today's reading, we see that as Jesus and the disciples gathered for the evening Passover Meal, John describes Jesus as being in great pain, anguish, and heavily-burdened. The atmosphere had turned somber and everyone could tell that Jesus had really important things to say. Let's join them at the supper table.

Notwithstanding the great suffering Jesus was experiencing, and the voluminous amount of information He wanted to impart into those at the table with Him, John records the most humbling experience, which we know took place only hours before Jesus was to be crucified.

Despite His pain, and despite knowing what He was soon to face, the scripture says Jesus took the time and energy to get in the floor, on His precious hands and feet, and begin to wash the dirty feet of those with Him. A pin drop would echo as He knelt to the floor. Stop what you're doing and visualize yourself in the room.

Of course, in those days and in that arid region, foot washing was a daily practice; but, it was the job of a servant/slave, not the Honored Guest. It's hard to imagine the shock the disciples felt when they realized what Jesus was doing. Even though some protested, He washed the feet of them all, one by one. Then He imparted a mind-blowing attribute of His true identity. He, as our Master, had come to be our "Servant"! He explained to them that we must do as He had done. Serving others was absolutely required. Servanthood is a vital part of being a Christ-follower! Reading this aloud is followed by the echo of a pin drop.

QUESTIONS:

1. How could I consider serving someone else's needs, even though I'm suffering greatly?
2. In what way would my service be consistent with being a "Christ-follower"?
3. Do I trust Him to meet my needs while I'm meeting the needs of others?

Day 23

Read John 14

The Comforter Has Come

We could study the last few chapters of John for the rest of our lives and there would still be more treasures to find. For instance, look at the life-changing instructions Jesus gave in John 14:1 when Jesus looked into the eyes of those at the supper table and said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me.” Imagine sitting there. If we turn our face toward Him, He’s speaking the same words to us. He’s telling us to rely on Him, believe His promises, and to NOT be stressed out! These are not the cliché words of our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.---these are the words of JESUS CHRIST, the One who IS before the beginning of time and IS throughout eternity. He’s a reliable and capable source upon whom we can surely rely!

Later in the chapter, Jesus lets us know that He is also providing the ability to do what He has said for us to do. See verses 25-26. When we feel so overwhelmed that it seems impossible to “believe, trust, and not worry” we must remember that He has provided Himself as Holy Spirit to enable us to do so. He gives us the promises AND the ability to trust in the promises.

Read verses 23-24 to find another priceless principle. Jesus told them that if they loved Him then they would obey His teachings, and as a result He and The Father would dwell with them. Having our Heavenly Father dwell with us would

certainly improve our quality of life, wouldn't it? So, we should follow His teachings. But, can we follow His teachings if we haven't read them? Not really. Simply put, in order to have constant relationship with The Father and The Son, we must study and apply the teachings of The Word.

QUESTIONS:

1. When I feel that I'm far from God, or that He isn't even listening to me, could it be that I have not been spending time in His teachings?
2. How much time each day do I spend learning (and "doing") The Word's teachings compared to my other daily activities? How can I find or make more time to spend with Him in prayer and in the Word?
3. Do I believe Jesus' promise that He will dwell with me if I obey His teachings?

Day 24

Read John 15:1-11

“If”

In addition to the promise we highlighted yesterday, in this chapter, Jesus told his disciples: “If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” (See verses 7-11) That’s astounding---go read it again! He continued, “If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love...and My complete joy will be in you.” His “complete joy” seems like something all of us could use! Jesus explained how we can experience our best lives with these instructions---abide in Him, know His Word, and do what The Word says.

Keep in mind that becoming a child of God only required our belief in Jesus Christ as our Savior. That’s it...genuine belief! But, being able to live out our lives taking advantage of all the privileges of being children in His Kingdom often comes with conditions. Notice that both promises in today’s reading begin with the word “If.” It’s a tiny word with huge consequences. It seems to boil down to this: Do I really believe what He said, and if I do believe what He said, am I willing to follow His instructions? Assuredly, if we comply with His instructions, He will uphold His end of the promise. Bottom line: remain in Him by being in His Word.

QUESTIONS:

1. How would it benefit me to spend more time with The Word than I do with social media, watching TV, or tending to my favorite hobby?
2. What is stopping me from experiencing my best life and complete joy?
3. Am I willing to try Jesus' promises by fulfilling the conditions?

Day 25

Read John 15:12-27

Love is a verb!

Jesus speaks of love ten times in the last half of this chapter. He seems to really be trying to make the point of how important love is to those who call themselves His followers. He said things such as: He loves us like the Father loves Him; we should remain in love; keeping His commandments is evidence that we love Him; we are to love each other just like He loves us; greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends; and, in summary, He commanded, “Love each other.” Ok, Jesus, we get your point. You have clearly called us to love you, and others, just like you have loved us.

When we’re experiencing a time of illness, let’s challenge ourselves to see how many new people with whom we can share His love. Physicians, nurses, health food store employees, pharmacists, holistic medicine professionals, herbs and oil sellers, etc. all need love from us, not only love from us but also God’s love through us. We have a job to do, let’s just do it.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do I understand how important love is to my Heavenly Father?
2. How can I learn more about how much He loves me?
3. How would loving others be a good representation of Jesus especially coming from someone they know is hurting?

Day 26

Read John 16 *Promise of Peace*

We should never cease to be astounded by, and grateful for, being allowed to hear the words of Jesus just as they came from His lips into the ears and hearts of those He loved. In this chapter, Jesus continued to share with His disciples about events which were about to take place. Undoubtedly, they could not comprehend all that His words contained, nor can we, but let's absorb as much of which we are capable.

Jesus explained how He was soon to go away, back to The Father, but that He would also soon send His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, Himself without flesh and bones, to always be with them. The vastness of that is yet to be revealed, but we can operate on the promises He has revealed to us. In the last verse of this chapter, Jesus explained that they would experience some harrowing times in the near future, but that they would always be able to find peace in Him. Specifically He said, "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!" Take heart, my friend, even though you may be experiencing great trouble right now, He will provide you with His peace, and ultimately, you will overcome.

QUESTIONS:

Day 27

Read John 17

Jesus prayed for me!

John was able to provide us with so many incredible details because of his extraordinary intimacy with Jesus. This entire passage is a recorded conversation Jesus had with God only hours before His crucifixion. Isn't that amazing? What's more amazing is that Jesus was talking to the Father about those who believe in Him...that's you and me! Let's look at what Jesus prayed to the Father about us. He prayed that we would:

1. be one with Him and The Father;
2. be protected from the evil one;
3. receive the full measure of His joy;
4. be sanctified by the truth of His Word;
5. be wherever He is;
6. be able to see His glory, and
7. have, in us, the same kind of love God has for His son!

Since Jesus asked the Father for these things, we can be assured they were granted. Accordingly, for you and me this means that we can be one with Jesus, we can be protected from the evil one, we can receive the full measure of His joy, we can be sanctified by the truth of His Word, we can be with Him, we can see His glory, and we can have the same kind of love God has for Jesus in us! It's up to us to apply these truths to our lives.

One final treasure from this passage, and perhaps the most mind-blowing of all, is in verse 23. Jesus said to God, "...[t]hen the world will know that you sent

me and HAVED LOVED THEM EVEN AS YOU HAVE LOVED ME! [*emphasis added*]” He loves us as extravagantly as He loves Jesus! Let us be encouraged by that glorious news.

QUESTIONS:

1. Am I aware of these gifts taking place in my life?

2. Am I being set apart for God’s use?

3. Who, in my life, needs me to be loving as He loves me?

Day 28

Read John 19:16-30

It Is Finished!

John may have been the only disciple (and/or gospel writer) physically close enough to the cross at the final moments of Jesus' life to hear clearly these gloriously definitive words of Jesus... "[i]t is finished." Matthew recorded what Jesus *shouted* from the cross in Matthew 27:46. Then, in Matthew 27:50, Matthew recorded that Jesus said something else in a loud voice; but, apparently he was not close enough to hear what was said. Mark only recorded the first loud cry, the same that Matthew recorded in Matthew 27:46. (See Mark 15:34.) Luke recorded Jesus' request to the Father for forgiveness for those who were crucifying Him, the conversation with the 2 thieves, and the words, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (See Luke 23:32-46.) However, John 19:25 says that Jesus' mother was near the cross as well as "the disciple whom He loved," which we see repeatedly in John's gospel that this is the way he referred to himself. Then, in his final act of compassion, Jesus gave his mother to John and likewise gave John to his mother. After having put wine vinegar on a hyssop stalk to touch Jesus' lips, only those in close proximity could hear Him say, "It is finished."

What was finished? When sin first entered the Garden of Eden by the choice of Adam and Eve to listen to the voice of the enemy rather than God's, the relationship between God and man was severed, they were removed from the garden, and subject to the curse of death and destruction. (See Genesis 3.) But, God had a plan from before the foundation of the earth to restore that relationship through the obedience of Jesus so that we could again have intimacy with The Father and experience the benefits of being in His kingdom. (See Psalm 103:1-3.) It was the finished works of Jesus Christ who made this possible for us, and all we

have to do is believe! It seems almost too good to be true, but the more we study and learn, the more we understand and can take advantage of this truth. We are incredibly thankful to John, the beloved, for being at the foot of the cross, despite the obvious risks and dangers, so that we too can hear Jesus' words to us..."IT IS FINISHED!"

This study was originally published as part of the H.E.A.L. Bible Study, an initiative of HealingStrong. For more information about HealingStrong and how you can connect with local groups in your area, please go to:

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H <hr/> Honor God with your commitment of time to study His word.	E <hr/> Examine your heart and pray to invite Him into your study.	A <hr/> Ask God to reveal His truths in the passage.	L <hr/> Listen to what he says and write it down.
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Meet Our H.E.A.L. Team



Angie McKinney, J.D.



Barb Griswold, Ph.D.



Cheryl Collins



Suzy Griswold

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Everything we do is made possible by your prayers and gifts, and we want to thank you personally for sharing your love of the Lord so that others can know Him, too.

We are thankful for all He has done and hopeful for all He will do. To God be the glory!

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