

SURVEYING CHRIST IN ALL THE GOSPELS

THE FOUR GOSPELS¹:

Tonight we're going to begin the Gospels. We're looking at the overall theme and what the Lord is trying to accomplish and I want to explain that as I read to you the introductory paragraphs for the 1917 edition of the original old Scofield Bible. Now this is what Bibles used to have in them. You know there were no study Bibles before Scofield wrote his. He pioneered this and he was a lawyer from Philadelphia. He helped start the Philadelphia College of the Bible. And though we might not agree with every thing because he was a lawyer and he liked to make the inexplicable explicable—so he explained more than the Bible does at times. But never heretically by any means but he just added a little bit of spice along the way which later Bible teachers have not full agreed with. But he's right on here. Let me read this to you.

The four Gospels record the eternal being, human ancestry, birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, and Son of Man. They record also a selection from the incidents of His life, and from His words and works. Taken together, they set forth, not a biography but a Personality.

These two facts, that we have in the four Gospels are a complete Personality - not a complete biography, indicate the spirit and intent in which we should approach them. What is important is that though these narratives we should come to see and know Him whom they reveal. The twenty-nine formative years are passed over in a silence, which is broken but once as seen in twelve brief verses of Luke's Gospel. It may be well to respect the divine reticences.

What he means is what God overlooks we should too except for the little bit that he showed and the reason he said that is that there are entire books written about the childhood of Christ. They said that he used to create birds for his birdbath and all kinds of crazy stuff- it's all apocryphal and not true. OK next paragraph in Scofield:

But the four Gospels, though designedly incomplete as a story, are divinely perfect as a revelation. We may not through them know everything that He did, but we may know the Doer. In four great characters, each of which completes the other three, we have Jesus Christ Himself.

The Evangelists never describe Christ -they set Him forth.

They tell us almost nothing of what they thought about Him, they let Him speak and act for Himself.

This is the essential respect in which these narratives differ from mere biography or portraiture. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" The student in who dwells an ungrieved Spirit finds here the living Christ.

Let me break off from Scofield for a minute to say that my wife was 21 years old and a world tramping hippie living out of a knap sack an alcoholic a bar tender- and that's Bonnie- that's what she was and she at the end of her rope reached down to the bottom of her knap sack and pulled out a little tiny Gideon New Testament or Bible that her aunt gave her and said when you get to the bottom of your barrel and when you don't know where else to look; look to God and read this. And so she reached down and pulled that out and she read Matthew,

¹ Old Scofield, p. 930-32.

Mark, Luke and John. When she finished the Gospel of John she got on her knees and met the Living Christ herself. It's true and for all who have been saved faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Let me continue with Scofield:

For the Gospels are woven of Old Testament quotation, allusion, and type. The very first verse of the New Testament – Matthew 1:1 – says “*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham*” Immediately tying in Jesus Christ and pulling the reader back to the Old Testament; and the risen Christ sent His disciples to the ancient oracles for an explanation of His sufferings and glory (Luke 24. 27, 44, 45). One of His last ministries was the opening of their understandings so they would understand the Old Testament. The Gospels present Christ in His three offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. And here's the last paragraph Scofield wrote:

Special emphasis rests upon that to which all four Gospels bear a united testimony. That united testimony is sevenfold:

1. In all alike is revealed the one unique Personality. The one Jesus is King in Matthew –and what's interesting is that Matthew looks at the very same site that the other evangelists look at but he pulls out every strand that would make a portrait of Christ as King. Mark shows Jesus as the Servant though they looked at the same life they show Jesus serving serving serving serving-, Luke points him out at the perfect Man and finally He's seen as the divine God-man in John. But not only so:
 - For Matthew's King is also Servant, Man, and God;
 - And Mark's Servant is also King, and Man, and God,
 - Luke's Man is also King, and Servant, and God;
 - And John's eternal Son is also King, and Servant, and Man.

The pen is a different pen; the incidents in which He is seen are different incidents; but He is always the same Christ. That's the first element that ties all of the Gospels together.

- All the Evangelists record the ministry of John the Baptist.
- All record the feeding of the five thousand. --- and let me just share that there's something significant that the Gospel writers out of 250 events recorded in the life of Christ- that all 4 of them agree that John the Baptist was important- all four of them agree that the feeding of the 5000 had to be in every Gospel as the Spirit inspired them.
- All record Christ's offer of Himself as King, according to Micah.
- All record the betrayal by Judas; the denial by Peter; the trial, crucifixion and literal resurrection of Christ. And this record is so made as to testify that the death of Christ was the supreme business which brought Him into the world that all which precedes that death is but preparation for it; and that from it flow all the blessings which God ever has or ever will bestow upon man.
- All record the resurrection ministry of Christ; a ministry which reveals Him as unchanged by the tremendous event of His passion, but a ministry keyed to new note of universality, and of power.
- All point forward to His second coming.

WHY ARE THERE FOUR GOSPELS?

Well first of all I believe that it is very important to realize that the Synoptic Gospels were written to the three great national powers of that day. Now what are the synoptics? Syn means with and optic means to see. Three- Matthew, Mark and Luke basically records the same events. John doesn't record----did you know that John starting in chapter 11 is involved with the very last few days of Christ's life? John 12 we're down to the last couple days. John chapter 13 we're in the last day of Christ's life and so 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 nine chapters deal with the last day and then the resurrections. That's how John- he just goes from eternity past in chapter 1 and covers some

highlights along the way and then starting in 13 he's at the last supper and it goes to the resurrection and that's what was important to him. The others give kind of a panoramic view from birth to death and kinda cover a lot of events. So what those 3 great national powers were addressed and let me continue reading---- The Jews were the great religious power; the Romans were the great military, governmental power; the Greeks were the great cultural power. It is interesting to realize that the Gospel offer was made in the book of Acts in the same order in which the first three Gospels are now arranged: The Gospel went first to the Jews, isn't that interesting? Just like the order of the New Testament books- Matthew to the Jews, Mark to the Romans and there goes to the Roman area around Jerusalem secondly and finally it was given to the Greeks as they went out into the far world and took it out to the furthest most extent of the world. Okay, what are the reasons though? Let me give you the 4 reasons why there are 4 Gospels. Number 1 for:

- **REFLECTION:** To give four different photographs of the Lord Jesus. Just as a photographer takes different poses of a person, the Holy Spirit takes four different snapshot pictures of Christ, as King, Servant, Man and God **for us to reflect upon the incredible uniqueness and the multiple faceted personality of Christ.**
- **PERFECTION:** To emphasize His life and work by repeating it four times. The Holy Spirit uses repetition to drive home great cardinal facts about the earthly life of the Lord Jesus. **And every one of them show that He was perfect. If he was king he was perfect as king. If he was a servant he was the perfect servant. If he was the perfect man his is perfect in all his expressions of it and as God of course divinely perfect.**
- **ATTRACTION:** To show that there is far more than enough in the Lord Jesus to attract all different types and races of men. Matthew shows that there is far more than enough in Christ to attract the Jews; Mark shows that there is far more than enough in Him to attract the Romans; Luke shows that there is far more than enough in Him to attract the Greeks; John summarizes by showing that there is far more than enough in Christ to attract people in all the world.
- **COMPLETION:** To show how He fulfilled Old Testament prophecy, which had pictured Christ as King, Servant, Man and God.

Let me share with you what I mean by that.

In this connection it is interesting to remember that our Old Testament Prophecies of Christ as "the Branch" correspond to the four Gospels:

- Jeremiah 23:5 **"Behold, [the] days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. (NKJV) there he's speaking of the branch as being the king the successor of David.**
- Zechariah 3:8: **"For, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch."** This corresponds to Mark's Gospel and so it's interesting Zechariah saw this branch- that's a prophetic name for Christ as a servant.
- Zechariah 6:12 **"Behold, the man whose name is the Branch."** This corresponds to Luke- Christ is the perfect man- he is the branch he is the messiah he is the promised one,
- Jeremiah 23:6 **"And this is His name whereby He (the Branch) shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness." And so this promised one who is coming this seed of the woman is going to be Jehovah and that is God and he is divine.** This corresponds to John.

It is also interesting to remember that four Old Testament prophecies of Christ which use the word "behold" correspond to the four Gospels:

- Zechariah 9:9 **"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He [is] just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey. (NKJV) This corresponds to Matthew.**
- Isaiah 42:1 **"Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One [in whom] My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. (NKJV). This corresponds to Mark.**

- Zechariah 6:12: "Behold the man, whose name is the Branch." This corresponds to Luke.
- Isaiah 40:9: "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God!" This corresponds to John.

WELL REAL QUICKLY IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE CHRONOLOGY OF THESE BOOKS THEY'RE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH IN THE ORDER THAT THEY WERE WRITTEN.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Matthew: between 50 and 60 AD, from Judea, possibly from Jerusalem.

Mark: between 66 and 70 AD from Rome.

Luke: between 60 and 70 AD, probably from Caesarea.

John: between 90 and 100 AD from Ephesus. (You will notice that John was written between 20 and 30 years after the three Synoptics.)

It must be remembered that there are differences of opinion among orthodox scholars about the relative dates of the three Synoptics. Some assign a very early date to Mark, making it the first of all four Gospels to be written. However, if we accept the above dates as correct, it is rather easy to remember that the four Gospels were written in approximately the same chronological order in which they are now arranged in our English Bibles: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

In **THE GOSPELS** we see the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that David would never lack a son to sit on the throne. Matthew lists the next one thousand years to present an uninterrupted, generation-by-generation list of male descendants-the longest known. None of the gospels are chronological histories or biographies in our modern sense. The Gospels record what Jesus did. The Gospel of John records what Jesus said.

The Gospels record Christ's ministry to the four groups of people then and now in the world.

- The Jews, who loved the Scriptures and the prophecies of God, would only listen to one of their own. So **MATTHEW** speaks to the Jews and the deeply religious of our day. *You have someone that's deeply religious and they're seeking the Lord? Let em read Matthew sometime. Matthew presents Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of those who are deeply religious who like everything to line up who like everything to be kind of like promised and come true just like it's supposed to and that's what Matthew presents.*
- **MARK** spoke to the Romans. These were the leaders and leadership and action impressed them. They knew nothing of Scriptures but everything of power. So to this group comes the action packed Gospel of the powerful ministry of Christ. Mark uses the word "and" 1,375 times to tie together the endless actions of Christ. Like our modern successful businessman and woman, they want a God who can powerfully meet their deepest needs. *That's why all the way through Mark's gospel every time anything comes up that's Jewish he explains it. Do you notice that?*
- **LUKE** was a Greek speaking to the Greeks. The Greeks loved culture, beauty and ideas. Happiness could be found in the pursuit of truth. Luke fills his book with insights, interviews, songs and details that fascinate the inquiring mind. *I mean everybody else said that the person was sick he didn't say they're sick he said that they had a protracted case of oozing blood- I mean for the people that like the details- Luke was filled with the details to fascinate those truth seekers. So today the truth seekers find Jesus in Luke!*
- **JOHN** wrote to everyone, because everyone needs to meet God and only Jesus can reveal Him. *And that's what's so sad and I remember when I started out as a pastor I got my first letter I was so excited and you know I sat at my desk and this was many years ago and I took my brand new letter opener and opened it and it was from the council of churches and I had no idea what the council of churches was but I was excited it was to me you know it was my first*

piece of mail and I tore it open and it said welcome to the area. You will from time to time be invited to pray at commencements and convocations and at dedications and public events and sporting events etc. it says one thing we want you to remember- do not use the name of Jesus- it's offensive- do not use Jesus and Christ together and never say Lord Jesus and Christ. Speak of the great and all-powerful one, speak of the divine being speak of God but don't mention Jesus and God in the same sentence. I thought I looked back at the you know at the where it was from and I thought was this from the you know the B'hai association I mean what ---this was the council of churches of the state and the churches of the Gospel it said and I thought what kind of gospel and I thought of Galatians where it said the false gospel and that's why we need to very clearly realize that Jesus is the only one who can reveal God and people that are looking for Christ in any other road will never find him. Also in the book of John we meet an absolutely powerful God in human flesh who controls and rules the Universe He **personally** created. So the best-known verse is the best of all offer that God loves all and offers all -- His Son as their only hope!

Let's survey the Gospels by noting a key verse for each book!

MATTHEW "CHRIST OUR KING" (Matthew 2:2) **The wise men came saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."** (NKJV) Worship Christ the King! I was working last night on our Christmas Eve communion service- I'm so excited about it I wish it was tonight and oh we've got all kinds of exciting plans right now you ought to plan to come- it's going to be a wonderful time of worshipping Christ the king. Now all the Gospels have a basic outline they all agree on.

OUTLINE: The Birth and Preparation of the King (1:1 - 4:11); The King Speaks and Serves (4:12 - 25:46); The King Suffers and Triumphs in Passion Week (26:1 - 28:20).

In a gospel written for Jews, Jesus is presented in His royalty; his Jewishness is very evident. Matthew opens with the declaration that Jesus is the "Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham." In fact, eight of the twelve references to Jesus as the son of David are in Matthew, who so clearly pictures Jesus as the ideal Israelite and the ideal King of Israel.

MARK "CHRIST OUR SERVANT" (Mark 10:45) **"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, son of man is interesting Jesus that's what he called himself- nobody else called Him that- that was His special title but the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."** (NKJV) Worship Christ the Servant!

OUTLINE: The Birth and Preparation of Servant Jesus (1:1-13); Servant Jesus Speaks and Serves (1:14-13:37); Servant Jesus Suffers and Triumphs in Passion Week (14:1 - 16:20).

In a gospel written from Peter's words to the fast paced Roman Empire, Jesus is constantly in action! Mark, perhaps the first gospel account written, opens with: The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God." God Himself ratifies the declaration in 1:11: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

LUKE "CHRIST OUR SAVIOR" (Luke 19:10) **"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."** (NKJV) **Christ is revealed as the perfect man who can be our savior.** Worship Christ the Savior!

OUTLINE: The Birth and Preparation of Savior Jesus (1:1-4:13); Savior Jesus Speaks and Serves (4:14-21:38); Savior Jesus Suffers and Triumphs in Passion Week (22:1-24).

In a gospel for the Greeks, we find the perfect man comes to earth. Luke talks as a physician, and describes medically how much Christ was a man -- tired and touched with the feelings of those about Him. Like Matthew, Luke proclaims the miraculous, virgin conception of Jesus (1:26-38). He alone writes of the glory of God that was manifested at the birth of Jesus (1:9). Luke reinforces Jesus' identity with humanity by using "son of man" twenty-five times, second only to Matthew. This section here is fascinating that when Jesus is revealed in Luke as the perfect Man he shows how we can live a life that will be pleasing in His sight and that's why the book of Luke more than any other book emphasizes prayer. In fact Luke is preeminently the Gospel of prayer it finds Jesus praying. Now when did Jesus pray? I think this is very fascinating.

One reflection of the Perfect Man Christ our Savior was is found in Luke's record of nine occasions when Jesus prayed:

- (1) At His baptism (Luke 3:21); **A PRAYER FOR CONSECRATION**- Christ presenting himself to God and saying I'm going to fulfill all righteousness, I'm going to identify with those who are your people, I'm going to be obedient. Now was Jesus always obedient and righteous? Yes. Was he always fulfilling the will of God? Yes. But there is something about publicly declaring that. You know we have a lot of people they say I'm saved I don't have to tell anybody. I don't need to be baptized. I've never needed to make any kind of public recognition. The Lord Jesus Christ did and he offered a prayer of consecration to God and then he stepped forward to the Billy Graham of his day, John the Baptist and offered Himself up for baptism. I think that if we want to please God we should be unashamed of stepping forward and declaring our allegiance and of standing and showing whom we belong to and of being willing to regularly affirm that.
- (2) After a day of miracles (Luke 5:15-16); **A PRAYER FOR STRENGTH** the Lord Jesus gave us an example that no matter how much we do that we must do it in His strength and if you want to succeed in your spiritual life, in being a witness at work, at being a witness at school, in your family and neighborhood then it comes by praying for strength. As it says in the incredible prophesy about the power of the Spirit in the Old Testament "not by might nor by power but by My Spirit says the Lord" in Zechariah. God says it's done as we prayerfully appropriate the power of the Spirit of God working through us.
- (3) Before choosing His disciples (Luke 6:12); **A PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE** guidance? Jesus? He never made a mistake, He knew all things why did He do that? To show us the example—though we might think we know everything about making the decision it's just cake you know it's easy to make we should still acknowledge Him and pray. We should acknowledge our need for guidance. If we as Proverbs 3:5-6 say trust in the Lord with all our hearts don't lean on our own understanding, in all of our ways acknowledge Him, he'll direct us--- but how does that happen? By us praying for guidance. I think as Jesus did we should consecrate ourselves in prayer we should ask for His strength in prayer we should ask for His guidance.
- (4) Before the first prediction of His death (Luke 9:18); **A PRAYER FOR ENCOURAGEMENT** He could have called ten thousand angels he didn't have to die—what did he pray for? He prayed as an example to us and Jesus regularly communed with His Father and he asked for strength and prayer for encouragement as He showed us how to live the life of God here on earth in His power.
- (5) On the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:29); **A PRAYER FOR WORSHIP** and what's beautiful is and we can look at Luke 9:29: ²⁹ As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. ³⁰ And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory--- And what this is --- a prayer as He was coming and offering Himself as the one to be worshipped--- do you notice that the net result is right there umm Peter -- ----verse 33 Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"*—not knowing what he said. Did you know that sums up the essence of religion today? I

mean all over the world there are cathedrals to saint so and so and there are pictures of Jesus on equal footing with other personages and you know look what God thinks about all that- ³⁵ **And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"** You see Jesus is to be worshipped. Angels, saints, events, and great people are not to be worshipped. Jesus is the one and this was a prayer as He was speaking to his Father and it's a prayer that speaks to us that our prayers should be that our worship be directed only to Christ. Now there are great people that have affected my life- great examples, great mentors, great just pilgrims of the faith that I have looked to and learned from but you know what? They if they're truly doing what God wants them to do only point us toward Jesus Christ. Remember Phillip and the Ethiopian eunuch? Phillip ran along side his chariot as he was reading his Bible trying to get to know Christ and Phillip says hey can I jump up into the chariot? He says sure and let him in and he opened the scriptures to him, led him to the Lord Jesus Christ and then he baptized him and they it says that the Spirit of God caught Phillip away and the Ethiopian eunuch went on his way rejoicing and worshipping Christ. That is the best picture of what we're supposed to be. We're not supposed to be building dependent relationships where people just have to hang on us – they just can't make it unless they--- got to have their fix you know they got to have us talk to them and help em and pray with them and just be there all the time-----that's not the New Testament church. We need one another and love one another we minister to one another but our goal is not to get people to have all these you know you ever go to the woods and you see those parasitic vines that are just attaching themselves to the trees and gradually killing the trees? He doesn't want parasitic suckers hooked on us he wants us to take people hands and get them up to the Lord Jesus Christ and get them worshipping Christ and that's what the lesson was for those disciples he says don't look at Moses, don't look at Elijah look at Jesus. You know what's so interesting? Every time some great Christian leader falls into disrepute people all over the place just crash and burn and you know they never go back to church why? Because they were following the man not the Master. You know what so often the men don't point people to the Master. They don't just say shhh and reflect His glory they're like sponges taking all the glory for themselves instead of saying all glory laud and honor be to Christ. So Jesus Christ give a lesson to the disciples as He was praying for their worship that they would worship Him and focus on Him.

- (6) Before teaching the disciples to pray. Luke 11:1 ¹ **Now it came to pass, as He was praying** – you know what's so amazing people talk about prayer they just don't pray and we have seminars on prayer and there's very little prayer in them and the best way to learn to pray is to pray and the best way to grow in prayer is to pray- and Jesus taught them how to pray by praying and he prayed for wisdom, for insight and he asked that he would be the example and so he showed them how to pray----- **in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."** **A PRAYER FOR WISDOM**
- (7) When the seventy returned with their report (Luke 10:21); **A PRAYER FOR INSIGHT** ²¹ **In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes.** And he was saying Lord just help them to have insight to understand help them to see the big picture help them to see if we could see beyond today as

God can see- then all the shadows and confusions would fly away- or present griefs we would not get all troubled and worry and regret we would see as God can see beyond today- that's the insight he was praying for them and that's something we need to pray for we need to be praying for consecration for strength for guidance for encouragement for worshipping Christ alone for His wisdom from above for insight into His Word. In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus was praying the prayer of victory- the prayer of victory is always the same Luke 23:39-46 it's a prayer not my will but thine be done. You want to be victorious? Don't do your own thing, don't do it your way- that's for Frank Sinatra not for us do it God's way. A prayer of victory is not my will and if Jesus said not my will we certainly need to say it. And finally on the cross #9

(8) In the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:39-46); **A PRAYER FOR VICTORY**

(9) On the cross (Luke 23:34, 46). **A PRAYER FOR OBEDIENCE** as he said Father into thy hands I commit my Spirit and he prayed and he just offered to God a constantly victorious and obedient life. He says father forgive them they don't know what they're doing- he truly was offering himself.

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S PROTECTION while facing the great crises of His life was found during prayer:

- His baptism (Luke 3:21-22)
- Choosing the twelve (Luke 6:12-13)
- Preparing for the cross (Luke 9:18, 21-22)
- His transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S PREPARATION for the great events - challenges - of His ministry

- Feeding the 4,000 (Matthew 15:36)
- Feeding of the 5,000 (John. 6:11)
- Walking on the water (Matthew 14:23-33)
- Healing the insane boy (Mark. 9:14-29)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S HELP in maintaining a proper focus in success was strengthened by prayer:

- After feeding 5,000 (Matthew 14:23)
- After raising Lazarus (John 11:41)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S DIRECTION for facing the stresses of life was found in prayer:

- Multitudes (Luke 5:15-16)
- Sick folks (Mark 1:35 [wilderness, v. 33 - whole city at door, so....])
- Ministry needs (Luke 4:42)
- Urgent situations (John 6:15) [human efforts and ambitions vs. God within]

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S COMFORT. His Emotions were sheltered by resorting to prayer:

- Uncaring friends (Matthew 26:36-46)
- Discouragement at misguided disciples (John 6:15) (their v. 39 lack of faith)
- Unbecoming attitudes and words of friends (John - confident in God)
- The pain of His calling -- the cross (John 12:28)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S WILL in the consummation of His life. It was met in prayer:

- His last breath on the cross (Luke 23:46)

JESUS PRAYERFULLY SOUGHT GOD'S GOALS. His earthly prayer life may be seen as:

- Harmony with God's plan was His passion (John 17:4)
- Thankfulness was a part of all His life (Luke 10:21)
- Perfection was His for He never confessed sin (I Peter 2:22; John 8:29)
- God's glory, not His personal needs, was primary (John 11:40)
- Confidence: He always had a confidence in God's hearing and answering (John 11:42)
- Submission: Every part of His life demonstrated submission (Luke 22:42)
- Intercession was always on His heart:
 1. For His disciples' growth (Luke 23:31)
 2. For His enemies needing saving grace (Luke 23:34)
- In all truly selfless (John 17:11)

I wonder if you can think for just a moment about the people that were closest to Jesus and what they picked up from His life--there's a great insight--- the men who spent 3 ½ years with Jesus whom he never taught them how to preach- whom he never really taught them a lot of techniques or methods -- - the only thing we know specifically in the Bible that Jesus taught them was how to pray. And you know what? At the end of those 3 ½ years when they finally got launched on their own and they got up and they were able to say something about everything that they learned what does it say in chapter 6 of Acts? The disciples came out and the apostles stepped forward and they said our ministry is going to be made up of this- but we will continually give our selves to prayer and the ministry of the Word- notice even the order that they spoke. Truly they learned from Jesus Christ that prayer must be a priority -----

Is prayer a priority? Talking to God.
Is the word a priority? Doing God's will.

Well the last one that I want to show you just to emphasize here is the Gospel of John showing through the special 7 times that Jesus says "I AM" it explains to us what Jesus wants to be in our life.

JOHN "CHRIST OUR GOD " (John 20:31) **but these are written-** John says I wrote this Gospel under the inspiration of God's Spirit **that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.** (NKJV) as you come into the person into the character into the finished work of Christ.

OUTLINE: The Birth and Preparation of Divine Jesus (1:1-2:11); Divine Jesus Speaks and Serves (2:12-12:50); Divine Jesus Suffers and Triumphs in Passion Week (13:1-21).

In a gospel written to the whole world, John presents us with the Divine Jesus. He is the Son of God - - his Divinity -- the Divine nature of God is very clearly seen. We have already seen John's incredible introduction of Jesus as the Word, the Dwelling Presence and the Glory of God. **John more than any other Gospel writer gives for us Jesus Christ seven self-descriptions of Jesus as "I am"** (6:35; 8:12; 9:5; 10:7, 9; 10:11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1-2). **That's something very important and I would encourage you this if you've never done this you ought to go down and buy a dollar high lighter that you can use in your Bible and mark what Jesus says about himself and then mark what others say about him and then mark what he does and you will have in your own Bible marked up a complete theology of his life because Jesus life is composed of this 3 elements what he said about himself, what others said about**

him and what he did and you'll find with in that triangle who he was and it's a powerful tool to share with others but John reveals Jesus as God's unique ("only begotten," KJV) Son, and refers to God as His Father more than any other book of the Bible. The Old Testament refers to God as Father only 12 times, John 120 times! So it's very interesting that God as father is a very big part and that revelation of God as father comes through Jesus Christ and-----

The perfection of Christ our God is seen in the seven "I AM'S" in John's record of Christ's life and ministry.

1. **I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE** (6:35) - He sustains us, apart from Him is only unsatisfied hunger. Now the people that you're living around, working beside, you are related to they if they have never met Jesus Christ have only one thing they have unsatisfied hunger- they're hungry I mean that's why if it's not going off after sports equipment and off road vehicles and going off you know in the constant gambling thing or entertainment thing or the moral thing the materialism thing they're hungry. You ever notice when you're hungry you eat dumb stuff? And that's what most peoples lives are characterized by – there is this internal hungering and they just can't explain it and they just want something and they're endlessly searching for something and you can introduce them to the one that said I'm the bread of life. He who comes to me will never hunger. And that's why the Lord's Table is such a picture that once you've eaten of Christ that he constantly nourishes us now the Lord's table doesn't save us and there's nothing magical when we celebrate that but it is the most glorious portrait of what Jesus is he is the one who continually nourishes and sustains us and keeps us from hungering.
2. **I AM THE LIGHT OF WORLD** (8:12) - ¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. Now we're going to talk about another element in Christ's dramatic ministry he was very dramatic he came and stood next to the great candelabras there were these mighty menorahs in the Temple and they were huge and were up on raised platforms and at one moment in the feast it says on the great day of the feast Jesus was there and he came and what they would do is they would come and they would light these candelabras and it would all of a sudden flood the whole courtyard with the light of these menorah lights and as they were lighting them Jesus stood up there beside them and it says that he cried out and said: **I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.**" Can you imagine the people looking at Him- who does he think he is I mean he's been breathing the fumes to long of the candle oil or something, but He illumines us, apart from Him is only impenetrable darkness. Do you know what one of the descriptions of hell is--- which is scientifically very correct? You know one of the darkest spots in the universe is the center of each sun? A sun a brilliant radiant thermal nuclear furnace that is radiating out light so bright that it would blind us but the core of every star is impenetrably dense electrons stripped from the nuclei they're compressed atoms down to such density that a piece of matter the size of your finger nail would just weigh tons and tons and hundreds of thousands of tons that is a place of utter blackness of darkness and yet it's incredibly hot and that's why the Lord says that those who do not receive Him will suffer the pain of everlasting fire in everlasting darkness he says in the book of Jude- that's what Jesus said for those who don't find Him as the light of the world. If He never illumines them then apart from Him is only impenetrable eternal darkness.
3. **I AM THE DOOR OF SHEEP** (10:7) ⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. I thought it was very interesting I was reading George Adam Smith he's a little bit liberal but he went to the Holy Land 120 years ago- of course I'm always interested in the Holy Land and he went over there back before they'd excavated everything and as he was there he was talking to an Arab Bedouin shepherd and he was sitting there drinking that thick Turkish coffee and he records in his journal that that shepherd- that Arab shepherd said he said what do you do? He says I am the door and George Adam Smith said what did you say? He says I am the door of the sheep. He said excuse me he says I am the door of the sheep he said did you know you're quoting from the Bible? He says I don't know the Bible I know the Koran but he says I am the door of my sheep and he said what do

you mean by that? And we all know the story there's a sheep fold made of piled up rocks high enough that the wolves can't get over and the thieves can't get over and then there's an opening and the shepherd stands there and makes sure all of his sheep get in and then he takes his cloak and he wraps it around him and he lays himself down and covers that doorway with his body and he sleeps in the doorway and this Arab Bedouin shepherd said this he said I am the door of the sheep he said no sheep can escape me unless they trample over me and he says I feel them and grab them and don't let them go and he says that no adversary no wolf no prey no animal that's preying on my sheep can get to my sheep unless they trample over me and I feel them and I stop them and you know what Jesus said? **I am the door of the sheep** - He admits us to life, apart from Him is only hopeless exclusion. You are not in the family if you don't come through the door of the sheep Jesus Christ.

4. **I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD** (10:11) - ¹¹ **"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. He lays it down willingly and it tells us that** He cares for us, apart from Him is only aimless wandering. You know people that don't know Jesus as shepherd go through their whole life wondering what they're here for. They just can't figure it out I mean they just say I don't understand I mean it just seems so ridiculous we just get here we just realize what life's all about and we're on the down hill side and we're over and it just goes like that. That's why Jesus said I'm the good shepherd and my sheep hear my voice and they follow me. You want to know if you're going to Heaven- are you following Jesus do you hear his voice is he your shepherd? Is he the one who's the good shepherd? Do you know that he gave himself for you because apart from him is only aimless wandering and you know what the scriptures call the lost? *Planeis*, which means wanderers. You know another thing that's astrophysically correct is that if you're in space you will always be falling and it says that hell is described as a bottomless pit always falling and waiting for that you know impact but always tumbling and falling through the blackness of darkness suffering the vengeance of eternal fire- that's what hell is apart from knowing the Good Shepherd.
5. **I AM THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE** (11:25) - He provides us life, apart from Him is only endless dying. That's what's so interesting if you come to Christ and if you embrace him we who have met Jesus have begun and you have right now and you are right now partaking of endless life. Now it's fraught with pain and we're still struggling and we still sin and we still you know we're not perfect but we have already begun partaking of endless life because we have him. Now we don't know the fullness until we're in his presence there is the salvation that is future and that is when we are in his presence but those who never meet Christ have already begun with endless dying. Have you ever thought what it's going to be like for those who all their life were addicted to stuff and did anything to get it when they're going to be eternally still addicted to all that stuff and not be able to get it? Can you understand the endless craving lustfully chemically and every other way? That's what endless death is all about and the resurrection and the life provides us life and apart from Him is only endless dying.
6. **I AM THE WAY, TRUTH & LIFE** (14:6) - He guides us, apart from Him is only to be endlessly lost. You ever been lost? You ever gotten that horrible feeling when you know you're lost? I've been lost many times in different parts of the world in my car in woods with my father's expeditions he used to lead up in northern Canada many times it's a frightening thing. Can you imagine being endlessly lost and finally Jesus says
7. **I AM THE TRUE VINE** (15:1) - He makes us productive, apart from Him is only continual withering.

There is a final portrait of the divine perfection of Jesus. This is reflected in the seven "Signs" John records from Christ's life. John built his whole Gospel as a bridge with seven successive sign posts that transport you to the ultimate sign of chapter 20 - The resurrection of Christ. John notes the ministry of Christ in light of its impact on the hearts of those who saw these signs. What were the signs Christ performed to bring those who saw His ministry to belief?

- Sign #1 = **WATER TO WINE** [John 2:1-11] **HE IS THE LORD OF CREATION**
- Sign #2 = **HEALING NOBLEMAN'S SON FROM AFAR** [John 4:46-54] **HE IS THE ALL-**

POWERFUL LORD of all sickness and disease, as well as Lord of time and space. Which is such a blessing if we call on him right now right here there's nothing hindering him-- He's the lord of time and space over it.

- Sign #3 = **FEEDS 5000** remember that's in all 4 Gospels [6:1-14] Note v. 14 **THE PROPHET. HE IS THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN** he is what we've all been dying of hunger to receive.
- Sign #4 = **WALKING ON THE WATER** [6:15-25]. **HE IS LORD OF NATURE**
- Sign #5 = **HEALS MAN BORN BLIND** [John 9:1-7]. **HE IS LORD OF SIGHT** v. 16, also Note v. 32
- Sign #6 = **RAISES LAZARUS** [John 11:1-44]. **HE IS LORD OF LIFE**
- Sign #7 = **THE RESURRECTION** [John 20]. **HE IS ALIVE FOREVERMORE!** He has the keys of hell and of death and he said that he is the one who can alone he says don't fear those who can merely hurt your body he said fear the one who has in his hand the destiny of your soul.

John wrote to everyone, because everyone needs to meet God and only Jesus can reveal Him. In this book we meet an absolutely powerful God in human flesh who controls and rules the Universe He created. So the best-known verse is the best of all offer that God loves all and offers all -- His Son as their only hope!

Let's just bow before that son tonight and just speak with him before we go.

And Lord Jesus I thank you for letting us take a glimpse into the Gospels and every where we look we saw the theme of this book and that's You Lord Jesus. You love all and you offer all the only hope that we'll ever have because you are the God of hope because you alone have offered to us life. Satan is a robber and a thief and a liar he offers temporary thrills he offers the smug self assurance of that we're good enough if we do enough for him in our religion but you reveal yourself as saying that we're all desperately hopelessly lost-there's nothing we can do to please you O God apart from receiving by faith the Lord Jesus and I pray that tonight if there's anyone who has come who is not yet said yes to Jesus I pray O Spirit of God that you'll knock on their hearts door right now that they would feel the stirrings of conviction that they would realize that they are lost that they need you Lord Jesus and that they would right now just quietly whisper to you Lord Jesus I believe you died for me and I believe that you're my only hope Jesus save me now. What a blessing it would be that in this look at the Gospel the good news that someone who has never come through the door into the fold of the shepherd would meet Jesus. I pray that we would love you and follow you more that we would be challenged to pray and to trust every need to you because of what we've seen tonight and all God's people said AMEN.