

Listening Guide 2

March 16th 2018

John's Gospel 2.12 - 6.71

Knowing Jesus

- as the bodily place where God dwells & who makes it possible that we will be such a place ourselves
- as a matter impossible for us by ourself
- as God's merciful provision for us when He is angry with us
- the Bridegroom of his bride - those given Him by his Father
- as He who testifies of his heavenly Life
- as having the Gift of God's Spirit to give away
- as the Lord whose word effectively restores
- the Bridegroom who brings abundant life to his bride
- whose real food is to do his Father's will
- whose words are heard, and we trust the Father who sent him, and immediately pass over, out of death into life. We are already now, participating in the life of God.
- as the future Judge of the world, as Son of man
- who has weighty testimony about Himself
- who provides real food which sustains life forever
- who is God's Passover Lamb for us
- who shields us from God's holy anger
- who saves us into living relationship with God

A series conducted in 2018: from 7.00-8.30pm over seven Friday nights in the Leederville Town Hall, 84 Cambridge Street, West Leederville.

1st half of the Evening - John 2.12-4.42

⌘ Jesus clears the Temple [Matt 21.12-13; Mk 11.15-17; Lk 19.45-46]

- Capernaum - Passover time. Makes a whip of cords, drove the merchants from the temple
- my Father's house has been made into a market place
Solomon's temple - where God caused his name to dwell
- Challenged to prove authority - Psalm 69
Resurrection was the decisive sign - where God dwells is Jesus' body
Difference between signs as miracles: signs that show glory
New Temple - the body of Jesus & the people of God indwelt by his Spirit

⌘ Nicodemus, a learned Pharisee of Israel [John 3.1-21; 20.30-31]

- Rabbi - verdict on Jesus is that he is a teacher from God
Can't see/enter unless something should happen to you first - unable ourselves.
Need to be born from above - a birth originating from the sovereign Spirit of God. Cannot know from where or to where He goes, but that can know that he has been. Because we can see what we could not before.
How can this be? - a question of method or of existence?
"We" - Father and Son; Christian community? - God's revelation is not to the learned by the wise but is given to the babes [Matthew 11/Luke 10]
- Son of Man must be lifted up [to glory; to die]
The setting of Numbers 21 - Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert
So we could believe/trust in him as the healer of our dying existence
- Indicates God's love for the world - not his condemnation but his saving
Warning 1 - Importance of taking the offer; for we are in desperate need
Warning 2 - We do love to stay in darkness because we fear exposure.

⌘ John the Baptist testifies about Jesus [John 3.22-35]

- Part 1 [3.27-30] - a man can only receive what is given him from heaven
John is not the Christ, he simply preceded him. The bride [the people Father gives to the Son] belongs to Bridegroom. John is a joyful friend of the Bridegroom; with respect to the bride, John must not take centre now; Jesus must.
- Part 2 [3.31-35] - There is a testimony that is earthly and there is a superior testimony that speaks of the life that comes from heaven. To accept this testimony is to assert that God is true, and therefore that Jesus is sent from God, speaks his words and is full of his Spirit. This is to know the Father has placed everything of his own into the hands of his Son.
To receive, or to reject this testimony is decisive for humans

⌘ The woman of Samaria, a lady of the world [John 4.1-26]

- Jesus speaks of a drink, living water, that He has to give - the gift of God - it has two meanings, it is the gift from God and also God is the gift himself.
- This water he gives quenches thirst forever, it becomes an inner resource of life of God - a vigorous spring welling up to burst out of a person.

2nd half of the Evening - John 4.43-6.71

This gift of water is the Spirit of God, who, when inside a person, revolutionises worship offered to God. It enables the sort of worship God has always longed for - the knowing of Him, appropriate to his own Being as Spirit.

- Woman's testimony becomes their own knowledge & experience

⌘ Jesus' meat - what sustains his life [John 4.27-38]

- The doing of his Father's will [the inner relation of life] and completing the work [the father's task for him] he has been given is what constitutes his living.
Bringing in the harvest of God, with his disciples.

⌘ 2nd sign - the official's son fixed by a word [John 4.43-54]

- In Galilee, a man asks for healing for his son, is told he will live. Taking Jesus at his word, the man goes and finds it so. His whole household believed.

⌘ Life through the Son [John 5.1-30]

- God is working, breaking the sabbath: they decide to kill him.
Son can do nothing of himself. Father does healings all the time
Father shows the Son all He is doing = open relationship
What if he [1] raises the dead [2] judges the world
So that all may honour the Son as they do the Father
I hear the words of the Son, believe in the Father who sent him
have eternal life, not condemned
passed over out from death into Life [Passover]
- Jesus the future judge of all the dead; we can trust his judgement
because He does what he hears from the Father

⌘ Scripture: record of self revelation of God experienced by men and women [John 5.31-47]

- Valid testimony: not from yourself: from John the baptiser: and also from the father, which is far weightier.
Works of Jesus testify that the father sent him.
No one has seen God: Scriptures speak of Jesus; won't come to him.

⌘ Jesus: I am [no.1] the bread of life [John 6.1-40]

- Feeding 5000 - miracle of multiplication, God's provision.
They search for Jesus for food which perishes, it goes off/goes stale
Jesus provides enduring, constantly fresh food/life
To believe in the One who sent Jesus; this is proper human work
Jesus is the true manna [bread from heaven] = life for the world
Never loses those the Father has given him. His own are safe.

⌘ God's Passover Lamb: eating Jesus' flesh and drinking his blood [John 6.41-59]

⌘ Some disciples desert him - words of life [John 6.60-71]

- Jesus' Ascension proves he came from heaven.

Reflecting on the 2nd Reading

What to do if we accept the fact that we cannot see of ourselves.

God's kingdom cannot be seen or entered by yourself. So to read this book of John's and to think that we can understand its revelation of a person, would be a mistake. How shall we proceed? We shall need to: abandon our own self-ability - will you do that? We could ask for something to happen to us - a rebirth - so that we could see. Then we need to look within ourselves to see if certain things are changing inside us; particularly if we are beginning to accept the testimony of this book about Jesus; are we beginning to receive Jesus - that is, treat Him as the Father is revealing him to be - as his Son. Are we beginning to trust that it was the Father who sent Jesus to us?

Fearing the darkness and coming to the light?

We must come to terms with our own love of the darkness. It is driven by our deeds and our fear of them being exposed. Knowing that God has provided for our acceptance with Him through Jesus releases us from this fear. The contrast is that we begin to live by the truth - who is Jesus - and so come to the light. When we do this we shall see that the truth can be done because it is a work of God in us - we can do the truth because we can begin to share the life of the Father and the Son.

The Gift of God is Himself come into our person

The way the life of God comes into us by receiving the gift of God, that Gift of the Holy Spirit, is at the same time God Himself. The gift God gives us is himself. First as a loving Father who sends his Son, and then as truly God who puts his Spirit and the Spirit of his Son into us. This drinking in the water of the Spirit is the picture here. There are deeper and more clear statements of the meaning of the receiving of the Spirit later in John 14-16.

Life is relating to God!

Food is that which sustains our life by continually ingesting it. Jesus sustaining life is the doing of his Father's will. This teaches us of the life within the Trinity of the Godhead. It is shown to us by the way they continually submit one to the other. There are deep patterns here which become the basis of our own relationships as well. It also leads to the showing forth of each Person's glory as it does with us.

Hearing the Son and trusting the Father

If we have really taken in the words of Jesus and received them as true, then we will find that He directs us to the Father who sent him. We are to trust the Father, who initiated this whole self-revelation through his Son. We shall then come to a relationship with God as the children of the Father - a matter which Jesus authorises simply by being the sent Son of the Father; and we hear his words and begin to trust the One who sent him. Jesus is acting here as a true 'sent one' - a true authorised messenger - as a true apostle.

The simple life as it is in Jesus

It may sound simple, but the minute we put our trust in the Father [and God] of Jesus Christ then we have begun a proper relationship with God. A relationship that he sees as a righteous way to relate to Him - that is to simply trust his word as it came through his Son. This is, at the same time, a crossing over from being a condemned person, who can only perish, into eternal life - the life of God shared. Do not be put off by the simplicity of this action. Don't despise it because it is so uncomplicated. This is the great power of the good news - it immediately opens us to shared life with God through the only means anyone shares - anyone else's life - by taking them at their word and relating on that basis.