

Gospel of John - episode 4

End of chapter 1 & chapter 2 part 1

Welcome to our sharing on Saint John's Gospel. We're now ready for the last piece of evidence that is in Chapter 1 of John's Gospel, and that's what we call the Prologue. You would have expected me to start there, but when I read it, you will realize I've been commenting on it all the time. Because, this is the witness of John's own church, and of John himself. So, this is the mature witness given to Christ after all the others; you see I started with John the Baptist because he came first in time, and then when the disciples came to Jesus, they came next, and **they** didn't know what John knew.

So, there was no point in starting with the Prologue, because you would be going back in time, in dealing with the other witnesses, we had to move forward. So, we begin with John the Baptist, and then go to the disciples, and then go to what John is saying. We are now armed with enough information to actually deal with what John actually wants to tell us. But we come to realize that what we have in chapter 1 is the entire Gospel in condensed form! That's why I've had to introduce it so much, and while I've had to go around it in so many ways to try and deal with the amount of material that's actually there. I was determined that you won't read his Gospel at the wrong level. If you read it on the level of below, the level of the unbelieving world, you're going to miss John's message almost completely, if not completely, so, I want to remind you, maybe for the last time, I hope, that Jesus operates from the level of above.

He operates from the very high spiritual platform, and if you don't reach out to meet him on that platform, you're going to completely misunderstand him because he will use all kinds of symbols that won't make any sense. So, I just want to give you a final definition of 'below' and 'above'. At the 'below level' the world that rejects God, and the world that opposes the Christ and the scriptures and all the rest of it, is the world of power politics. It's the world where, the few control the many, and where you get the manipulation of individuals and nations by a few people who have got enough money and enough influence. It's the world where you will meet selfishness, egotism and individualism. That world Will never understand Jesus. But when you reach up to the world of 'above', that's the world where love and self-sacrifice and the laying down of one's life for others exists, and the world of union with God and wisdom and understanding, standing.

That's the world that we're invited into. And when we reach up to that level, then we do understand Jesus insofar as we've reached it, and we can grow more and more in that area. And what we're going to find is that 'below' is called 'death', and 'above' is called 'life'. Now Jesus speaks about life all the time we just need to know what we're talking about. Jesus himself is the very embodiment of life from above. He became incarnate to raise us up to that level; the divine became human in order to raise the human up into the divine... and that's where we're actually called to.

So, in verses 1-5, we deal with the pre-existence of Christ, the pre-existence of the Word, so, let's just read it for a moment. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him, all things came to be. Not one thing had its being, but through him. All that came to be had life in him. And that life was the Light of men, a Light that shines in the dark, a Light that Darkness could not overpower".

So, there you get this triumphant message from John and his church. So, we're given the pre-existence of Christ. Now if there was time to go into this, I'll just say to you: you will find Jesus in Genesis; you will find him in all the prophets; you will find him everywhere. Why? Because he's the



Word, and it's the Word that becomes flesh. And we're introduced to the pre-existent Word who is there from the very beginning, from before time.

And that pre-existent Word becomes flesh, and we call him the incarnate Word of God. And then we're told immediately that he is the Light of men. Now, later commentators in the New Testament take this up and say it very clearly. The letter to the Hebrews chapter 1:3 says it marvellously for me. "He is the radiant Light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature". So, Just as the Word was revealed at the beginning of Creation, so he's going to be revealed in all his glory now in the time of the Redemption, when you've got the beginning of the in the new creation of man. So, proclaiming Jesus' divinity here at the very beginning of his Gospel, John is preparing us for the astounding statement of Jesus in chapter 8:58, "before Abraham ever was, I am". Now 'I am' is what God said to Moses when Moses said, "tell me who you are".

God said, 'I am'. So, the great 'I am' is the one who bears the divine name, who revealed himself to Moses in the book of Exodus at the very beginning of salvation history. It's a fascinating thing to go back into Genesis and Exodus and find the pre-existent Word all over the place. If you actually read the Old Testament from this angle, you will realize that Jesus was explaining himself, bit by bit, to all the prophets all down the centuries, so that by the time he came, they would recognize him. Isaiah, for example, told us so much about him that it was impossible that they wouldn't recognize him. It was just impossible! And we know that the Sanhedrin did recognize him. They just didn't accept him.

John says that everyone, past, present, and future has received life from the Creative Word. He's the source of all physical and spiritual life. Jesus is going to say this himself in chapter 5:21. "The Son gives life to anyone he chooses". And Paul underlines this in Colossians 1:16. He says, "all things were created through him and for him". Because of this, the Word, the Logos, has the right to rule all creatures.

Paul says in Romans 11:36, "all that exists comes from him. All is by him and for him. To him be glory forever". And I have already given you his glorious return in Revelation chapter 19. So, in 1:4, we're told that he is the Light. Well, this is a major topic in John's Gospel, that Jesus is the Light. In John one of John's letters, 1 John 1:5, he says, "God is Light, and in him, there is no Darkness". So, the Light represents the good and the kingdom of heaven.

Darkness represents evil and the kingdom of Satan. These two realms or these two spheres of influence or these two kingdoms - whatever language you want to use - are in contention for the souls of the human race. Darkness will never understand the Light. We're going to see this as we go along. Darkness cannot imprison the Light, but it will try. Darkness cannot overcome the Light, but it will try. And all of us who know Jesus, like John the Baptist, must bear witness to the Light. So, this will become clear as the Darkness tries to extinguish the Light in the Passion of Jesus.

But what you find is that the more the Darkness moved in to extinguish the Light, the more the Light shone in all its glory. That's the amazing thing.... and the more hatred moved-in to try and absolutely destroy him completely, the more love burst forth from him to the point where the Song of Songs chapter 8:6 was fulfilled, that Jesus proved that "love was as strong as death and as terrible as hell". This was a battle of the titans between Satan and Christ.... and it is marvellous when you look at the passion of Jesus from this angle that it is a battle between them. The more Satan moved-in to try and destroy, the more Jesus triumphed. And that's why his final words on the cross are so incredible: "It's accomplished". I've done it. There's nothing else that can be done. It's absolutely incredible. He had paid the price to the last penny. It's just really amazing, so, throughout the public ministry of Jesus, what you're going to find in this battle between Light and Darkness is that the Light wins in all the

miracles and healings of Jesus because the Darkness brought all the damage, so, the Light actually brings it all back and restores it.

The Light wins in all the teaching of Jesus because the truth and wisdom are all manifest... and the Light wins in all the incarnate love that Jesus shows throughout his whole life and very particularly in his passion and death. So, after the death and resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the community of the beloved disciples go out into the darkness of the Roman Empire to shine the Light of Christ on the unbelieving world.... and the journey of the Light continues. The battle of hatred against the love continues; the victory of love over hatred continues.... all down the centuries.

We've dealt with the fact that John the Baptist was chosen by God, but he was not the Light. He was to bear witness to the Light. Now if someone has to bear witness to Light, it means that there's an incredible amount of darkness around. But Isaiah had warned us about this when he told us in chapter 9:1 of his book that "the people that walked in Darkness have seen a great Light. The people who lived in the land of shadow, a Light has shone". And in chapter 60, Isaiah told us in verses 1, 2, "Arise, shine out, for your Light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. Look, even though night still covers the earth and darkness, the peoples, on you, The Lord now is rising, and over you, his glory is seen".

To me, it's a dreadful tragedy that while that was actually happening to them on a daily basis during the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry, they couldn't see! It is mind boggling to me that they couldn't see.... it tells you about this terrifying battle between Light and Darkness. So, Jesus, the incarnate Word came into a hostile environment and John and the apostles and lots of others had to bear witness to him.

Now from verse 9, the Prologue says, "the Word was the true Light". John the Baptist was only a witness; the apostles were only witnesses; the church is a witness, but **he is the true Light**. "And he is the one who enlightens all men. He was coming into the world. The world he was actually in the world. The world had its being through him, but the world didn't know him". You see, this is the unbelieving world. And even to this very day, 21 centuries later, the unbelieving world still talks about 'no God'; the death of God! We've had books published on the death of God. It's incredible. The world cannot know him. They're on the wrong level. They will not rise to his level so that they can see.

"The world did not know him. He came into his own domain and to his own people". Now his own domain is Israel. His own people were the Judeans, and they didn't accept him... but he wasn't rejected by everyone. "All who did accept him, he gave power to become children of God". So, when this incredible Light came into the darkness of Israel, nobody could see it. The Darkness must have been very, very thick because Light automatically dispels darkness. So, if there is a bright Light shining and you cannot see there's something drastically wrong with you. So, we realize that because the Light was going to be rejected, and the people were not going to see.... they were not going to accept all the witness given to them.

We then realize that he is also going to be the suffering servant of God. Isaiah 42:6 is now fulfilled. "I, the Lord, have called you to serve the cause of right. I've appointed you as covenant of the people and the Light of the nations". In other words,... he's the saviour of all the world. Isaiah knew he was the saviour of all the world. And Jesus was been sent "to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeon. My name is the Lord, and I will not yield my glory to another".

Isaiah was so clear. I just don't understand how they rejected this evidence. When John the Baptist pointed to Jesus he was pointing to God's own heaven-sent Light, so, the rejection of the Word was going to be one of the terrible scandals of the Gospel. He was rejected by the whole nation, but there were individuals who accepted him. And we know that when it came to the time of the Ascension, there were at least 500 people present witnessing the ascension of Jesus (1Cor 15;6) and that wasn't all who believed in him; that was just the number who assembled on that particular occasion. And we're told something amazing about these people.

You know, in John's Gospel a comma makes a huge difference! We will deal with that in the second half particularly. Listen to this: Verse 12. "But all who did accept him, he gave power to become children of God. To all who believe in him who was born, not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or Will of man, but of God himself". Now there's one way of reading that when you leave the comma in, and that is that Jesus himself is the One that is not born of human stock or will of man, that he has become Incarnate through a mighty prodigy of God. What we're going to discover when we go into chapter 3 that all who become members of the kingdom of God and who join him as beloved disciples, **they too are born of God!** They're not born of the will of man either!

And Jesus is going to say, "the spirit moves where he wills". The baptism in water and the spirit is a birth on the spiritual plane that we will all be born of God; it's absolutely amazing. Then he says in verse 14, "The Word was made flesh". The logos became sarx. He pitched his tent among us and we saw his glory. Now John is speaking about the end of first century when they had seen his glory.

That's why I gave you the witness of John the Baptist first and the witness of the apostles because it was going to take them so long to see his glory. They didn't really see his glory until after the resurrection. So, we're going to have the individuals who actually gave themselves to Jesus were going to be people who are born from above and living on the level of above.... and they will be operating on the principle of love... and they will be completely opposed by hate... and they will be persecuted by hate. And so, the struggle between Light and Darkness, Love and Hate will continue in the Beloved Disciples. I think it is important for us to look at the fact that there is an infinite distance between Logos and SARX. (WORD and FLESH)

Then I don't think we are able to take on board the leap from Heaven and the extraordinary humiliation of the Son of God, I don't think so. I find his humiliation in becoming incarnate quite shocking... I find it disturbing. If we put up with the smallest thing we think we're being humble but we don't know what humility is. He's the only one who knows what humility is. He left the glory of the Godhead behind him as Paul tells us in Philippians 2:6-11.

And he left all his enormous freedom and all his privileges of divinity behind him, and he took on the limitations of human flesh. He took on the limitations of one of his own creatures. I don't think we can take this on board. It's just unbelievable, and that's why John said that it eventually dawned on them who he was. And I think we have to persevere in reading and praying the scriptures. We have to persevere in sitting in the presence of God in order for it to dawn on us who Jesus really is. When the church discovered it she said, "you alone are the holy one; You alone are the Lord.... You alone are the most high, Jesus Christ".

"The Word was made flesh. He lived among us. We saw his glory. That glory was the glory of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth". That means everything that is good that comes from God comes to us through Jesus.... all redemption, all spiritual life, everything comes from him. He is the one and only mediator between God and man. Everything comes from him.

So, I remind you again of, John 1:49, "To have seen me is to have seen the Father". And so, we need to come to that final point that they came to at the end of the Gospel, and which John gives you here at the very beginning, and that Jesus is 'my Lord and my God'. This is what John says in the end, Verses 16-18. "Indeed, from his fullness..." from his pleroma... the absolute fullness of God.... "we have all of us..." every soul from Adam to Zachary... past, present, and future. "we have received grace upon grace from him. Since the law was given through Moses, Grace and truth have come to us through Jesus Christ". Now the Law was very constricting and limited, but the grace that comes to us through Christ is absolutely unlimited love of God.

And then finally, we have this wonderful, wonderful statement. "No one has ever seen God..." and I gave you that before that Moses was not allowed to see God. "It's the only Son who has been nearest to the Father's heart who has made him known". This is a very wonderful, triumphant statement of John's Gospel. In a sense, it should be given as the end of the Gospel that having taken us through the whole journey of revealing who Jesus is and all the witness to him and the terrible battle between Light and Darkness and the victory of Jesus on the cross. I mean, one of the things that people don't seem to realize is that the victory of Jesus was pointed out in that very simple statement, "Father forgive them!" That meant that love had triumphed over hatred, that life had triumphed over death, and that he was opening the gates of heaven to us.

John wants us to try and enter into this mystery of Christ, and to try and enter into this loving relationship with Jesus... that Jesus had with the Father. Therefore, when we come back and I begin opening up chapter two for you, that when we begin to see Jesus beginning to manifest or to show his glory that we will actually see all the points. And we have to be like Sherlock Holmes, you know, looking for all the pieces of evidence and putting them together. I always say that to become a scripture scholar, you need to like jigsaw puzzles because the scriptures give you little pieces of evidence all over the place. And when you put them together, you get the most wonderful, wonderful manifestation of truth. Thank you for listening.

INTERVAL

Welcome to our sharing on Saint John's Gospel. In this episode, I want to bring us into chapter two of Saint John's Gospel. I'm going to read part of it first and then I'm going to dissect it sometimes line by line, sometimes Word by Word because people read this on a superficial level, and they come to conclusions that John didn't think about. John has very deep things in mind when he's actually giving you this text.

Let's read it: "Three days later, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples were also invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine'. And Jesus said, 'woman, why turn to me? My hour has not yet come'. And his mother said to the servants, 'do whatever he tells you'. There were 6 stone water jars standing there meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews.... that's the Judeans. Each could hold 20 or 30 gallons. And Jesus said to the servants, 'fill the jars with water', and they filled them to the brim. 'Draw some out now', he said, 'and take it to the steward'. They did this, and the steward tasted the water which had turned into wine. And having no idea where it came from, only the servants who drew the water knew, the steward called the bridegroom, and he said, 'people generally serve the best wine first and keep the cheaper wine until the guests have had plenty to drink. But you, you've kept the best wine until now. This was the first of the signs that Jesus gave. It was at Cana in Galilee. He let his glory be seen, And his disciples believed in him. And after this, he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers, and stayed there a few days".

On the surface, that reads a very simple story. But if you look at it at all, you are tripped up by lots of individual points and so I want to give you a very detailed response to this, and let you know what treasure is there if only you will look at it **from above** and not look at it from below.

From below, it's very easy: they didn't have enough wine, and blessed mother asked Jesus to supply the wine. He did.... but that's not what John is saying. The unfolding of the mystery that we have been talking about in all the episodes up to now and which have been given to us in chapter one, it's now beginning to unfold in chapter two. We get the first pulling back of the veil to see who Jesus really is. And we get the first sign, that he wants to give about his mission to all the world. Galilee was Called 'Galilee of the Gentiles'.

Let me read this for you, from Isaiah chapter 9:1-7, "In the days past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. (That's the area that was called Galilee in Jesus' time). But in the days to come, he will confer glory on the way of the sea on the far side of the Jordan, province of the nations. The people that walked in Darkness have seen a great Light. On those who live in a land of deep shadow, a Light has shone....." now I'm going to jump down because "there is a child born for us, a Son given to us, and dominion is laid on his shoulders.... and this is the name they give him, wonder counsellor, mighty God, eternal Father, Prince of Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity, from this time onwards and forever".

We're going to hear the scriptures being fulfilled all the way through. Not just all the way through the Gospel, but almost in every line of the text. Galilee of the Gentiles: that's where Jesus decided to begin. And this is very, very important because nothing that God does is extra. He does exactly what is required in each situation. If he begins in Galilee of the Gentiles, it's because that is most significant in terms of the mission of Jesus. The people of Judea who had Jerusalem as its capital city and the temple as the center of its public worship... these people in John's Gospel are called Yudeoi... a term usually translated in English as 'Jews'. But the translation gives a problem because the term Jews was not used for these people until several centuries into the Christian era! The translators have actually given us a problem and produced a lot of antisemitism, which is not necessary. In John's Gospel, these are the people of Judea, and the people who oppose Jesus are the leaders of temple most of whom would have been Judeans! Jesus himself was a Judean because he was born in Bethlehem.

That's why you read in chapter one that he came to **his own people**, and his own people rejected him. He himself was a Jew (Judean), and you're going to realize that it is his own people who actually gave him more trouble than anybody else. So, the Judean leadership is usually called the Sanhedrin, and it's made up of Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees along with the various priestly families and the heads of all the important families of the land. It was in the temple, in the city of Jerusalem that they kept very, very strictly to the laws of Moses because the Pharisees were meticulous on every detail of the law.

And Jesus is going to challenge this because they had narrowed down the Will of God into absolutely particular laws that may not express the people's love for God at all, which is really sad. But because they kept very, very strictly to the laws of Moses, and they added 613 rules for the Sabbath day alone. Could you imagine? They had neither sympathy nor understanding for the people in Galilee.

Why? Because it was Galilee of the Gentiles. It was the only place in the whole land where Jews and Gentiles, or shall I say the people of the land and people from other lands could live together in harmony, and they worked and lived together side by side. But as far as the folks in Jerusalem were

concerned that meant that they were contaminated.... and they were compromised with the world, so they absolutely despise them. That's why you'd hear an expression like, "can any prophet come out of Galilee? What good could come out of Nazareth?" These people are contaminated because they live and work side by side with people from other nations. The folks in Jerusalem also hated the Samaritans. They despise the Galileans, but they had a very special hatred for the Samaritans, whom they saw as a mixed race with a contaminated religion because they refused to go to the temple in Jerusalem! They treated the Samaritans as heretics because for they only accepted the first 5 books of the bible, the Pentateuch or the Torah. The Samaritans didn't accept the prophets and the other writings. And so, there was an expression which is going to be thrown at Jesus in chapter 8:48, that "you are possessed and that you are a Samaritan". And for the folks in Jerusalem that was the same thing - Samaritan and possessed. In other Words, you're worshiping the devil! It's really frightening. And so, They the folks in Jerusalem are against Samaria. The amazing thing is that when God became man, He chose to go to Galilee, and he chose to go to the Samaritans.

You'll hear and see him going to the Samaritans in chapter 4. In other words, we have the proof of a text I've already given to you that God's ways and our ways are very different (Is 55:8-9). God's way of thinking and our way of thinking are totally opposite. God is telling us that he doesn't think or work like us. Not at all. He's very different to us. And the strange thing is that it is in Galilee and among the Samaritans that people will be much more open to Jesus. They will listen to him.

They will receive him. And insofar as human beings can respond, they do respond to him. It's very interesting. So, you have to remember as we are going through the Gospel about the two levels, the level of above and the level of below. This is very important because if you read what happens at Cana of Galilee from below, It's very simple. When I show it to you from above, you'll see how utterly profound it actually is. As we go through the text we need to ask the Lord to raise us up to the level of above so that we have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts that will understand. Otherwise, we're going to miss it.

The very first thing we have to examine are the first three Words, "3 days later". This Gospel sits on the 3rd day because Jesus rose from the dead on the 3rd day, and the whole Gospel is moving in that direction. We have to look at the significance of the 3rd day... and it is very significant in the scriptures. If you go back to the very beginning of the bible in Genesis chapter 1, the story of creation, it was on the 3rd day that God declared twice that the development of his works was good, and he blessed them. So, he began blessing them on the 3rd day. This is very important. And it's when we come to the 3rd day at the end of the Gospel, you'll realize the enormity of the blessing that God gives to the work of Redemption.

In Exodus chapter 19, we have the covenant of Moses about to be signed on Mount Sinai. And this is what Moses said to them, and this is Exodus chapter 19:10, "Go to the people and tell them to prepare themselves today and tomorrow. Let them wash their clothing and hold themselves in readiness for the 3rd day. Because on the 3rd day, God Will descend on the mountain of Sinai, and he will descend in the presence of the whole people". Now that is a prophetic forecast of the Lord showing himself on the 3rd day in the Resurrection. So, they had to hold themselves in readiness for this extraordinary event that was going to happen.

When you go to Genesis chapter 22, you have the story of Abraham taking his son, Isaac, to Mount Moriah to sacrifice him in obedience to the Lord. And what happens? They arrive on the 3rd day. Don't you think that's interesting? Because the sacrifice of Isaac is the prophetic forecast of the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary. You're told in Jonah chapter 1:17 that Jonah was in the belly of the fish for 3 days 3 nights. Back in Matthew's Gospel, which I've already done, Jesus gave the sign of Jonah

as the sign of his Resurrection, 'that the Son of man would be in the heart of the earth for 3 days 3 nights'. So, John wants to tell us that as we begin reading chapter two, that we've to keep Jesus' great victory on the 3rd day in our minds as he begins to unfold the mystery piece by piece as we go along. Of course, He will give us a final sign of the 3rd day before that... and that will be the raising of Lazarus, which will happen on the 3rd day. And the raising of Lazarus is an absolutely extraordinary preparation for the Resurrection of Jesus himself.

So, we're still on verse 1, and the next thing we have to look at is "there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee". Now for all of us weddings are ordinary; they're happening on a daily basis. People come together, commit themselves in love, ask for God's blessing for their new life. Cana of Galilee was only a very small village, so most of the village would have been at the wedding.... but that's not actually the point. The point is that when you go back into the scriptures **the wedding** is a terribly important concept because we're told by the prophets that God the Father was the Bridegroom of Israel, and that He was wedded to these people in the Mosaic Covenant.... Therefore, the people of Israel were His bride. This is terribly important. If you take Isaiah 54:4-5, "you will forget the shame of your youth. You will no longer remember the curse of your widowhood, for your creator will be your husband. His name, the Lord of hosts". Isaiah 62:5, "Like a young man marrying a virgin, so will the one who built you, wed you. As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will your God rejoice over you".

The prophets use the symbol of marriage in order to be able to get through to the people when they are failing in their covenant commitment to God. When they fall back into idol worship they are accused of adultery. (Some people who read the scriptures on a very low level). The wedding symbol is the great symbol of the commitment that God has for his people and the people have for their God. So, when you come to Hosea chapter two, for example, the prophet speaks about the disloyalty of the chosen people to their Divine Husband and that He wants to bring them back... that is in redemption. And to get them to commit themselves to the marriage again, that means that they come back into the covenant and that they begin to live this relationship between God and themselves. So, When John tells us that there will be a wedding on the 3rd day he's talking about a new revelation. Because when Jesus rises from the dead on the 3rd day, his Covenant that he will have made and cut in his own body on the cross for us will be accomplished.

And on the 3rd day, he will have a new bride, And that is the Church.... we eventually call it the church. And we're going to hear this confirmed for us in chapter 3 when we're told that "the bride is only for the bridegroom". So, there's a new Bridegroom and a new Bride actually being presented. Just as at any wedding you have a new bride and a new bridegroom and you have a New Covenant, and you have a new commitment to a life of loving, commitment to each other. So, this is what John is thinking about. And the wedding at Cana of Galilee is merely the context in which John can talk to about these deeper things. So, Jesus has come to prepare a new Bride for himself, and the church will be made up of Jews and Gentiles.

And there will be the marriage bond of the New Covenant, the **everlasting covenant** that Jesus, will make for us.... and the New Covenant Will be a covenant of love. The old covenant under Moses was a covenant of law and justice. And so, there was laws and breaking of laws and punishments and all the rest of it. The New Covenant is entirely about love and mercy, which is totally extraordinary. And given to a people, the Gentiles, who had no preparation like the Jewish people had for their covenant. So, the Gentiles are thrown into this completely new relationship with God, which is totally love and mercy, which I hope we appreciate. It's absolutely amazing.

The one law of the New Covenant, the new marriage is going to be love. But The English language has a problem.... I suppose many problems! But the problem it has here is that it uses the word **l o v e** for all kinds of things. So, we have to go back to the Greek, which uses different words to explain different loves. The Greek uses 'eros' is used for human fleshly love, physical love. Jesus has stopped talking about that. Greek uses for the love of friendship. Jesus isn't talking about that. And the Greek uses 'agape' for divine love, self-giving love.... and that's what Jesus is talking about all the time. So, as I go through this commentary, I'm going to say 'love' so did you know we're talking on the divine level? We're talking about the divine love that's been given to us. And this is why, in the second half of the Gospel, Jesus is going to say to us, "I give you a new commandment. Love one another as I have loved you...." that is with agape love. And by this love, which is completely different to Eros and philos. "By this love, everybody will know that you are my disciples". This love is going to be completely different.

And one of the things they said, during the time of the acts of the apostles It's these Christians, how they love one another! It's just amazing. It's not selfish. It's not egotistical. It's not what can I can get out of it? This one law, this agape love is a forgiving love. It's a self-sacrificing love. It's an all-conquering love that Jesus is going to conquer every single nation on Earth with.

It doesn't matter what your culture is; it doesn't matter where you came from. It doesn't matter who your tribe is. It doesn't matter what your colour is. This one love is the all-conquering love. And, eventually the human race will actually surrender. We resist as much as we like because we're so selfish, and we're so caught up in this lower level. And so, In order to introduce us to this agape love, we were told in chapter 1 that Jesus has come to us as Incarnate Love.

He literally **embodies this love** and so he is the model. And we watch him, and we watch how he operates, and we listen to what he says because that is the model. So, we look at Jesus, and we find the most important thing for him is **to do the Father's Will**. So, we will realize as the Bride of this Bridegroom that the most important thing for us as the church is **to do God's Will**. The second thing is that you love one another. And if this love doesn't exist between us, then the sign of his covenant is actually not there.... but we have to love on the realm of above; that's what conquers.

Selfish, egotistical love doesn't get anywhere. The next thing we need to look at, in this is the young couple who are getting married at Cana of Galilee. You're told nothing about them; you're not told even their names; you're not told anything. They're just there! So, If people are not actually named and called out, as we would say, then you've got to say 'what is John saying'? The answer is he's saying a lot! The couple are not named because John wants you to read this text not on the natural level that Jim and Joan are getting married because that's not what he's talking about. He's not talking about that at all.

The couple represent all the people in the New Covenant who will be committed to each other by this command of Jesus and by this Covenant of Jesus. And they Will be committed together in love. And the new marriage that Jesus is going to bring for us in the New Covenant It's going to be a marriage made in Heaven. It's going to be a love marriage. And this is the way Jesus described it, John 15:9, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you, so you must love one another". There you have the whole thing. The Father has loved the Son infinitely, absolutely, eternally, unconditionally, knowing him absolutely. And Jesus has loved us infinitely, absolutely, unconditionally, with absolute forgiveness, knowing us for who we are. He says that this agape love is what we have to give to other people, knowing them for who they are, knowing their faults, their failings, their shortcomings, everything, That we have this all-conquering love. It's totally incredible.

It's a marriage made in heaven. And so, this marriage at Cana of Galilee represents this marriage made in heaven. And in our next episode, I want to take it off from there. Thank you for listening.

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