

Themes in the Gospel of John

The Backstory: The Prologue

Lesson #3 for October 19, 2024

Scriptures: John 1:1-5,9-13; 3:16-21; 9:35-41; 17:1-5; Genesis 1:1; Matthew 7:21-23.

1. Is Jesus really God? Did Christ exist prior to the creation of this earth? Was Christ created? That was discussed at length for the first four centuries of Christianity!

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] More than anywhere else in the Scriptures, the Gospel of John boldly proclaims, precisely and powerfully, **the truth that Jesus is God. As God eternal, Jesus precedes Creation and eternity itself.** The beloved disciple dwells on the theme of Jesus' divinity in such depth in order to illuminate the cosmic truth that the Word became flesh....

For John, the subject of Jesus as Creator was vital because Satan, the great deceiver, hated the truth of Christ's divinity and of His equality with God. **Near the end of the first Christian century** [in John's day], **dark heresies subtly entered the church. Gnostic heretics questioned the reality of Jesus' divinity, spreading doubt about His true incarnation in the flesh.** This dangerous phenomenon occurred approximately three decades after the writing of the synoptic Gospels. Consequently, it brought discouragement among the believers and lowered their spiritual morale. [John wrote his Gospel to counter the Gnostic heresy.]

The first 18 verses of John's Gospel constitute a prologue to the rest of his Gospel. They provide an unshakable, concise, and compact theological statement about **Christ's divinity**. Christ the Word is God and has ever been. He is the Creator and the Life and Light-Giver; yet He became a human being, born of God, and demonstrated His love, grace, and glory before His creation.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 39.†‡

[BSG:] This presentation, at the opening of the book, gives readers, who already know that Jesus is the Messiah, an advantage that the characters in the book itself did not have. The reader can clearly see the grand themes that the evangelist returns to as he tells the story of Jesus. These great themes are placed within the historical period of Jesus' earthly life.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath Afternoon, October 12.‡

2. **Jesus came primarily to teach us the truth about the Father and His government. If Jesus was not fully God, then we do not have an adequate picture of the Father.**

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] Had God the Father come to our world and dwelt among us, veiling His glory, humbling Himself, that humanity might look upon Him, the history that we have of the life of Christ would not have been changed in unfolding its record of His own condescending grace. **In every act of Jesus, in every lesson of His instruction, we are to see and hear and recognize God. In sight, in hearing, in effect, it is the voice and movements of the Father.** But language seems to be so feeble! I refrain, and with John exclaim, "Behold what manner of love hath the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not." [1 John 3:1.]—Ellen G. White, *Letter 83, 1895*,*

par. 25; *Manuscript Releases*,* vol. 21, 393.1; *Letters and Manuscripts*,* vol. 10 (1895); [10LtMs p.1.2160].^{†‡Ω} Compare *That I May Know Him* 338.4.

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John 1:1-18: ¹ **In the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** ²From the very beginning the Word was with God. ³Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him. ⁴The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to humanity. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

⁶ God sent his messenger, a man named John [the Baptist], ⁷who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light. ⁹This was the real light — the light that comes into the world and shines on everyone.

¹⁰ The Word was in the world, and though God made the world through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. ¹²Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. ¹³They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.

¹⁴ The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's only Son.

¹⁵ **John spoke about him. He cried out, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'He comes after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.' "**

¹⁶ Out of the fullness of his grace he has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another. ¹⁷God gave the Law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. **The only Son, who is the same as God and is at the Father's side, he has made him known.**— American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., John 1:1-18). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{†‡}

3. ***Where would one learn about God if s/he did not have the story of the life of Jesus?***
4. Notice that the New Testament Gospel of John begins where Moses began in the Old Testament by writing, "In the beginning."

[EGW:] "His name shall be called Immanuel, ... God with us." "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is seen "in the face of Jesus Christ." **From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was "the image of God," the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of His glory."** It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. **To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God's love,—to be "God with us."** Therefore it was prophesied of Him, "His name shall be called Immanuel."

By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God,—God's thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, "I have declared unto them Thy name,"—

“merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,”—
 “that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”
But not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the **theme into which “angels desire to look,”** and **it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song.** It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which “seeketh not her own” has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 19.1-2.†† [“Our little world is the lesson book of the universe.”]‡
<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.22&index=0>‡

5. ***Is it important to you that Jesus Christ is/was fully divine? Again, if Jesus was not fully God, then we do not have a complete picture of God.***
6. Why did John start by calling Jesus *the Word* or in Greek, *Logos*? Greek philosophers have used the term *logos* to describe the complete, rational structure of the universe, or the idea of logic. Other philosophers have suggested that the *logos* is an intermediary kind of god, dwelling somewhere between the gods and us on this earth.
7. But, for John, the *Logos* is the Word of God. To him, Jesus Christ was a lived-out Example of the truth about God. In John 1:14, John said God came to “pitch His tent” among us. God said the same thing to the children of Israel when they exited Egypt!

John 1:14: The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, **lived among us.** We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father’s only Son.—*Good News Bible*.*†

John 1:14: And the Word was made flesh, and **dwelt among us,** (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten on the Father,) full of grace and truth.—*King James Version*.*†

Exodus 25:8-9: ⁸ “**The people must make a sacred tent for me, so that I may live among them.** ⁹**Make it and all its furnishings according to the plan that I will show you.**”—*Good News Bible*.*†

[BSG:] The incarnate Son of God “dwelt” among us (*John 1:14*). “**Dwelt**” is the translation of the Greek word *skenoō*, which **literally means He “tented” with us.** This notion **hearkens back to** [recalls to mind] **Exodus 25:8, in which God says to Moses: “ ‘And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them’ ”** (NKJV). **The idea that God desires to be with us continuously is one of the major themes of the entire Bible. God does not want to be a temporary resident but a permanent one. That is why the heaven-given name of God incarnate is “Immanuel,” God with us.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 41.†‡§

8. Think of all the other worlds and created beings that worship and adore God. But, **God chose to become One with us on this one rebellious planet.** Thus, the onlooking universe has been able to see how God deals with rebellion and sin.

Ephesians 3:9-10: ⁹God, who is the Creator of all things, kept his secret hidden through all the past ages, ¹⁰in order that at the present time, by means of the church, the angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world might learn of his wisdom in all its different forms.—*Good News Bible*.* [We are to teach angels!][‡]

9. The word *only begotten* as translated in the *King James Version* literally means *unique*. It does not mean that Jesus was born sometime in the past. Reading again:

John 1:14: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the **only begotten of the Father**,) full of grace and truth.—*King James Version*.^{*†}

[BSG:] The word “begotten” (*John 1:14, 18*) has been misapplied throughout the history of Christianity in ways that the Bible never intended—namely, that at some indefinite and distant time, before anything was created, the Son was begotten, or created, by the eternal Father. But this notion is fallacious. **Christ was truly the originator and the Creator of all things, not a created being.** John asserts without any hesitancy that Christ was God, and with God, from eternity: “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (*John 1:3, NKJV*)....

Christ [Jesus] voluntarily humbled Himself, became human, and died for sinful humanity. **He willingly altered His eternal nature to retain our humanity forever. Instead of remaining fully divine, now He is both fully divine and fully human.** What a tangible demonstration of self-sacrificing love for the entire universe to behold!—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 40-41.^{†§} [Jesus will forever be a human as well as divine.][‡]

10. John made it very clear that God reveals Himself through the incarnation of His Son. If one believes the words of John, how could anyone question God’s love? However, even one of Jesus’s closest followers, the disciple Philip, did not seem to get the information at the time!

John 14:9: Jesus said to him, “**Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’**”—*New King James Version*.^{*†}

[EGW:] **By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God,—God’s thought made audible.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 19.2.^{†‡}

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11. There are some church organizations even in our day that do not believe that Jesus existed before His birth on this earth. John 1:1-3 in the original language makes it very clear that Jesus existed before anything was created.

[BSG:] When Christ became flesh in our likeness (not sameness), His humanity veiled His divinity; yet, He remained fully God. Indeed, He became similar to us in order to sympathize with us; but He remained different from what we are in order to save us. What an amazing act of divine condescension for God to humble Himself and become man! We cannot fully comprehend this mystery of divine love, but we must heartily appreciate and embrace it. **In many world religions, man futilely attempts to experience ascent to the so-called “gods”; but in Christianity, God actually descends to our level to meet us where we are.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 40.^{†‡} [Did

Jesus become human “to sympathize with us” as the Bible study guide says?
Or, was it to more clearly reveal the character of God to us?][‡]

12. In light of what we have seen so far, why do you think John chose to start his Gospel by talking about the divinity of Christ and His role as Creator? John was facing Gnosticism!

[EGW:] Jesus has said, “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men [*sic*] unto Me.” John 12:32. [Note that the *KJV* inserts the word *men* in italics, indicating that *men* is not in the original language. Ellen G. White in *The Desire of Ages* quoted John 12:32 as it is correctly translated without the word *men*.] Christ must be revealed to the sinner as the Saviour [*sic*-Br] dying for the sins of the world; **and as we behold the Lamb of God upon the cross of Calvary, the mystery of redemption begins to unfold to our minds and the goodness of God leads us to repentance.** In dying for sinners, Christ manifested a love that is incomprehensible; and as the sinner beholds this love, it softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires contrition in the soul.

It is true that men sometimes become ashamed of their sinful ways, and give up some of their evil habits, before they are conscious that they are being drawn to Christ. But whenever they make an effort to reform, from a sincere desire to do right, it is the power of Christ that is drawing them. An influence of which they are unconscious works upon the soul, and the conscience is quickened, and the outward life is amended. And as Christ draws them to look upon His cross, to behold Him whom their sins have pierced, the commandment comes home to the conscience. The wickedness of their life, the deep-seated sin of the soul, is revealed to them. They begin to comprehend something of the righteousness of Christ, and exclaim, “What is sin, that it should require such a sacrifice for the redemption of its victim? Was all this love, all this suffering, all this humiliation, demanded, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life?”—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ** 26.4-27.1.^{†‡}

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13. In John 1:1-18, as quoted in Item #2 above, Jesus is also described as *the light*. C. S. Lewis said the following about that statement:

[C. S. Lewis in BSG:] “**I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.**”—“Is Theology Poetry?” (n. p.: Samizdat University Press, 2014), p. 15, originally presented in 1944.—[as quoted in *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, October 15].^{†‡}

14. ***Why did so many people, even those who saw many of the miracles that Jesus performed, choose to reject Him and His divinity?***

15. Probably the saddest verse in all the Bible is **John 1:11** which could be translated: “**He came to His home, and His family rejected Him!**”

16. Notice these important words from Jesus’s own prayer:

John 17:3: [Jesus prayed:] “And eternal life means knowing you, the only true God, and knowing Jesus Christ, whom you sent.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*‡}

17. What was John’s purpose for writing his Gospel?

John 20:31: But these have been written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you may have life.—*Good News Bible*.*

18. *How do these two passages we just read fit together when talking about knowing (John 17:3) Jesus Christ and believing (John 20:31) Him to be the Messiah?*

19. In John 3:16-21, John described why it is so important that we believe in God and in His Messiah. Notice these words in particular:

John 3:20-21: ²⁰ “All those who do evil things hate the light and will not come to the light, because they do not want their evil deeds to be shown up. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light in order that the light may show that what they did was in obedience to God.”—*Good News Bible*.*

20. As we read through the Gospel of John, we see that the people in Jesus’s day were divided into two distinct groups: (1) Those who believed in Him and accepted Him as the Messiah, and (2) Those who, while they had the opportunity to do so, chose not to accept Him.

[BSG:] In John, the major difference between the two groups is the way that they relate to Jesus. Believers, or those who come to believe, have an openness toward Him, even when He confronts or rebukes them. They come to Jesus and do not run away. He is the Light that shines on them. And by faith, by believing, they become the children of God.

Unbelievers, on the other hand, typically come to Jesus to fight with Him.

They are characterized by those who love darkness rather than light. They find His sayings hard to accept or they see Him breaking old traditions and not fulfilling their expectations. They stand in judgment on Him rather than letting His light measure and judge them. This attitude, of course, had been seen again and again in the religious leaders, who ideally, as the spiritual guides of the nation, should have been the first ones to have accepted Jesus.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, October 16.^{†‡}

21. One of the themes of the Gospel of John is **God’s glory**.

John 17:1-5: ¹After Jesus finished saying this [to the disciples], he looked up to heaven and said [in prayer], “Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son, so that the Son may give glory to you. ²For you gave him authority over all humanity, so that he might give eternal life to all those you gave him. ³And eternal life means knowing you, the only true God, and knowing Jesus Christ, whom you sent. ⁴I have shown your glory on earth; I have finished the work you gave me to do. ⁵Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*‡}

22. It is interesting that Jesus seemed to imply that His death on the cross would bring glory to God! Try to imagine how the shameful, humiliating death as an alleged “traitor” to the Roman government could bring glory to God.

[EGW:] **The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father.** He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by him as his right. This was no robbery of God.... [Proverbs 8:22-27 is quoted.]

There are light and glory in the truth that Christ was one with the Father before the foundation of the world was laid. This is the light shining in a dark place, making it resplendent with divine, original glory. This truth, infinitely mysterious in itself, explains other mysterious and otherwise unexplainable truths, while it is enshrined in light, unapproachable and incomprehensible.—Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*,* April 5, 1906, par. 7-8; Ellen G. White Comments, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*,*[¶] vol. 5, 1126.5-6.[†]

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23. **It was in the garden of Gethsemane that Jesus first “died” to demonstrate that sin leads to death. No human being had yet touched Him. However, He fell dying to the ground. And of what was He dying?**

Luke 22:43-44: [In the garden of Gethsemane:] ⁴³An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴In great anguish he prayed even more fervently; his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.—*Good News Bible*.^{*‡}

[EGW:] **Having made the decision [to “drink the cup” and proceed with going toward His death on the cross], He fell dying to the ground from which He had partially risen.** Where now were His disciples, to place their hands tenderly beneath the head of their fainting Master, and bathe that brow, marred indeed more than the sons of men? The Saviour [*sic-Br*] trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him.

But God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld the Saviour’s [*sic-Br*] agony. **They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of satanic forces, His nature weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread.** There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief **they watched the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son,** they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin. [God hates sin because it kills His children! These words tell us that a cosmic conflict was raging in Gethsemane.]

The worlds unfallen and the heavenly angels had watched with intense interest as the conflict drew to its close. Satan and his confederacy of evil, the legions of apostasy, watched intently this great crisis in the work of redemption. The powers of good and evil waited to see what answer would come to Christ’s thrice-repeated prayer. Angels had longed to bring relief to the divine sufferer, but this might not be. No way of escape was found for the Son of God. In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious cup trembled in the hand of the sufferer, the heavens opened, a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and the mighty angel who stands in God’s presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ. **The angel came not to take the cup from Christ’s hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father’s love.** He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved [or healed] as the result of His sufferings. He assured Him that His Father is greater and more powerful than Satan, that His death would result in the utter discomfiture

[feeling of unease] of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail [laborious effort] of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 693.1-3.†† [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3395&index=0>]†

24. Scholars do not often compare the experience in the garden of Gethsemane with what happened at the cross. However, notice these significant words from Ellen White.

[EGW:] [On the cross:] Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. **In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father's acceptance heretofore given Him. He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father's favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 756.3.†† [What evidence really mattered to Jesus?]† [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3735&index=0>]†

25. That separation impacted Jesus so much that it broke His heart, and He died. Every time we choose to sin, we are choosing to separate ourselves from God; and thus, we are experiencing what Jesus experienced on the cross—separation from God. (See Isaiah 59:2.) Do we, and should we, feel that separation from God as Jesus felt it?

Isaiah 59:2: It is because of your sins that he doesn't hear you. It is your sins that separate you from God when you try to worship him.—*Good News Bible*.*

26. Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 tell us that one of Jesus's final cries was: "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?" How could the abandonment of Christ bring glory to God? Luke 23:32-47 and John 19:25-30 give us all the details we have from the Gospels about the actual death of Jesus. As we have already noted, **Jesus died because by the pre-incarnation agreement with His Father, They had decided that it was necessary to show what happens when the life-giving power of God is separated from a human being. That separation is what the Bible calls *the second death*.**

27. Jesus is the only Person in the history of the universe, so far, who has died that second death, the death that results from being separated by sin from the Father. **Being the Master Teacher that He is, Jesus Christ, in cooperation with His Father, actually died twice to demonstrate to the onlooking universe and then to us—although at the time no human being understood what was happening—that the second death comes because of separation from God, the only Source of life. That is the death which the wicked will die at the final judgment which is at the third coming of Jesus.**

[EGW:] The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. **But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour [sic-Br] in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart**

with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.

Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour [*sic-Br*] could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. **He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 753.1-2.††

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28. The life and death of Jesus give us a choice: (1) We can choose to live lives as close as possible to the pattern given in the life of Jesus; or (2) We will die the death that He died, separated from the Father.

29. Through the resurrection, Jesus won the great controversy between God and Satan over the character and government of God. Once Jesus had won that controversy, He could, once again, exercise His divinity! Try to image and understand this conflict: Jesus won by dying!

[EGW:] **When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ's tomb, saying, Thy Father calls Thee, the Saviour [*sic-Br*] came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself.** Now was proved the truth of His words, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again.... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Now was fulfilled the prophecy He had spoken to the priests and rulers, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John 10:17, 18; 2:19.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 785.2.††

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30. ***Why are some people so foolish as to deny the light and refuse to hear the truth?***

31. John 12:36-50 tell us that many of the people did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. However:

John 12:42-43: ⁴² Even then, many of the Jewish authorities believed in Jesus; but because of the Pharisees they did not talk about it openly, so as not to be expelled from the synagogue. ⁴³They loved human approval rather than the approval of God.—*Good News Bible*.*

32. While it is true that most of the religious leaders were adamantly opposed to Jesus during His life, fortunately, some of them later came to their senses and joined the early Christian church. They became convinced that Jesus was correct and chose to join the early church.

John 1:12-13: ¹²Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. ¹³They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.—*Good News Bible*.*

Acts 6:7: And so the word of God continued to spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem grew larger and larger, and a great number of priests [usually Sadducees] accepted the faith.—*Good News Bible*.*‡

[BSG:] Here is the connection between the prologue and the conclusion of the Gospel. **In John 20:31, the apostle presents why he wrote—that you may**

believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life by His name. Thus, the introduction and conclusion form a kind of unity. They are related concepts that enclose all that occurs between them. This linkage points to the **overarching goal of the Gospel of John—that people will be saved by believing on Jesus Christ as their Savior.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, October 15.^{†‡}

33. As we know, **without freedom, there could never be love.** So, God gives us the opportunity to choose for ourselves. However, God does everything possible to direct us and help us to make the right choices. Think of what Jesus did!

Philippians 2:8-9: ⁸He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death

— his death on the cross.

⁹ For this reason God raised him to the highest place above and gave him the name that is greater than any other name.—*Good News Bible.**

Hebrews 12:2: Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. He did not give up because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right-hand side of God's throne.—*Good News Bible.**

34. ***Is it important to you that Jesus Christ is/was fully divine? By His life, Jesus demonstrated the truth about God; by His death, He demonstrated the results of sin. Remember that if Jesus was not God, then we do not have a complete picture of God.***
35. Unbelievable as it may seem, Jesus Christ chose to become fully human, and He will retain His humanity for the rest of eternity. This does not mean in any sense that He loses His divinity. He is fully human, and He is fully divine.
36. One of the most amazing things about Christianity is that Jesus Christ our Messiah won the great controversy by dying! Of course, if He had remained in the grave, it would not have been a win. It is clear that Jesus understood from the beginning of His ministry what was coming. (See John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23-27; 13:1; 16:32; and John 17:1.) Jesus knew that those final three days of His life on this earth would be crucial to the great controversy.
37. What more could we possibly say about God's love after what Jesus has done and what John has written about it?

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