
A prayer, prior to a meditation from the John's Gospel...

"LORD God, Jesus, help us...help me to grow in faith and truly believe You, and likewise, live according to that belief by bearing eternal fruit for You and Your Kingdom. Amen. *(jeff borden)*

Begin John's Gospel:

"They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or birth, but a birth that comes from God." (John 1:13)

"The unique One, who is Himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us." (John 1:18)

Jesus on being "Born Again"...

Jesus repeats this imperative three times in the span of a single conversation (speaking to Nicodemus). Stylistically, when something is repeated in this manner, its importance is paramount. See the verses that follow:

"I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God." –John 3:3

"I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit" –John 3:5

"You* must be born again." –John 3:7

*The Greek word for "you" is plural.

The world, in its unbelief, stands "already judged..." (John records the words of Jesus)

"There is no judgment against anyone who believes in Him. But anyone who does not believe Him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son." –John 3:18

"And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life, but remains under God's angry judgment." –John 3:36

Here, in John 3:36, Jesus equates "belief" with "obedience". Obedience implies action and measurable (visible) evidence that can quantify "belief." (John records the words of Jesus)

"If you only knew the gift God has for you..." –John 4:10 (Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well. I think He speaks these words to us as well...)

"Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?" –John 4:48 (Jesus speaking)

Jesus continually tests, purges, and refines the hearts of men so their faith might be proven authentic. (1Peter 1:7)

- He taught in parables so only the hungry of heart would be fed the Bread of Life. (Luke 8:9-10)
- He taught without compromise and always with full disclosure; this with the knowledge that many would turn from him to be eternally damned. (John 6:43-70)
- No one has ever “loved” more perfectly than Jesus; no one before him and no one after him. Not once were any of his words spoken with any measure of “meanness,” spite, or deception...yet often were the times his words were painfully difficult and used to expose truth.

“My Father is always working, and so am I...” –John 5:17

“If you only knew the gift God has for you...” –John 4:10

“THIS IS THE ONLY WORK GOD WANTS FROM YOU: BELIEVE IN THE ONE HE HAS SENT.” –John 6:29

We must remember the words of Jesus from his earlier conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:36) where he equates “believe” with “obedience.”

Jesus: “I AM” = I am GOD

Chapter Eight of John’s Gospel begins Jesus making unequivocal claims of His Godhood.

- **Jn 8:12** (implied) — “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”
- **Jn 8:19** (implied) — “Since you don’t know who I am, you don’t know who my Father is. If you knew me, you would also know my Father.”
- **Jn 8:23** (implied) — “You are from below; I am from above. You belong to this world; I do not.”
- **Jn 8:24** (explicit) — “That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that **I AM*** who I claim to be, you will die in your sins”
- **Jn 8:25** (implied) — “‘Who are you?’ they demanded. Jesus replied, ‘The one I have always claimed to be.’”
- **Jn 8:28** (explicit) — “So Jesus said, ‘When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that **I AM*** he.’”
- **Jn 8:38** (implied) — “I am telling you what I saw when I was with my Father...”
- **Jn 8:40** (implied) — “...you are trying to kill me because I told you the truth, which I heard from God.”
- **Jn 8:42** (implied) — “...I have come to you from God”
- **Jn 8:49** (implied) — “...I honor my Father—and you dishonor me.”
- **Jn 8:56** (implied) — “Abraham rejoiced as he looked forward to my coming. He saw it and was glad.”
- **Jn 8:58** (explicit) — “Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, **I AM!***”

****Jesus uses the “I AM” the divine name of GOD that was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. There is no mistaking that his usage of this name was an absolute and direct claim to himself as the One and only GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.***

CHAPTERS 12—18— a meditation on the words of Jesus (*jeff borden*)

“Now the time has come...” (Jesus)—Beginning with chapter 12 of John’s Gospel and running through chapter eighteen is one of the most incredible monologues of Jesus. I am completely “blown away” by the almost incomprehensible truths that are contained in these words of His.

Jesus spoke: *“I have come as a light to shine in this dark world; so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark...I don’t speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it. And I know His commands lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells me to say.”*—John 12:46-50

Beginning with vs. 23, Jesus announces the time has come for him to enter his glory. Following this proclamation of Jesus; “Father, bring glory to Your name,” a voice is heard from heaven saying, “I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again.” Jesus is affirmed...his person, his message, and his mission by God Almighty... Thus begins a crescendo of revelation teaching. Jesus lays the foundation of this teaching as “the Father’s words” (John 12:46-50).

Building on that foundation, he lays the cornerstones of servant leadership and love (John 13:4-17; 34, 35). Following this cornerstone of service and servanthood, he reveals the next stages of Kingdom building...himself, love, obedience, intimacy, unity, oneness with the Godhead.

“Walk in the light while you can, so the darkness will not overtake you. Those who walk in the darkness cannot see where they are going. Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light...” Jesus —John 12:35-36

Chapter 14

- v.1 “trust in God”
- v.2 “trust in me”
- v.3 “when everything is ready, I’ll come get you.”
- v.3 “you’ll always be with me”
- v.6 “I am the way, the truth, and the life”
- v.6 “no way to the Father except through me...”
- v.9 “if you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the Father.”
- v.12 “you will do greater works than me”
- v.15 “If you love me, obey me...”
- v.17 “Holy Spirit lives with you”
- v.18 “I will not abandon you”
- v.20 “I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I in you”
- v.23 “All who love me, will do what I say...”
- v.24 “what I tell you is from the Father.”
- v.26 “the Holy Spirit will teach you everything”
- v.27 “I am leaving you peace of mind and heart”
- v.27 “do not be troubled or afraid...”
- v.31 “I will do what the Father requires of me, so the world will know that I love the Father.”

This incredible revelation of Himself with the promise of His “indwelling person” to His disciples stands alone as utterly fantastic and almost incomprehensible in its ramifications and scope. But then, Jesus continues this thought with his teaching of one of the most vivid visual illustrations of “connectedness” in all the gospels. He equates himself with a vine as he points to a vineyard as an object lesson to his hearers. The metaphor of Jesus being “the vine” (John 15) is not only a great visual, but it serves as a “bolded underline” as Jesus reiterates his main points from the previous chapter repeatedly to emphasize the importance and urgency of his message. *(I notice how many times Jesus repeats the importance of his main point in the verses that follow.)*

Jesus: The True Vine (3X)

1. **v.1** “I am the true grapevine”
2. **v.4** “A branch cannot produce fruit if severed from the vine, you can’t be fruitful unless you remain in me.”
3. **v.5** “I am the vine”

Jesus: You were created to bear and produce fruit for God (7X)

1. **v.2** “my Father cuts off non-producing branches...”
2. **v.2** “He prunes fruit producers, so they will produce more fruit...”
3. **v.4** “be fruitful; remain in me
4. **v.5** “remain in me; produce much fruit”
5. **v.6** “non-producers are cut-off and burned up”
6. **v.8** “produce much fruit = true disciples and glorifies God”
7. **v.16** “I chose you and appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit...”

Jesus: Talks about “love” (7X)

1. **v.9** “I have loved you as the Father has loved me”
2. **v.9** “Remain in my love...”
3. **v.10** “When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love”
4. **v.12** “This is my commandment: love each other in the same way I have loved you.”
5. **v.13** “There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”
6. **v.14** “You are my friends if you do what I command...”
7. **v.17** “This is my command: Love each other.”

“Unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. Those who love their life in this world will lose it those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me.” –John 12:24-26

“The world’s sin is that it refuse to believe in me” (Jesus) –John 16:9

*Jesus intends that “believe” means to “believe with your whole heart.” Believe changes the mindset and behavior of the one who believes. It is not simply an act of verbal affirmation or acknowledgement...it is life-changing. This understanding is implied and understood from the Hebrew mindset and use of the word from the original language usage of “heart” (*Lebab*) in conjunction with believe (eg. Believe with your heart not just your head).

Definitions of heart:

- **Heart**, as defined by the **English** dictionary (Merriam-Webster), is the emotional or moral as distinguished from the intellectual nature...<a feeling>
- **Heart**, as defined and used in the **Greek** (Romans 10:9), is *Kardiōa* [Strong's #2588] – denotes the centre of all physical and spiritual life.
- **Heart**, as defined and used in the **Hebrew** (Romans 10:8 quoting Deut. 30:12-14), is *Lebab* [Strong's #3824] – inner man, mind, will, heart, soul, understanding; mind, knowledge, thinking, reflection, memory; inclination, resolution, determination (of will); conscience; as seat of emotions and passions

Chapter 16

Jesus shares with his disciples that he must “go away” to the One who sent him and promises the coming of the Holy Spirit. With this promise, he shares with them the specific work of the Holy Spirit in the world and in their lives.

- **v.8** –convict the world of sin
- **v.8** –convict the world of God’s righteousness
- **v.8** –convict the world of the coming judgment
- **v.13** –guide “believers” in truth
- **v.13** –tell “believers” about the future.
- **V.14** –give instructions to “believers” from Jesus (directly!!!)

“He (The Holy Spirit) will not speak on His own but will tell you what He has heard. He will bring me (Jesus) glory by telling you whatever He receives from me. The Spirit will tell you whatever He receives from me...” –John 16:13-15

THE PRAYER OF JESUS –JOHN CHAPTER 17

I think this chapter from John’s Gospel is one of the most captivating and incredible collections of Jesus’ words in all the gospels. His personal prayer for His followers, the promises of His life continued in the lives of His followers, and the promise of reconciliation and unity—“oneness” with the triune Godhead is mind-staggering. This prayer is it! The promise we live for and the hope we look forward to; this is the payoff of the Good News...it is **The Gospel**.

“Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, Father save me from this hour? But this is the very reason I came! Father, bring glory to Your Name.” Jesus –John 12:27-28

“Father, glorify Your Son so He can give glory back to You...” Jesus –John 17:1

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRAYER OF JESUS (looking at it verse by verse)

- **v.2** –Jesus has authority over everyone
- **v.2** –Jesus gives eternal life...
- **v.3** –Eternal life comes from knowing God and Jesus
- **v.4** –God is glorified through the cross of Christ
- **v.6** –Jesus reveals God
- **v.6** –The words and message of Jesus are God’s
- **v.9** –Jesus’ prayer is for those who believe (believe with your heart-*Lebab*)
- **v.11** –Disciple-followers would be united in the same way as Jesus and God, The Father, are united...
- **v.13** –Followers filled with the joy of Jesus Christ
- **v.14** –Jesus gives us God’s Word
- **v.17** –God’s truth makes believers (believe with your heart-*Lebab* believers) holy.
- **v.17** –God’s Word is Truth.
- **v.18** –Believers sent with the same “mission” as Jesus; *“Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by Your Truth.”* –John 17:18-19
- **v.20** –This prayer applies to those who believe (believe with your heart-*Lebab*) and follow behind the original twelve disciples and their message.
- **v.21** –“I pray they will all be one, just as YOU and I are One—as You are in me, Father, and I am in You. And may they be in us so that the world will believe (believe with your heart-*Lebab*) You sent me.”
- **v.22** –Jesus imputes/imparts His glory to His believers (believe with your heart-*Lebab*) so we can be one as He and God the Father are one.
- **v.23** –This passage has HUGE IMPLICATIONS: “I am in them and You are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that You sent me and that You love them as much as You love me.”
- **v.24** –Jesus wants His followers (believe with your heart-*Lebab*) to be with Him eternally.
- **v.24** –Believers (believe with your heart-*Lebab*) will see Jesus in His full glory, as God, and as He has always been
- **v.25** –Believers (believe with your heart-*Lebab*) know Jesus is from God
- **v.26** –Jesus reveals God
- **v.26** –Jesus will continue to reveal God
- **v.26** –The Father’s (God) love for Jesus Christ will be in believers (those believe with your heart-*Lebab*), and Jesus will be in believers (remember *Lebab*)

*****BELIEVE WITH YOUR HEART “LEBAB” HEART = lebab** (lebab – Hebrew Strong’s word #3824)

Heart, as defined and used in the **Hebrew** (Romans 10:8 quoting Deut. 30:12-14), is *Lebab* [Strong’s #3824] – inner man, mind, will, heart, soul, understanding; mind, knowledge, thinking, reflection, memory; inclination, resolution, determination (of will); conscience; as seat of emotions and passions.

| A meditation from the Gospel of John by Jeff Borden [Dec. 2008]

...closing this meditation from John 12 – 18, we are given a view into the Garden at the time of Jesus' arrest:

Temple guards and Roman soldiers arrive in the Garden in search of Jesus. Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to Him and stepped forward to meet them. "Who are you looking for?" He asked. "Jesus the Nazarene," They replied. "I AM He," Jesus said. As Jesus said, "I AM He," They all drew back and fell to the ground... –John 18:4-8

As Jesus identifies Himself to the temple guards and Roman soldiers, He reveals His true self to them all... **"I AM"** –God Almighty. Jesus used the actual and divine name that God had given to Himself when Moses had asked what His name was on Mount Sinai. There was absolutely no mistaking what Jesus was saying or who He was claiming to be; **I AM = I AM GOD.**

The Truth, the authority, and the impact of this revelation caused those hearing His words to "Fall back and down to the ground" in recognition of whose presence they were in. Fantastic.

The time is urgent; God is near...Jesus has given us everything we need to walk in unity and oneness with Him. We are empowered with the very Spirit of the Living God. Will we live as though we are "Lebab" heart-believers?

"As surely as I live," says the LORD,
'every knee will bend to me,
And every tongue will confess and give
Praise to God." –Isaiah 49:18