



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

JOHN

Week 3

“...Was Blind, but Now I See”

DAY 15

John 9:1-41

The lyrics of “Amazing Grace” open our hearts to the story of spiritual healing:

*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*

1. Was there a reason that this man was born blind (vs. 1-3)? For what message (vs. 4-5)?

2. How might this action by Jesus, in healing the blind man, parallel the act of creation (vs. 6-12)?

3. Outline the interaction between the Pharisees, the blind man, his parents and Jesus (vs. 13-41). How does the blind man come to believe in Jesus while the others were “blind” to his identity (vs. 40-41)?

4. Why did the Pharisees accuse Jesus of sin when he was not present (v. 24)? What had they replied previously when he had asked them, “Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?” (8:46)?

1. Take ten or fifteen minutes to close your eyes and listen to the world around you. Hear the birds as they chirp, the cars as they hurry by, the wind as it blows. During that time when you voluntarily set aside your physical sight, consider how precious your spiritual vision is.

2. What do you *know* about Jesus? Do you now *see* (v. 25)? Be open for opportunities to tell others about what you see.

*In the miracle recorded in John 9, we have an account of a healing of a person **blind from birth**. The miracle involved not only the eyes, but also the brain's ability to make sense of the data coming from the eyes. This man can be seen as representative of all humanity, for we are born spiritually blind. Only the might of Jesus produces light to enable our spiritual sight.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

The Good Shepherd

John 10:1-42

OPENING
up to the Word

How do you protect your property? (a) deadbolt locks, (b) guard dog (c) alarm system, (d) video surveillance (e), fences, (f) firearms, (g) trust in the Lord.

DIGGING
into the Word

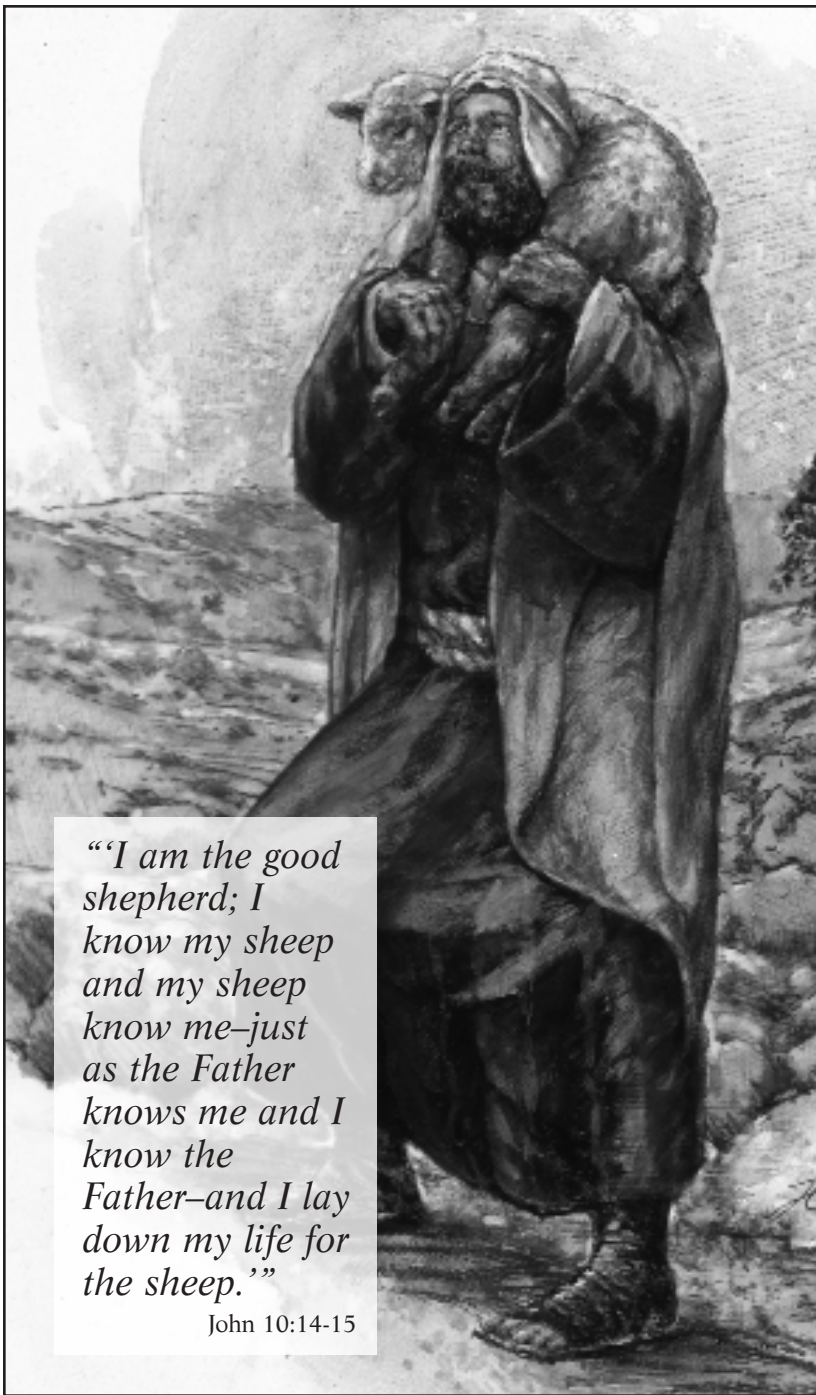
1. How were the Pharisees like a thief (vs. 1-5)? Who were the sheep of Jesus?
2. How does one enter the sheepfold to live within its protective walls (vs. 6-9)?
3. How does Jesus protect his sheep (vs. 10-18)? Do hired hands care for the flock like Jesus? Do they care enough to die for the sheep (vs. 17-18)?
4. What great gift comes to Jesus' sheep (vs. 22-28)?
5. How did Jesus reveal his nature (vs. 29-42)? As a result, who believed?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Consider your daily activities in the light of sheep. Is the Lord your Shepherd? Or are you following a hired hand who regards you as a mere commodity?
2. Read Psalm 23. Today, as you travel, work, study or play, apply the message of this psalm with Jesus as your Good Shepherd.
3. Thank Jesus for his voluntary sacrifice for you, and, as his sheep, thank him for eternal life.

WINDOW
on the Word

*In response to the question about his **messianic identity**, the Good Shepherd reveals himself as one with the Father (vs. 29-38). He is one with God in his divine nature, as the Son of God before his human birth, being fully human and fully divine in the one person Jesus by the Incarnation. Though the Son is a distinct person from the Father, he is united in essence and being.*

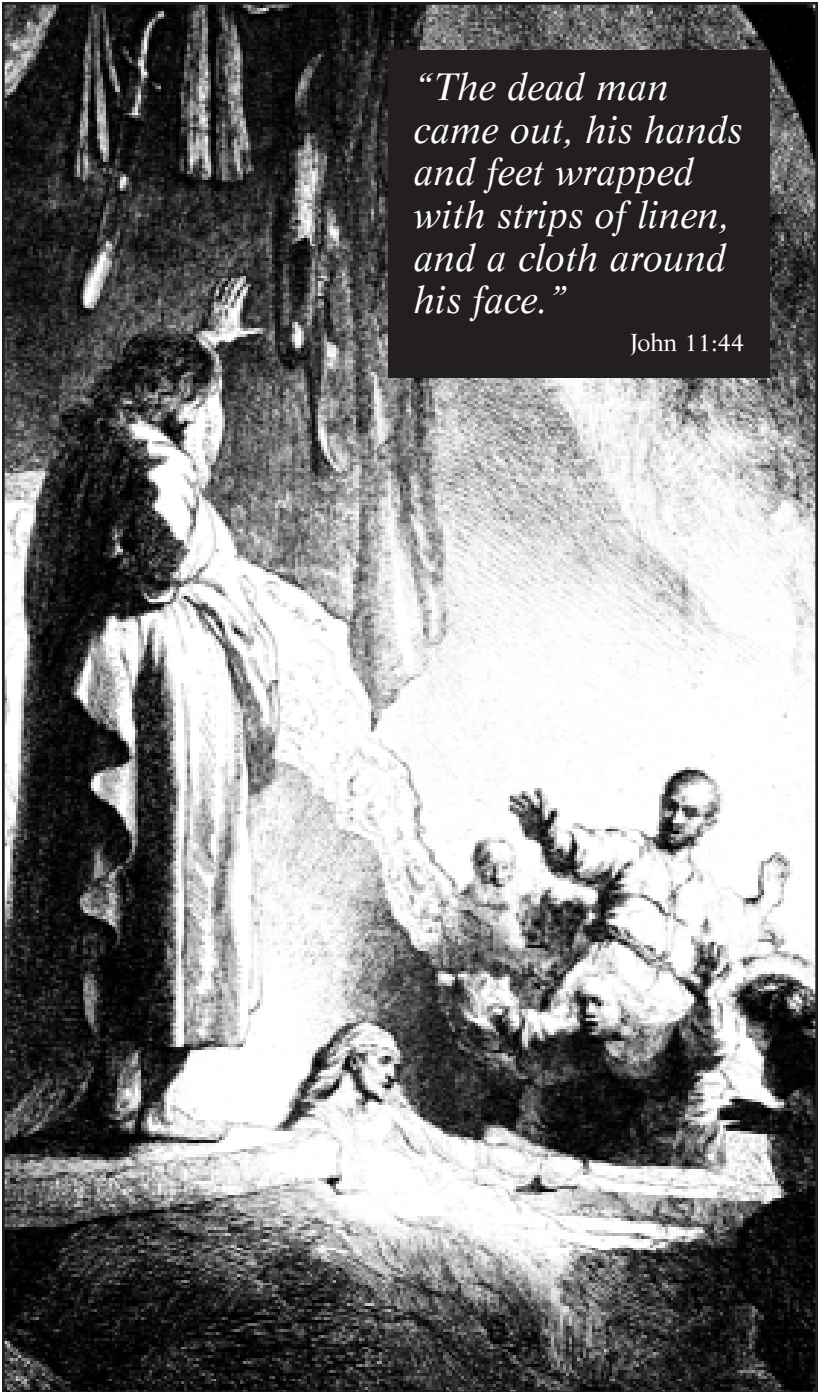


“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

John 10:14-15

*“The dead man
came out, his hands
and feet wrapped
with strips of linen,
and a cloth around
his face.”*

John 11:44



Artwork by Rembrandt van Rijn, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam

When Is Death Not Death?

DAY 17

John 11:1-57

When is death not the end of life? When fruit drops off the tree, only to have the seed sprout?

1. How does the story of the resurrection of Lazarus parallel the healing of the man born blind (Jn 9:1-11; 11:37)?

2. Why do you think Jesus delayed responding to Mary's and Martha's request (v. 6)? How did Jesus explain his meaning to the disciples (vs. 12-15)? What do you think Thomas meant in verse 16?

3. Again, how is Jesus the light (vs. 9-10)? How is he the resurrection and the life (vs. 25-26)? How does he show the glory of God (v. 40)?

4. Why were the leaders of the Jews afraid of Jesus (vs. 47-57)? Why did they step up their efforts to kill him?

1. Today, if someone dead were given physical life, do you think everyone who heard about this miracle would believe in Jesus? Or would they come up with "rational" explanations?

2. "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." Do you believe this?

*The **words of Caiaphas**, the high priest of Israel, are ironic (vs. 49-50). Though Caiaphas intended to say that the death of one man, Jesus, would spare the Jewish nation by keeping the Romans from intervening, in truth, Jesus would die for all humanity to rescue us from spiritual blindness and death.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

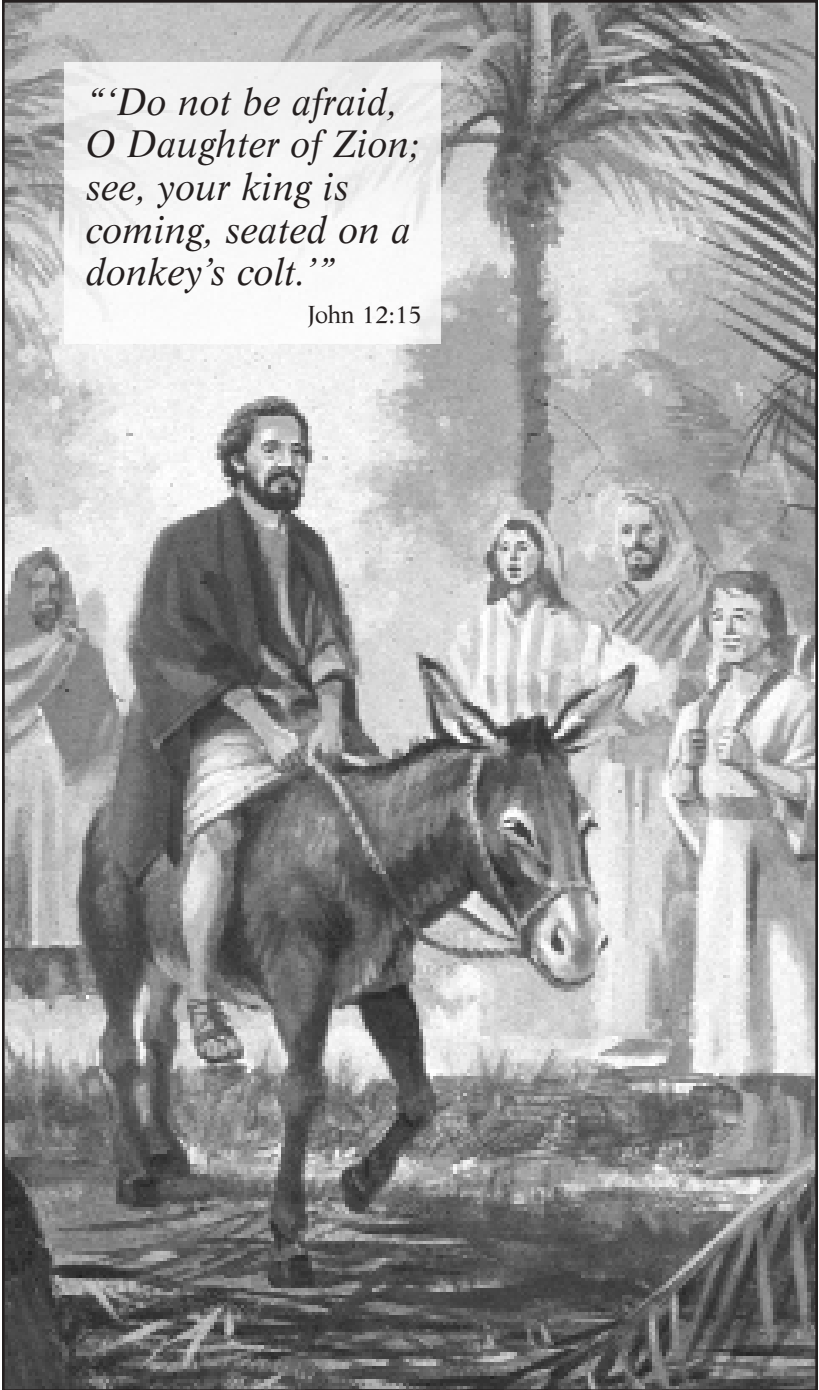
out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

*“Do not be afraid,
O Daughter of Zion;
see, your king is
coming, seated on a
donkey’s colt.”*

John 12:15



Artwork by Ken Tunell

The Triumphal Entry

DAY 18

John 12:1-28

Take a look around you today. Do you see genuine love extended to others? To the physically needy? The emotionally needy? The spiritually needy?

1. What did Judas Iscariot's outcry against Mary say about his attitude of betrayal (vs. 1-11)? Who demonstrated genuine love for Jesus?
2. How did Jesus' entry into Jerusalem fulfill things "written about him" (vs. 12-18)?
3. Why did the Greeks seek Jesus (vs. 20-22)? Consider John 10:17 and 3:16.
4. How does death lead to life (vs. 23-28)? How did Jesus serve us, and how does he continue to serve us

1. Are you able to recognize when someone needs help? How can Jesus work through you to help someone who is physically or spiritually needy?
2. What favorite hymn or song helps you to praise God from your heart?

*The recent resurrection of Lazarus added credibility to the belief that **Jesus was the Messiah**. Many Jews believed the Messiah would come to Jerusalem to save the nation from the Romans. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey as the Messiah of peace (Zec 9:9), the people cried out Hosanna, meaning "save now" (Jn 12:13). However, the political and religious leaders were painfully silent.*

OPENING
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DIGGING
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The Cross and the Light

John 12:29-50

OPENING
up to the Word

Consider a prism that separates light into its various components—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Can a parallel be made to children of light who represent various ethnic groups?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Was Jesus' death a humiliation or glorification (vs. 28-34)? Consider how the cross—an instrument of shame—is transformed into a symbol of victory.
2. How can people become "sons of light" (vs. 35-36)? Are the light of Jesus and the glory of God one and the same (vs. 35-36, 41)?
3. Who believed Jesus' words (vs. 37-43)? Can you name a leader who believed in him (v. 42)? See John 3:1.
4. How does Jesus' last public appeal sum up his divinity, his mission and his destiny (vs. 44-50)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Think about how the power of Satan is replaced with the power of the cross (vs. 31-34).
3. Believe in the Light—accept his challenge to come to the light (vs. 35-36, 44-50).

WINDOW
on the Word

*The prophet Isaiah, preaching seven centuries earlier, had warned Israel about willful **blindness and hardness of heart** (Isa 53:1; 6:9-10). John refers to these prophecies as descriptors of the blindness of many leaders of Judah in Jesus' day.*

The Servant Leader

DAY 20

John 13:1-38

In your culture, what are some of the duties of servants? (a) open doors, (b) drive cars, (c) prepare meals, (d) wash dishes, (e) maintain the yard, (f) clean house. Are you willing to be a servant when needed?

1. How did Peter demonstrate his impetuosity during footwashing (vs. 1-12)? What did he learn (vs. 12-17)?
2. Why do you think Jesus allowed the betrayer to stay with the disciples so long (vs. 18-30)? How did the actions of Judas symbolize spiritual darkness? How does the crucifixion and resurrection vanquish the darkness?
3. What is the new commandment from Jesus (vs. 31-35)? How is it new?

1. How innocent are your motives? In prayer today, ask Jesus to wash your feet. Don't forget to thank him for his total cleansing.
2. As a servant, reach out and love someone today. Make someone happy! Find a way to serve that person. Consider renewing a friendship with someone you have not talked with for some time.

*Jesus is the ultimate **servant leader**. In the first century, travel was most often by foot. People wore sandals to walk the dusty roads. When arriving at their destination, servants sometimes assisted weary travelers by washing their feet to clean them and cool them off. Jesus, the leader, shocked his disciples by assuming the role of a servant to wash their feet. This happened at Jesus' last Passover (v. 1), also known as the Lord's Supper. The first Passover was the redemption of Israel from Egyptian slavery; the Lord's Supper introduced the new covenant redemption from the slavery of sin.*

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The Way, the Truth and the Life

John 14:1-31

OPENING
up to the Word

When was the last time you went house hunting? How many rooms were you looking for? Did you find a comfortable home or are you still searching?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How do the “many rooms” in the Father’s house speak of multiple blessings in the kingdom of God (vs. 1-4)?

2. How is Jesus “the way” (v. 5)? How is Jesus, in his unique relationship to the Father, “the way and the truth and the life” (vs. 5-7)? Is he, for us, the pathway, the absolute truth and eternal life (Review the prologue of 1:1-18)?

3. How do we know the Father and the Holy Spirit through the Son (vs. 8-26)? What does love have to do with it?

4. How does the peace which Jesus has left us surpass the “peace” of this world (vs. 27-31)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Think about your future dwelling place. Is it peaceful? Full of joy and love?

2. Map out your spiritual journey as Jesus leads you to his Father’s house. Which onramp do you take? Which road? What is the vehicle of truth? Is your goal to have life in Jesus?

3. Today, follow the command of Jesus to love another person, and thus love God.

WINDOW
on the Word

*In his final discourse, Jesus deals with the coming ministry of the **Holy Spirit** three times (14:14-17; 15:26-27; 16:5-15). When Jesus’ earthly ministry was done, the Spirit would lead the church into the truth of the new covenant (7:39; 16:13).*



THE NATURE OF JESUS

Jesus used many images to express his role in salvation:

4:25-26	I am the Messiah (so give him your allegiance...)
5:25-27, 39-40	...the Son of Man who executes judgment and gives life (so come to him for mercy and life...)
6:35, 48	I am the Bread of Life (so eat of him...)
8:12; 12:35, 46	I am the Light of the world (so follow him...)
10:7, 9	I am the Gate (so come in...)
10:11, 14	I am the Good Shepherd (so hear his voice...)
11:25	I am the Resurrection and the Life (so believe in him...)
13:13	I am the Teacher and Lord (so be taught by him...)
14:6	I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (so come to the Father...)
15:1, 5	I am the True Vine (so bear fruit through him...)
18:37	I am a King (so accept the kingdom of God...)