



Follow me
Jesus

Come experience His
loving leadership,
As CC Santee women study
the Gospel of John.

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How to Use This Study Guide

Each week as you sit down to study, begin in prayer. Before reading the corresponding chapter and answering the questions, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His truth to you. For greater impact, re-read the chapter in a different Bible translation. The New American Standard Bible (NASB) was used for this study.

At the end of the study questions, there will be a *“Follow Me”* section. This will be an important and personal part of the study as you *follow Jesus* through the gospel of John.

There will be an optional *Digging Deeper* section. The goal here is to help you delve deeper into the practical application of God’s love letter to us, the Bible.

Finally, on the very last page of the study guide, you will find a personal journal page. Use this journal to record the Scripture references and words the Lord speaks to you while you prayerfully travel through this study.

Enjoy!

"Follow Me" - Jesus

Welcome!

This year I believe the Lord is asking us to make a conscious effort to follow the greatest Mentor, the finest Rabbi in the world...Jesus! We all would love to have a mentor; our heart's desire is to be discipled. Luke 6:40 says that everyone who "has been fully trained, will be like his teacher". These are very encouraging words! We live in a fallen world; our dwelling is in the midst of deceit. If we honestly want to make a difference in the world we live in, we will have to be very intentional about whom we are following and where we are going. As I sought the Lord this summer, He showed me in the gospel of John that the book starts and ends with "Follow Me". I felt the Holy Spirit asking me to literally do this, to follow hard after Jesus this year. Jesus came to simple people like you and me with one request, "Follow Me".

So, if you wanted to get to know someone, how would you go about it?

I suggest three things:

- Watch ... their actions*
- Listen ... to their words*
- Learn ... from their re-actions*

There can be no more perfect mentor than Jesus Himself. God is asking us today to "Follow Him", to hear what He says and observe what He did. Then under His directions, to attempt to begin to do and say the same things. We are challenged to "take His yoke and learn from Him, for He is gentle and humble in heart." (Matthew 11:29)

Our goal for studying this book is "Life in Jesus' Name"! "These words have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ...you may have life in His name." (John 20:31)

May our lives be changed forever as we make a deliberate choice to follow Jesus!

Because of Jesus!

Meef

Follow Me through John 1

"Follow Me"

John's gospel is often seen as the most evangelistic of the four gospels. It was important to him that he help the reader understand that the God of the universe took on human flesh and became the sacrificial Lamb for mankind.

The day after the priests and Levites questioned him, John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

Read John Chapter 1

1. Fill in the blanks for verses 1-4 and 14:

In the beginning was the _____, and the Word was with _____, and the _____ was _____. He was in the beginning with _____. All things came into being through _____, and apart from _____ nothing came into being that has come into being. In _____ was _____, and the _____ was the _____ of _____.

¹⁴And the _____ became _____, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His _____, _____ as of the _____ _____ from the Father, full of _____ and _____.

2. According to verses 6-9, there was a man sent from God whose name was John. Why was John sent?
3. It was important to John to make it clear that he was not the Christ. Look up the following verses and write how John describes Jesus in each verse.

John 1:9

John 1:15

John 1:30

John 1:34

John 1:41

4. Read verses 12 and 13. In your own words, describe how we become “children of God”.

5. “The Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17) Look up grace and truth; write a definition for each below.

Grace:

Truth:

6. The apostle John wrote this evangelistic gospel to his fellow Jews. Read Deuteronomy 18:15 and write out the verse to get a better understanding of why they thought that John the Baptist was a prophet.

7. John 1:29 says, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” The Jews would have been familiar with Isaiah 53:3-7. How do these verses describe the Lamb?

8. One day, just as Jesus' public ministry started, two disciples began *following* after Him. What did Jesus turn and ask those disciples in verse 38?

Jesus is asking us this same question today. What are you seeking from Jesus?

Believing is a spectator sport; following makes you a player.
Jan David Hettinga

Follow Me: In John 1:43 Jesus turns to Philip and said, "*Follow Me*". We are the disciples of the 21st century. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is still saying to us, "*Follow Me*". Practically speaking, what do these two words mean to you today?

Digging Deeper...

To come to a greater understanding of Jesus being God and co-creator of the universe, look up the following verses and fill in the blanks:

God and Jesus are both called _____ in Psalm 23:1 and John 10:14

God and Jesus are both called _____ in Genesis 18:25 and 2 Timothy 4:1,8

God and Jesus are both called _____ in Isaiah 10:20 and Acts 2:27

God and Jesus are both called _____ in Deuteronomy 10:17 and Revelation 7:14

DATE:

GOSPEL OF JOHN STUDY NOTES

Lined writing area with horizontal lines for notes.

Follow Me through John 2

Madman or Messiah

This chapter opens with the miracle at the wedding in Cana, where Jesus turns water into wine. Wine usually typifies joy in the Scriptures. This is the first of eight miracles John chose to write about that unmistakably confirm the deity of Jesus. John's record of Jesus cleansing the temple points to His authority as Messiah and His power in the promise of the resurrection.

Read John Chapter 2

1. A wedding was a major social event in first century Palestine, and the celebration could last as long as a week. The wedding marked the culmination of the betrothal period, which could last for several months. Why do you think Jesus chose to perform His first miracle at a wedding?

2. As you read through verses 3, 4, and 5, what is the impression you get of Mary?

3. In verse 4, Jesus introduces one of His repeating themes, "My hour". To get a better understanding of this, look up the following verses: John 7:30, 8:20, 12:23, 13:1, and 17:1. Why is this theme important? What is God trying to tell us?

4. According to verses 7-9, who did Jesus reveal the miracle to?

5. The temple in Jerusalem was the central place for Jewish worship, the dwelling place of the presence of God. Read verses 13-17. What did Jesus find in the temple?

What did He accuse them of?

6. Now look up Isaiah 56:7. What should have been found in the house of God?

7. What differences do you see in Jesus from the wedding to the temple?

*Either this man was and is the Son of God:
or else a madman or something worse. But don't let us
come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a
great human teacher. He hasn't left that open to us.
He didn't intend to. C. S. Lewis*

8. As you read John 2:19-21, what temple was Jesus saying would be destroyed?

9. In these verses, it seems that the people are starting to believe in Jesus. According to verses 24-25, why doesn't He trust them?

Follow Me: What is the most significant thing you learned about Jesus in this chapter?

How will it influence the way you live?

Digging Deeper...

Compare Jesus' first miracle with Moses' first miracle in Exodus 7 and with His last recorded miracle in John chapter 11.

Follow Me through John 3

Jesus or Judgment

This story of Nicodemus actually begins in John 2:23. Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. Many believed in His name because of the miracles He had performed, but Jesus knew their hearts and did not entrust Himself to them. He was looking for genuine conversion rather than enthusiasm for the spectacular. He wanted whole-hearted commitment, not just intellectual assent.

Read John 2:23 through John Chapter 3

1. Read John 3:2. What was Nicodemus' observation of who Jesus is?

2. Nicodemus was a pious and knowledgeable teacher and a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court. What did Jesus say to him in John 3:3?

How did Nicodemus respond in verse 4?

3. Nicodemus thought that mere physical lineage and the keeping of religious externals would qualify him for entrance into the kingdom. What was he lacking?

The moment you are born again you receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit will manifest Himself through your life, not for your good alone, but for the benefit of those around you.
Henry Blackaby

4. In John 3:8, Jesus compares the Holy Spirit to the wind. In your own words, explain this metaphor.

5. If one of Israel's most respected Rabbis did not understand the teaching of Jesus, what does this say about the spiritual condition of the time?

6. In the next few verses, Jesus gives us a discourse on the true meaning of salvation. Notice how many times the word "believe" occurs. According to verses 15-18, what are the benefits of believing in the "Son of Man"?

What is the outcome of those who do not believe?

The central purpose of Christ's life... is to destroy the life of loneliness and to establish here on earth the life of love.
Thomas Wolfe

7. What is your perception of "eternal life"?

When would you say it begins?

8. Verses 17-19 mention the word “judge” four times. At the second coming of Jesus, He will judge those who reject the “light”. According to verses 19 and 20, why do men love darkness?

9. As John the Baptist’s ministry faded away, Jesus’ ministry moved to the forefront. John’s disciples became disturbed when they saw more believers coming to Jesus. According to verse 30, what was John’s response?

Follow Me: Do you remember the day you became “Born Again”? Write a letter to Jesus thanking Him for this glorious day!

Digging Deeper...

Look up the following passages that illustrate that there must be a death of self in order for Christ to reign.

Matthew 10:38

Luke 9:23

Galatians 2:20

Colossians 3:9-10

Follow Me through John 4

Living Water or Lost

The history of the animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans is long, and not one-sided. The Jews didn't speak to Samaritans, nor did a Jewish man ever speak to a woman he did not know...even a Jewish one. When a Jew traveled, he would avoid Samaria altogether, but Jesus "had to pass through Samaria".

Read John Chapter 4

1. When we start out our day, we can rarely imagine what God has planned for us. The more willing we are to allow God to choose our path and direct our steps, the more adventurous it can become. Read verses 1-9. What was the Samaritan woman's response when He spoke to her?

Do you think this was a 'chance' encounter?

2. Sometimes we can limit God's blessings in our lives when we focus only on our physical needs and forget about our spiritual needs. What gift did Jesus offer this woman according to verse 10?

How has God satisfied your thirst?

Everything that happens to you is your teacher. The secret is to learn to sit at the feet of your own life and be taught by it. Everything that happens is either a blessing, which is also a lesson, or a lesson, which is also a blessing.

Polly Berends

3. Jesus usually avoided announcing to the Jews who He was. In verse 19, what conclusion had the woman come to?

4. This woman was not a pillar in the community or someone people looked up to, yet her testimony was so convincing that she got the people of the town to go out and see Jesus. How does her example encourage us to share what Jesus has done for us with others?

5. Verse 27 tells us that the returning disciples were amazed. Do you think that happened often?

Why do you think they didn't ask Him what He was doing?

Write about a time when God amazed you.

6. Read verse 34. What do you think Jesus meant when He said these words?

7. John 4:4 says, "He had to pass through Samaria". Read verses 39-41 and write down the outcome of His trip.

8. Jesus walked on the earth and touched one life at a time with His love. Read verses 46-54. According to verse 53, what was the outcome of Jesus healing one little boy?

*God's promises are like stars;
the darker the night the brighter they shine.*
David Nicholas

9. Jesus is still in the business of healing. He wants entire households to understand God's love, and entire cities to believe in Him because of the word of our testimony. What has Jesus done for you lately?

Are you sharing it with your family or in your community?

Follow Me: The nobleman was respected in the community. The Samaritan woman was more obviously looked down upon by the Jews. Yet Jesus patiently ministered to each of them; He saw them through eyes of Love. Look up I Samuel 16:7 and write out what you learn from this verse.

Digging Deeper...

What do the following verses tell you about Samaria?

Acts 1:8

Acts 8:1

Acts 8:14-17

Acts 9:31

Follow Me through John 5

Religion or Relationship

The first two miracles that John records were fairly private and quiet. The miracle Jesus does in chapter 5 is very public and was performed on the Sabbath. Here we see Jesus reaching out to His own people, the Jews, and confronting the religious leaders. The nation of Israel had religion, but they had no relationship with God. This is the beginning of the official persecution and rejection of the Messiah.

Read John Chapter 5

1. "Bethesda" can mean "house of mercy" or "house of grace". It was near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem. What is the significance of the name of the pool and the nearby gate? (See John 1:29)

*Whatever happens to me has come across my Father's desk.
His sovereignty rules over all.
Meef Lawton*

2. At the beginning of the chapter, Jesus heals a man from an infirmity he had for 38 years. Does this man's healing depend on his faith?

How can you tell, and why is this important?

3. Take a moment and think about how God has healed you. In what ways has He made you whole and well?

4. Read John 5:14-15. After Jesus came to him the second time in the temple, whom did the man go to and why? (also see verses 12,13)

5. Look up the following verses: John 5:16, 5:18, 5:42, and 5:43. What reasons are given for the religious leaders' opposition to Jesus?

6. Jesus was very clear in His description of Himself being equal with God. Read through John 5:21-24 and list the ways that Jesus claims to be God.

*My great concern is not whether God is on our side;
my great concern is to be on God's side.
Abraham Lincoln*

7. Why do you think it is important that we understand that God and Jesus are one?

8. According to John 5:33-39, who are the witnesses that support Jesus' claim to deity?

9. Jesus wants relationship not religion. According to verses 39-40, what were the religious leaders doing wrong?

Follow Me: We must always check our motives. In John 14:15, Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (*follow Me*). Are there any areas in your life where you are aiming to please others more than Jesus?

Digging Deeper...

In Deuteronomy 2:14, we see that the Jews wandered in the wilderness for the same amount of time that the man in John 5 was ill, 38 years. Read Numbers 13 and 14. How was the Israelites' reaction similar to the Jewish man's at the pool?

What is the difference between God's response to the Israelites and to the man at the pool?

Are there any excuses that you are giving God?

Follow Me through John 6

Fed or Frustrated

The story of the feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. It reveals the creative power of Christ more than any other miracle and sets the stage for Jesus' discourse on the "Bread of Life".

Read John Chapter 6:1-15

1. According to verse 2, why were the crowds *following* Jesus?

2. Jesus was always teaching His disciples. If Jesus knew what He was going to do (verse 6), why do you think He asked Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

3. What do we learn from Jesus' example in verse 11?

Whenever you get a blessing from God, give it back to Him as a love gift. Take time to meditate before God and offer the blessing back to Him in a deliberate act of worship.

Oswald Chambers

Read John Chapter 6:16-21 This section tells the miracle of Jesus walking on the water.

4. The Lord balances our lives with “Still Waters” and “Storms”. Even if we are in the center of His will, what might be some reasons for the storms?
5. What did Jesus say to the disciples when they were afraid? (verse 20)

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.”
Hebrews 13:8

Read John Chapter 6:22-40

This section brings us to Jesus’ famous discourse on the “Bread of Life”. This is the first of seven “I AM” statements recorded in John’s gospel.

6. When Jesus used the name “I AM,” He was definitely claiming to be God. To get a better understanding of this, look up Exodus 3:14 and write the words that God said to Moses.
7. The crowds *followed* Jesus motivated by superficial desires for food, even more so than their curiosity for miracles. What did Jesus say to them about this in verse 27?
8. According to verses 39-40, what is the “will of the Father”?

*The heart of the giver
makes the gift dear and precious.
Martin Luther*

Read John Chapter 6:41-71

In these verses, the Jews are grumbling and stumbling because Jesus told them that in order to have eternal life they would have to eat His flesh and drink His blood. They misunderstood this spiritual truth by taking it literally. "All Jesus said was, 'Just as you take food and drink within your body and it becomes a part of you, so you must receive Me within your innermost being so that I can give you life.'" (Warren Wiersbe)

9. In verse 38, Jesus told His *followers* that He had come down from heaven. What did He tell them in verse 62 that would stumble them even more?

10. In verse 63, Jesus explained that His language was figurative and spiritual, not literal. The flesh amounts to nothing; His words are spirit and life. What did Peter say in verses 68-69 that gives us reason to believe he got the message?

Follow Me: The words of Jesus are spirit and life. They were written down for us to consume, as food for our souls. What is your spiritual "diet plan"?

Does it satisfy your appetite?

Digging Deeper...

Look up the following verses and write the "I AM" statements made by Jesus.

John 6:35

John 8:12

John 10:7

John 10:11

John 11:25

John 14:6

John 15:1,5

Follow Me through John 7

Christ or Confusion

Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus was always conscious of doing the Father's will according to His divine timetable. The Jews (the chief priests and Pharisees) were trying to kill Jesus and He knew it; but it wasn't fear that kept Jesus away from Judea, it was timing. Jesus just continued to minister elsewhere. Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken.

Read John Chapter 7

1. Verse 5 states that Jesus had brothers who didn't believe in Him. Do you have unsaved family members?

Do they misunderstand what you do to serve the Lord?

In light of Acts 1:14, how are you encouraged by what Jesus went through?

2. Read John 7:9-10. Jesus did not go up to the feast with His family publicly but went up later in secret. Read Psalm 139:3 and Isaiah 55:8-9. Why do you think it may be a good idea to wait for God's timing and *follow* His lead?

Faith waits... trust listens... hope endures
Unknown

3. In John 7:14-16, the Jews were amazed at the way Jesus taught, although uneducated. This doesn't mean He had not read the Scriptures. Who did Jesus say was His teacher?

4. The Jews wanted to kill Jesus because He had healed a man on the Sabbath and because He was calling God His father. They were so focused on keeping the Law that they failed to see Jesus' heart behind His actions. Do we judge the service of others by what we see without understanding their motives?

What did Jesus say about this in verse 24?

5. Now read verses 25-30. The people thought they knew Him, but they didn't understand or know Who had sent Him. In your own words, try to explain the difference between knowing who Jesus is...and *knowing* Jesus.

*Question the whispers of discontent,
And nourish your soul with His presence.
Unknown*

6. Look up Isaiah 55:1 and write out the verse.

Not only does God offer water, the basic necessity for life, but He also offers all that brings true satisfaction or abundance to life. What did Jesus say about this in John 7:37-38?

7. From verse 39, what was John's explanation of what Jesus had said? (See also Acts 1:4-8)

8. In verse 32, we learn that the Pharisees sent officers to seize Jesus. According to verse 46, why did they come back empty handed?

Follow Me: There will be times when *following* hard after Jesus will result in people misunderstanding you. If you have a life verse that helps you bear up under this type of suffering, write it out here.

Digging Deeper...

Read Micah 5:2, Matthew 4:13-16, and Luke 2:4-11. What do the Scriptures say about where the Messiah was to come from?

Follow Me through John 8

Disciple or Demon

In this chapter, we see a series of contrasts and conflicts that reveal the graciousness of the Messiah and the wickedness of the people. These events take place as the Feast of Tabernacles is ending. It is interesting to note that Jesus never spent a night in Jerusalem.

Read John Chapter 8

1. The Law of Moses had strict rules about sexuality. The punishment for adultery was death by stoning for both the man and the woman. Do you think Jesus is condoning the woman's sin by not condemning her? Explain why or why not.

2. Even though these men were condemning her, each man knew somewhere deep in his own heart, that he too, deserved the sentence of death. In verse 7, what statement did Jesus make that helped them come to this understanding?

*Forgiveness is the fragrance that the flower
leaves on the heel of the one who crushed it.*

Mark Twain

3. How does this story encourage you to *follow* Jesus in your attitude toward your own sin and the sin of others?

4. In verse 12, John records the second wonderful “I AM” statement made by Jesus, “I am the Light of the world”. This startling claim coincides with the Feast of Tabernacles during which huge candelabra were lit in the temple to remind the people of the pillar of fire that guided Israel. How has *following* Jesus brought light into your life?

5. What does Jesus say about sin in the following verses?

John 8:24

John 8:34

6. In verse 31, Jesus tells us how to be a disciple. What did He say?

7. According to verse 44, what is the nature of the enemy who tempts us to sin?

Elegance is the art of restraint.
Unknown

8. Why is our conduct the truest test of whether we are *following* Jesus or not? (See John 14:15)

9. According to John 8:56-59, why did the religious leaders want to kill Jesus?

Follow Me: Jesus, the Light of the world, speaks the light of truth to the darkened hearts of sinful people. Will we hear and *follow* Him? In what areas of your life do you sense the Lord speaking uncomfortable words to you?

What will you do?

Digging Deeper...

How do Jesus' claims to offer "living water" and of being "the light of the world" tie into Old Testament prophecies and allusions? Explain what He meant by these terms.

Verses to consider:

- Exodus 13:21-22; 14:19-20
- Psalm 119:105
- Proverbs 6:23
- Isaiah 42:6-7; 49:6
- Ezekiel 1:26-28
- Malachi 4:2

Follow Me through John 9

Blind or Blessed

Jesus performed miracles in order to meet human needs. But He also used those miracles as a “launching pad” for a message conveying spiritual truth. Finally, His miracles were His “credentials” to prove that He was indeed the Messiah. Jesus used this miracle of healing a blind man as the basis for a short sermon on spiritual blindness. (Verses 39-41)

Read John Chapter 9

1. In verse 2, what was the focus of the disciples’ question to Jesus?
2. Jesus’ answer in verse 3 changes their focus to what?

*Keep your face to the sunshine,
and you cannot see the shadows.*
Helen Keller

3. In verse 5 Jesus said, “I am the Light of the world.” Turn to Job 29:3. What had Job done “by His light”?
4. Jesus was the greatest Teacher ever. His heart was always the heart of a Father. He took temporal things to teach eternal lessons. Read John 9:6-7. What three things did Jesus use in this healing?

5. His neighbors, the Pharisees, and other Jews kept asking the once-blind man, “How did He open your eyes?” (Verses 10, 15, 16, 19, 26) They were trying to understand the miracle instead of believing in the One who performed the miracle. The blind man went from not knowing *Who* Jesus was to a solid faith in his Healer when coming face to face with Him. Complete these verses and *follow* his progression:

- Verse 11: “The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash’, so I went away and washed, and I _____.”
- Verse 15: “He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and _____.”
- Verse 17: “What do you say about Him...?” And he said, “_____.”
- Verse 25: “...one thing I do know, _____.”
- Verse 30: “Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet _____.”
- Verse 33: “If this man were not from God, _____.”
- Verse 36: “Who is He, Lord, that I may _____.”
- Verse 38: “And he said, ‘_____.’ And he _____.”

*The man with a testimony is never
at the mercy of a man with an argument.
Gary Lawton*

Follow Me: The once-blind man gave a very simple testimony when asked what Jesus had done for him. In one paragraph, give your testimony of how you were once blind but now see.

Digging Deeper...

The Pharisees had good physical vision but were blind spiritually. They “saw” the change in the blind beggar and could not deny that he had been healed. They “saw” the mighty works that Jesus performed. What did the blind beggar see and experience that the Pharisees did not?

DATE:

GOSPEL OF JOHN STUDY NOTES

Follow Me through John 10

Shepherd or Stranger

In chapter 9, Jesus healed a blind man. After questioning him, the Pharisees (the shepherds of Israel) "put him out" of the synagogue, out of Judaism. Now he would live as a Gentile. Here Jesus speaks again to these Pharisees.

Read John Chapter 10

1. At night it was common for a shepherd to take his sheep to an enclosure for safety. Often, several shepherds would use the same enclosure and their herds would be all mixed together. Read verses 3-4. How do the sheep recognize their own shepherd?

How do they respond when they hear his voice?

Read Jeremiah 29:11. How do you trust Jesus to lead you?

2. In John 10:5, how do the sheep react to the voice of a stranger?

Why is this a good thing?

3. Jesus doesn't *build* us a refuge; He *is* our refuge. Read verses 7-9. Have you entered into this "door"?

If so, how has that changed your life?

4. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the true Shepherd of Israel. The religious leaders were supposed to be shepherding the people but were just "hirelings" (hired servants). Read verses 11-13. List the differences between the "Good Shepherd" and the hireling.

Good Shepherd	hireling

5. In verses 14-15, Jesus says that He knows His sheep. He knows our every thought, every struggle, every failure, and every triumph. Yet Jesus says His sheep also know Him. Write some things you do, or could do, to get to know your Shepherd better.

*In the opinion that there is a God, there are difficulties,
but in the contrary opinion there are absurdities.*
Voltaire

6. Jesus' death was a voluntary offering for our sin, but it was also obedience to the Father. He was not a helpless victim. No one 'took' His life; He gave it willingly. Read verse 18; what does Jesus say about this?
7. In verse 24, the Jews said to Jesus, "If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." What was His response according to verses 25 and 30?

A God who would let us prove His existence would be an idol.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

8. Read verses 27-30. We are IN HIS HAND! Who can snatch you from the hand of God?

Write down some ways this is encouraging to you.

How does this help you to *follow* Him?

9. Read verses 31-40. When Jesus gave the questioning Jews a *plain* answer, they became enraged again, just as in chapters 5 and 8. Here, during a time when the people were celebrating the cleansing and rededication of the temple, they were trying to stone the One for Whom it was built. Were these Jews successful in their attempts to silence Jesus? (Verse 39)

How does knowing Jesus also faced opposition for telling the truth help you?

Follow Me: Jesus faced much misunderstanding and opposition, yet He didn't stop ministering to those who came to Him. Read verses 41-42.

- Who came?
- What did they do?
- How would this have been encouraging to Jesus after all He went through in Jerusalem?

- How does this help you to persevere in your own faith and in your witness to others?

Digging Deeper...

Read Psalm 23. David wrote this Psalm; his Shepherd is yours also. List the ways your Shepherd cares for and provides for you.

What does this mean to you?

Follow Me through John 11

Life or Death

The miracle in this chapter is the seventh and last recorded by John; it is the climax of our Lord's ministry. It also contains the fifth of Jesus' "I AM" statements: "I am the resurrection and the life". Jesus proves His claim by raising Lazarus from the dead. The emphasis here is on faith; some form of the word "believe" occurs over eight times.

Read John Chapter 11

1. The family of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary enjoyed a close, intimate friendship with Jesus. What do you think is the secret to that kind of relationship with Jesus?
2. Why do you think Jesus waited to go see Lazarus? (John 2:4, 7:30, 11:4, 11:9-10, 14-15)
3. What elements of doubt and faith do you see in Martha's conversation with Jesus? (John 11:21, 22, 27, 39)
4. Mary is found three times in this gospel record. In the following verses, note where she is and what she is doing?

Luke 10:39

John 11:32

John 12:3

*If Jesus Christ can do nothing about death,
then whatever else He can do amounts to nothing.*
Warren Wiersbe

5. What kind of life and death is Jesus referring to in John 11:25-26?

6. How does Jesus' statement in these verses affect your view of life and death?

7. Read verses 45-57. How do you explain the fact that the people who saw the same miracle responded in two totally different ways?

*You never test the resources of God
until you attempt the impossible.
F. B. Meyer*

8. What does this reveal about the value of miracles alone for bringing people to faith in Jesus Christ?

Follow Me: "Jesus wept." (John 11:35) How do you feel when you read those words?

As you *follow* Jesus, is your heart broken for a lost and dying world? How will you respond?

Digging Deeper...

Read John 3:16-21 and compare the promises and claims of Jesus with those in John 11.

Follow Me through John 12

Light and Darkness

This chapter focuses on reactions of love and hate, belief and rejection toward Christ, leading to the Cross. The Lord Jesus here relates to four different groups of people – His friends, those who came to the Passover celebration, the visiting Gentiles, and the unbelieving Jews.

Read John Chapter 12

1. What act of service do you see Mary performing in verse 3?
2. There are times when people will do or say good things only to benefit themselves. From verse 6, what was the real reason Judas did not condone what Mary did?
3. Verses 12-19 take us from a quiet dinner in Bethany to a noisy public parade in Jerusalem only two miles away. His “Triumphal Entry” is the only public demonstration that our Lord allowed while He was ministering on earth. According to verses 14-16, why did Jesus ride the donkey into Jerusalem?

How did the people react? (Verse 13)

What did the Pharisees conclude? (Verse 19)

4. In verse 24, Jesus explains how a sown kernel must die to bring forth a rich harvest. In the following verse, He relates this to our lives. Explain verse 25 in your own words.

*No pain, no palm, no thorns, no throne,
no gall, no glory, no cross, no crown.
William Penn*

5. In verse 26, Jesus gives a prerequisite to serving Him. What is that prerequisite?
6. It is interesting that even Jesus' soul became troubled. What can we learn about facing difficulty from what Jesus said in verses 27-28?

*When a person starts to resist the Light, something
begins to change within him; and he comes to the
place where he cannot believe. Warren Wiersbe*

7. What are we admonished to do in verses 35-36?
8. According to verses 46-47, why did Jesus come into the world?

Follow Me: What Mary did was an act of pure love on her part. It was spontaneous, sacrificial, lavish, and personal. Can you describe a time you did something like this for someone close to you?

Digging Deeper...

Verses 27-33 tell us that Jesus knew it was time for Him to go to the cross. His words, however, indicate that He was looking *beyond* His crucifixion to the glory that would follow. Look up Isaiah 52:13. Explain how the Son of man was glorified by being crucified.

Follow Me through John 13

Bathed and Betrayed

The time for Jesus to die has finally come, and He knew it. Verse 1 tells us, "He loved them to the end". This can also be translated "to the limit"; He could not love them more. The time is short, but there is still so much more He desires to teach them... so little time left to encourage them.

Read John Chapter 13

1. Jesus knew Judas would betray Him. This was the betrayal of a friend, one who had been loved and chosen by Jesus. We have all had friends who turned their back on us. Jesus understands our heartbreak, the sense of loss and betrayal. How does knowing this encourage you?

Does the fear of being hurt keep you from making new friends or from being a friend?

2. There is an old proverb which says that a picture is worth a thousand words. Jesus came from heaven, humbled Himself, and became a man. He suffered and died to wash us free from our sins with His own blood and returned to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. How are verses 4-13 a picture of this?
3. What was Peter's response to Jesus when He wanted to wash his feet? (verses 8-9)
4. Once we have been bathed in the blood of Jesus, we need only a regular rinsing of confession and repentance to remove the dust of this world. In verse 15, Jesus said He was setting an example for us. What was His example?

*Ministry is what we leave in our wake as we follow Jesus.
Gerald Hartis*

5. Read verses 21-22. What did Jesus tell His disciples?

What was their reaction?

6. Jesus intimately knew each of the twelve He had chosen. He knew it would be Judas who would betray Him. Yet, He treated him the same as the others. Even in the end (verses 27 and 30), Jesus treated Judas with love and abounding grace in not exposing his betrayal to the others. What example does this give us about how we are to treat others?

What about how we treat those who betray us?

7. In verse 33, Jesus calls the disciples “little children”, which is a term denoting intimacy and fondness. What else did He tell them?

How do you think that made them feel?

*I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God
Who is sending a love letter to the world.
Mother Theresa*

8. Read verses 34-35. Jesus gave the disciples, and consequently all believers, a new commandment. What does He tell us to do?

9. What did Peter proclaim in verse 37?

What warning did Jesus give to Peter in verse 38?

Do you think this is the response Peter was expecting?

Follow Me: In talking about serving others in verse 17, Jesus said you are "blessed" if you know these things and do them. Blessed is also translated as happy. It brings joy and happiness into our lives when we serve others. Have you found this to be true in your life? Explain.

Digging Deeper...

Jesus told His disciples to "love one another, even as I have loved you...". In loving us, Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice, giving His own life for our redemption. John's letter (1 John) continues the theme of loving one another. Read the following verses and write some ways we are to love each other.

1 John 2:9-10

1 John 3:16-18

1 John 4:7-12

1 John 4:19-21

1 John 5:1-3

***Follow Me* through John 14**

Abiding and Obeying

This chapter opens and closes with, “Let not your heart be troubled”. (verses 1 and 27) From all that Jesus had been telling the disciples, they had much to be troubled about. Our own hearts are easily troubled. The Hebrew word for “peace” is “shalom”. It means more than just an absence of war or distress; it means wholeness, health and security, physically, mentally, and spiritually. Peace is the harmony that comes from a right relationship with God.

Read John Chapter 14

1. What are some things that trouble you?
2. Where do you find peace?
3. What does Jesus mean in verse 6 when He says He is...
 - ...the way?
 - ...the truth?
 - ...the life?
4. In view of this, how would you answer someone who thinks there are many ways to come to God?

*No religion can bring us to God; only Jesus can do that.
He is the standard for truth. He is the source of life.
J. Vernon McGee*

5. In verses 13-14, Jesus says He will grant our prayer requests if we ask in His name. According to 1 John 5:14-15, how is this possible?

6. What does John 14:16-17 teach us about the Holy Spirit?

The true believer in the Holy Spirit is one who knows how to hoist the sail of his own spirit to catch the winds of God.

Ralph W. Sockman

7. Knowing the Word is one thing; doing what it says is another. Jesus emphasizes the relationship between loving Him and obeying Him in verses 15, 21, and 23. Why does Jesus underscore this relationship? (verse 31)

8. Jesus loved His disciples very much. He knew what they were facing and in verse 27 we see the heart of our Savior. As we *follow* Him, what does this verse say will become a part of our lives in a fallen world?

Follow Me: Jesus is calling us to *follow* Him through loving obedience. In what areas of your life can you love Jesus better?

Digging Deeper...

Jesus offers the promise of heaven to those who *follow* Him. Verse 3 of this chapter is the first place in the Bible that says God will take us off the planet to a place Jesus Himself has prepared for us. Note how heaven is described in the following verses:

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Revelation 7:16-17

Revelation 21:3-4

Revelation 22:1-5

Follow Me through John 15

Fruit and Friends

Christ is the Vine, and the Father is the Gardener who cares for the branches to make them fruitful. The branches are all those who claim to be *followers* of Christ. The fruitful branches are true believers who by their living union with Christ produce much fruit. But those who become unproductive – those who turn back from *following* Christ after making a superficial commitment – will be separated from the vine.

Read John Chapter 15

1. Jesus speaks of believers as “branches” and wants us to “bear fruit”. According to verse 5, how does one bear fruit?

A branch has no source of life within itself but receives life from the vine. What happens if we do not abide?

2. Describe what it means to abide in Christ.

*A fruitful life is the inevitable result of dwelling in Him
and thus allowing His life to flow through you.*

Kay Arthur

3. Jesus was teaching the disciples to stay close to Him and to keep His words. According to verse 11, what is the natural outcome of doing this?

4. Jesus commanded us in verse 12 to “love one another, just as I have loved you”. How did Jesus show His love for us?

5. What does Jesus mean when He calls us “friends”?

There is nothing that brings you closer to your Christian friends than sharing how God is a comfort in a bereavement you didn't expect, a divorce you didn't want, or a sickness you weren't anticipating. Life's lessons learned at the foot of the cross make for deep friendships!

Jill Briscoe

6. Read verses 16 and 19. What do you learn about God choosing you?

7. If we decide to *follow* Jesus, we will be going in direct opposition to the world and its ways. According to verses 19 and 20, how will the world treat the *followers* of Jesus?

8. In verse 26, what hope does Jesus offer us after telling us we will suffer persecution if we *follow* Him?

Follow Me: How can we show our love to others as Jesus did?

Digging Deeper...

“...every branch that that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.” John 15:2
How does God “prune” us that we might “bear more fruit”?

Follow Me through John 16

Persecution and Prayer

In John 13:31-15:27, but especially 15:18-27, Jesus had been warning His disciples about what was coming in the future... so that they would "be kept from stumbling".

Read John Chapter 16

1. From John 16:2, what are some things the disciples could expect?
2. Jesus was currently the object of persecution. In the future, the disciples would be persecuted also. It is important for us to remember that whatever happens in our lives will NEVER catch God by surprise. How does this encourage you?

How would it help the disciples, when persecution came, to remember that Jesus had warned them it was coming?

Sometimes God purifies our faith, by threatening to destroy it.

Richard Foster

3. Read verses 7-15. Rather than the physical presence of Jesus, the Holy Spirit would be with them; theirs would be a spiritual relationship. What would the Holy Spirit's work be:

...in the world (verse 8)

...for the disciples and future believers (verse 13 and John 4:26)

...for Jesus (verse 14 and John 15:26)

4. The explorers Lewis and Clark had guides to help them find their way to the Northwest Territory. In what ways does the Holy Spirit guide you?

Why is He so well qualified for this job?

5. In John 14:1, Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled...". It has been a couple of weeks since we studied this, but only a matter of minutes since the disciples heard Him say it. From John 16:16-18, how do they seem to be doing at not being "troubled"?
6. When pregnancy results in delivery, the cause of the pain then becomes the cause of the joy. Using verses 22 and 24, how would the disciples' sorrow be transformed into joy?

Who could take this joy away from them?

When nothing whereon to lean remains, when strongholds crumble to dust, when nothing is sure but that God still reigns, that is just the time to trust.

Joseph Parker

7. Read John 16:23-24 and Hebrews 4:16. When we need "help in time of need", where do we go?

What do we receive?

8. When we give our lives to Jesus, repent from our sinful nature, and accept His sacrifice and forgiveness, we become His and His Father becomes ours. Why does the Father love us? (John 16:27)

9. To gain a deeper understanding, write verse 33 in your own words.

Follow Me: Jesus closed His teachings to the disciples by giving them a promise that because He has “overcome the world”, in Him they would find peace, even though they would have tribulation in the world. What are some ways we can pass this encouragement on to others?

Digging Deeper...

Before the apostle Paul was known as Paul, he was known as Saul of Tarsus. He was zealous for God and a persecutor of the early church. Jesus told His disciples "an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God". (John 16:2) Saul was a prime example of this!

Read the following verses about Saul/Paul: Acts 7:54-8:3; 9:1-22; 22:3-8; 22:19-20

In spite of this beginning, God used Paul to bring the gospel to the Gentiles and to write most of the letters in the New Testament. How do Paul's words and Paul's life encourage you to keep praying for your unsaved family and friends?

Follow Me through John 17

Prayer and Promises

This is the greatest prayer recorded in the Bible, therefore it is the greatest prayer ever prayed. Here Jesus escorts us into the “Holy of Holies” of the Gospels and we must approach with humility and worship. Jesus prays first for Himself and tells His Father that He has done His will on earth. Then He prays for His beloved disciples, that they may be safely kept. He finishes by praying for you and me, that we may be one in God. Take a moment and let that sink in. The God of the entire universe prayed for *you!*

Read John Chapter 17

1. Verse 3 tells us that eternal life comes from knowing God. According to John 1:18, how do we find out who God is?

2. How would you describe Jesus’ relationship with the Father?

3. In John 17:4, Jesus said that He had accomplished the work His Father had given Him. What is the work God has given you to accomplish?

*Near, so very near to God, nearer I cannot be;
For in the person of His Son, I am as near as He.
So dear, so very dear to God, more dear I cannot be;
The love wherewith He loves the Son
Such is His love to me!
Catesby Paget*

4. What does Jesus say about intimately knowing the Father and the Son? (verses 3, 25, 26)

5. Jesus prays three things for His disciples. Read the following verses and write out what Jesus prayed for them.

Verse 11: Keep them in _____ .

Verse 15: Keep them from _____ .

Verse 17: Sanctify them in the _____; Thy word is _____.

6. According to this chapter, what has the Father given the Son?

*Nobody ever outgrows the Scripture;
the Book simply widens and deepens with our years.
Charles Haddon Spurgeon*

7. Nehemiah 8:10 says, “the joy of the LORD” is our strength. According to John 17:13, why did Jesus speak these things?

8. A form of the word “glory” is used eight times in this prayer. How will you “glorify” God in your life this week?

Follow Me: As we *follow* Jesus and grow in knowledge of Him, our love for Him grows too. But it is not always easy to love our brothers and sisters who also belong to Him. Pray and ask Jesus to help you love others as He has loved you.

Digging Deeper...

Note how the truth of God has been given to us in the following verses:

John 17:17

John 14:6

1 John 5:6

Follow Me through John 18

Deception, Desertion, and Denial

The events of Jesus' arrest and trial receive emphasis in this chapter. Since John's purpose was to present Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God, he produced evidence to substantiate this purpose throughout his account of Jesus' passion. Through all of the debasing, shameful acts that were directed toward Jesus, John skillfully shows that these events, rather than detracting from His person and mission, actually present evidence confirming who He was and the reason He came.

Read John Chapter 18

1. In verse 10, Peter draws his sword and cuts off the ear of the High Priest's servant. Had this turned into a sword fight, God's plan of redemption may have been thwarted. Can you remember a time you were tempted to take matters into your own hands instead of trusting in God?

2. In verse 11, Jesus exhibited two important qualities we can all emulate – submission and obedience. Is there an area of your life where God is asking you to put down your sword and trust Him?

*True strength lies in submission, which permits one
to dedicate his life, through devotion,
to something beyond himself.*

Henry Miller

3. Turn to Matthew 26:40-41 and read Jesus' words to Peter while in the Garden. What two commands does Jesus give to resist entering into temptation?

Explain what Jesus was saying to do.

4. The Bible says, "The nearness of God is my good". (Psalm 73:28) Read John 18:12-27. Follow Peter's progression as he moves away from Jesus to the point where he denies Him. What was Peter doing and saying in the following verses? Where was his heart?

Verse 15:

Verse 17:

Verse 18:

Verse 25:

Verse 27:

5. Pilate had the greatest of opportunities, and he missed it. He did not recognize Truth. Although his conscience troubled him, he allowed himself to be persuaded to do something he knew was wrong. What are you doing to make sure you can discern Truth from the lies of the enemy?

Men stumble over the truth from time to time, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened.

Winston Churchill

6. There are events between John 18:38 and 39 that John does not record. Please read of these events in Luke 23:6-12. Herod wanted to see Jesus perform some sign or miracle. Do you think this would have caused him to believe in Jesus? Why or why not?

7. According to John 18:37, why did Jesus come into the world?

Follow Me: Lest we think we could never deny our Lord as Peter did, take some time to examine your heart. Pray the Holy Spirit will reveal those times you “denied Him” and, as Peter did, sorrowfully repent and go forward to serve our Lord. Pray Psalm 32 back to God.

Digging Deeper...

What is the irony in John 18:28?

How would you classify these religious leaders?

Follow Me through John 19

Cross and Crucifixion

The crucifixion of Jesus is seen by some as a tragic end to His ministry here on earth... that He had failed. Yet, as horrible as His death was, it was certainly not some needless tragedy, but a sacrifice, a victory over sin and death... the work of God. Ultimately, God was in control, as John attested to when he wrote over and over again, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled".

Read John Chapter 19

1. In verse 4, what did Pilate declare to the Jews about Jesus?

In verse 6, what was their answer?

2. Pilate really did not want to have anything to do with the chief priests' desire to kill Jesus, yet he seemed to be caught between a rock and a hard place. It was his job to maintain the peace (*Pax Romana*) in Jerusalem. In verse 8, we read that Pilate was afraid... of Jesus?

Read verses 10-11. What did Pilate say to Jesus?

What did Jesus declare to Pilate?

3. Read verses 14-15. Pilate declared to the Jews, "Behold your King! Shall I crucify your King?" What was their reply?
4. Pilate wrote an inscription to be posted above Jesus in Hebrew, the language of Israel; in Latin, the language of Rome and the law; and in Greek, the language of business and the arts. He made sure that EVERYONE could read it. Read verses 19-22. What was the inscription that Pilate wrote?

How did the chief priests of the Jews react when they saw it?

God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died it was God saying to the world, "I love you."

Billy Graham

5. It is accepted as fact that "the disciple whom He [Jesus] loved" was John, the author of this gospel. In the midst of all that was going on, what did Jesus take the time to do? (verses 26-27)

6. Read verses 28-30. The plan of redemption, alluded to in the Scriptures from the time of the first sin, is now complete. Jesus has fulfilled every command from His Father, and paid for every one of our sins. What does verse 30 tell us that Jesus said?

When you suffer and lose, that does not mean you are being disobedient. In fact, it might mean you're right in the center of His will. The path of obedience is often marked by times of suffering and loss. *Chuck Swindoll*

7. What did John declare in verse 35?

In verse 36, what is another reason John gives as to why we can trust what is written here?

8. John 12:42 tells us that many among the Jewish rulers believed in Jesus. Joseph and Nicodemus were both members of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council, and knew first hand the hatred of the chief priests toward Jesus and their plots against Him. They were secret disciples, but their belief in Jesus would not be a secret any longer. Read John 19:38-42. What actions did these two men take after Jesus died?

What does this tell you about how they felt toward Jesus?

What do you think some of the consequences could have been for their actions?

Follow Me: In verse 28 Jesus said, "I am thirsty". There is more than one kind of 'thirst'. Read Psalm 42:1-2. How did the psalmist describe the thirst he had?

What was he thirsting for?

Do you think Jesus had this same kind of thirst?

Write a prayer asking God for this thirst in your life.

Digging Deeper...

Over twenty Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled during the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Here are a few of those incidents recorded in John 19 and the reference to the prophecy in the Old Testament.

- John 19:23-24 and Psalm 22:18
- John 19:28-29 and Psalm 69:21
- John 19:33 and Psalm 34:20
- John 19:34 and Zechariah 12:10
- John 19:41 and Isaiah 53:9

How does seeing that God's plan was unfolding from the beginning encourage your faith?

Follow Me through John 20

Empty and Encouraged

The Son is up! The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the pivotal point of all history and the foundation of Christianity. Without the resurrection there is no Christian faith, no salvation, and no hope. Jesus never mentions His death without also speaking of His resurrection. All our hope is expressed in Jesus' words, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies". John 11:25

Read John Chapter 20

1. Why do you think women were the first witnesses of the resurrection?
2. Mary Magdalene appears at the crucifixion and the resurrection in all four gospels. Why do you think Mary recognized Jesus when He said her name? (See John 10:3-4)
3. Jesus did not appear to the religious leaders after the resurrection. Why not? (See Luke 16:30-31)

It was no accident, no coincidence that the seasons came round and round year after year. It was the Lord speaking to us all and showing us over and over again the birth, life, death, and resurrection of His only begotten Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It was like a best-loved story being told day after day with each sunrise and sunset, year after year with the seasons, down through the ages since time began.

Francine Rivers

4. What do these verses reveal about the resurrected Jesus?

John 20:14, 21:4

John 20:19, 26

John 20:20, 27

5. Is believing that Jesus rose from the dead as important as believing that He died on the cross for our sins? Why or why not?

6. In verses 24-29, Thomas expresses both unbelief and belief. What is the difference between doubt and hard-hearted skepticism?

*Our doubts are traitors,
and make us lose the good we oft might win
by fearing to attempt.
William Shakespeare*

7. What are some of your doubts?

8. What reason did John give in verse 31 for writing this Gospel?

Of all the miracles John included, which have been the most meaningful to you and why?

Follow Me: “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” (John 20:21) As a *follower* of Jesus, what mission has He given you?

Digging Deeper...

Compare the following verses. How are they similar and how are they different? What do they tell you about Jesus?

- John 20:12 and Exodus 25:17-18

- John 20:20 and Ephesians 5:27

- John 20:22 and Genesis 2:7

Follow Me through John 21

Fishing and Following

This last chapter of John's gospel begins with Jesus commissioning Peter and restoring him to his apostleship. Jesus was now risen from the dead. Peter and his fellow fisherman had traveled the 75 miles north from Jerusalem to the Sea of Galilee as Jesus had instructed. Not wanting to sit idle, they decided to do what they did best – go fishing! Jesus met them right where they were and He continued to use everyday things to teach them profound lessons.

Read John Chapter 21

1. These seasoned fishermen had been at it all night long and caught nothing. Why were their labors in vain? (See Luke 5:4-10.)

2. In verses 5-6, Jesus saw that they needed help. What endearing name does He use to call His disciples?

When they obeyed the voice of the Lord, what happened?

*We are indeed "fishers of men",
and there are "fish" all around us.
If we obey His directions, we will catch the fish.
Warren Wiersbe*

3. After the fish analogy, Jesus reminded them of the shepherd/sheep analogy. What were the three commands that Jesus gave to Peter in verses 15, 16, and 17?

How do you interpret these three commands?

4. When Jesus asked Peter in verse 15 “...do you love Me more than these?” He could have been referring to the enormous catch of fish or to the other disciples. In either case, Jesus wanted to know just how much Peter loved Him. Review your life and ask yourself if you love Jesus more than your family, your husband, your children, your work/career, your hobby, your investments, your pet... Do you love Jesus more than *anything* else?

There is a cost to following Jesus Christ... because He is God, He must have preeminence over all other loves, all other affections, all other relationships, over our own lives and personal goals and ambitions. Those who follow Him are taking up an instrument of death... death to self. Theirs will be a new path... His.

Kay Arthur

5. The first thing you do after God speaks to you is crucial. In verses 18-19, Jesus had just told Peter what kind of death he would suffer. Then Jesus said to Peter, “Follow Me.” Rather than responding to what Jesus told him, what did Peter ask? (verse 21)

Where was his focus?

Where should it have been?

6. So often it is easy for us to become judgmental of others; analyzing them and deciding what they should do. Jesus was very straight up with Peter in verse 22 about this. What did He say?
7. Like Peter, we have made a commitment to follow Jesus. How can we be certain and not fearful about our future?

Who is in control?

8. What encouragement do you find in verse 25?

Follow Me: In the beach scene in John 21:15-17, Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him. It is one thing to say you love Jesus, but the real test is your willingness to serve Him. Perhaps you have failed your Lord, disobeyed His word to you, or denied Him by the way you live. Take a moment now to confess your sins to Him. Jesus will not berate you; He will not humiliate you. He will ask you to examine your love for Him. If you truly love Him, your service for Him will be of the quality that He desires.

Digging Deeper...

John begins his gospel in John 1:43 with Jesus' words, "...follow Me" and ends it in 21:19 with, "Follow Me!". In Matthew's gospel, he records additional statements Jesus made as He urges us to follow Him. Look up Matthew 10:38 and 16:24. Jesus is speaking to you directly. What does He specifically want you to do when He says, "take up your cross and follow Me"?

