

Gospel John Chapter 12 -- John Karmelich

1. Ever wanted a good summary chapter of how God wants us to interact with people?
 - a) Chapter 12 gives us some great examples for this question.
 - b) I like to summarize chapter 12 in 3 categories
 - i) Jesus' relationship with *believers*, *potential* believers and *non-believers*
2. The first set of verses we see Jesus have dinner with Mary, Martha, Lazarus and the disciples.
 - a) This whole section is an excellent model of our role as believers with Jesus and with fellow believers.
3. The next section is about non-believers ("some Greeks") wishing to seek Jesus.
 - a) There are some very good lessons to help people who want to know more about Jesus.
4. The final section is the writer-John's commentary about non-believers.
 - a) This section is helpful in our dealings with non-believers.
 - b) He emphasizes that non-belief is a fulfillment of prophecy.
 - c) He is also teaching that a person can develop a state of mind where it becomes *impossible* for them to believe in Jesus!
 - d) You also get the impression that a lot of this reaction by John was after *years* of contemplation about this situation.
 - i) Remember that John wrote this gospel many years after it took place.
 - ii) John had many years to think about these events and their importance
 - a) John takes his years of wisdom to pass on to us how these events about Jesus are important to our lives and what we can learn from them.
 - e) With that, let's start John Chapter 12.
5. Verse 1: Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. ³ Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume
 - a) Some miscellaneous observational comments:
 - i) At this point Jesus is about a week away from the crucifixion. Before the "big week" begins, he spends a last opportunity to relax with his friends.
 - ii) Most commentators speculate this dinner was given as a thank-you to Jesus for raising Lazarus from the dead.
 - a) The application is: Do you show gratitude for what Jesus did for you?
 - iii) Remember this was a good size dinner party. Besides Jesus, Mary, Martha & Lazarus, the 12 disciples were present.
 - iv) There were two stories in the Bible about women wiping Jesus' feet with their hair. These are two *different* characters. The other was a prostitute at the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:37-39).
 - v) I'm fascinated by the fact that John remembered the smell "the house was filled with the fragrance".
 - a) Smell is a very powerful sense. People can remember a certain smell the rest of their lives.
 - b) Mary's way of worshipping God was something that can be a powerful witness to those around her.
 - b) Going back to the 1st 3 verses, there are 3 types of activities present in these verses
 - i) Martha served
 - ii) Lazarus "fellowshipped" (spent time just talking with Jesus)
 - iii) Mary was at Jesus' feet, in adoration (praise)
 - iv) All three are forms of worship
 - a) All three are important to us as believers.

6. On to the villain of our story: Verse 4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵ "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages. " ⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.
 - a) Judas knew the financial value of the perfume, but not the human value.
 - b) You can't measure devotion in dollar figures Look at Mark 12:41-44:
 - i) Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. ⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything--all she had to live on." (Mark 12:41-44 NIV)
 - c) The writer John does not have a lot of high praise for Judas.
 - i) He calls him a thief in verse 6.
 - ii) So why did Jesus call this guy to be a disciple in the first place?
 - iii) After all, Jesus knew he was going to betray him?
 - iv) Why didn't God pick a Roman, or a Pharisee to betray him?
 - a) Part of it is to fulfill Bible Prophecy (Zechariah 13:6, et.al.)
 - b) Mostly it was to teach us a principal that not all who are "called" are also "saved".
 - c) There has to be *repentance* and a change of heart on the believer's part.
 - (1) You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble! (James 2:19 NKJV)
 - d) Judas could have simply been one of the many who were looking for the "Messiah" to set up his earthly kingdom (and make himself one of the rulers). When Judas he figured out Jesus wasn't interested in setting up the Messianic kingdom *now*, that is when he decided to turn on Him. (This is speculation on the part of some commentators.)
 - e) Judas could have figured that Jesus' death was imminent, and by betraying Jesus, Judas could save his own life (more speculation).
 - f) All things are for God's glory. Even those who are against Him!
 - (1) More on Judas as we get closer to the end of the Book.
7. Verse 7: (Jesus' response to Judas' accusation) "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.
 - a) I am convinced that at this point in the story, Mary is the only person who "got it".
 - i) The disciples didn't understand how Jesus was going to die and be resurrected.
 - ii) Verse 7 states very plainly that Mary intended to save this perfume for the day of Jesus' burial.
 - a) Since she *knew* Jesus was going to be resurrected, Why waste the oil on burial day? She used it to glorify God now!
 - b) There's a powerful lesson for us.
 - (1) We don't worship a dead God, but a *risen* God.
 - (2) Don't procrastinate the opportunities to worship God (through service, fellowship or praise) until some unknown date.
8. Verse 8: You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."
 - a) It is important to read this verse in the context of the passage.
 - i) Jesus is talking about the importance of worship versus caring about the poor.
 - ii) J. Vernon McGee had a good quote here:
 - a) "We can always do a service to the poor. Our service should *not* be a substitute of sitting at his feet" (*Emphasis added*)

9. In Verse 9, we see “the effects of a good witness”. Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.¹⁰ So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well,¹¹ for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.
- a) “If God is at work week by week raising men from the dead, there will always be people coming to see how it is done. You cannot find an empty church that has conversion for its leading feature. Do you want to know how to fill empty chapels? Here is the answer: “Get your Lazarus”.
 - i) Samuel Chadwick, Methodist evangelist and teacher (1860-1932)
 - b) Lazarus is a danger to enemies of the cross. A friend of Jesus is an enemy of the world.
 - i) Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. (Luke 6:22 NIV)
 - ii) "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. (John 15:18 NIV)
 - c) Remember that I said in the beginning that this chapter can be summed up as Jesus relationship with *believers*, *potential* believers, and *non-believers*.
 - i) In Verses 9-11 we see the danger to our lives because of *non-believers*.
 - a) This reminds me of a saying a missionary told me one time.
 - (1) “If you don’t believe Satan is real, try opposing him for awhile.”
 - b) Remember, that although we suffer persecution for Jesus sake, (2 Timothy 3:12), the ultimate victory is ours (1 John 4:4b)
 - (1) 2 Timothy 3:12: In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (NIV)
 - (2) 1 John 4:4b, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. (NIV)
 - d) With that, lets move on to the section with *potential* believers.
10. Verse 12: The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.¹³ They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! " "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, ¹⁵ "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."
- a) This is what Christians refer to as “Palm Sunday”.
 - i) I happen to be a big fan of Palm Sunday, and I am endlessly fascinated with it.
 - ii) When you read the Gospels, you notice Jesus going out of his way to tell people *not* to reveal who He is. This is especially true when Jesus performs miracles. (Jesus wants people to come to Him for repentance, not to see miracles, and therefore, discouraged people from spreading the word about him). How can Jesus teach people if they were simply focused on miracles?
 - iii) Yet on Palm Sunday Jesus physically presents himself as king. Why?
 - iv) For starters, it will to fulfill one of the greatest prophecies in the Old Testament. (Credit for this goes to a man named Robert Anderson. He was head of Scotland Yard in the mid-19th Century. He was *also* famous for solving the “Jack the Ripper” case.)
 - a) In Daniel 9:25, God told Daniel from the time that the walls in Jerusalem were to be rebuilt (after Babylon destroyed it) to the time of a coming Messiah will be 6 “seven’s” and 62 “seven’s”
 - b) So what’s a “seven”? In Hebrew “seven can be a period of seven days, seven weeks or seven years. Here is means years
 - c) Robert Anderson (book “Coming Prince”) figured out from the day the order was given to rebuild the walls (In Nehemiah) to the exact day of Palm Sunday was 62+7 (69) “seven’s” or 69 times 7 years! Again, it was accurate to the day!

- v) Another reason Jesus picked “Palm Sunday” is that it is the same day the lambs were chosen for Passover. Remember that millions of people were in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. That means hundreds of thousands were lambs were needed for family meals as required for Passover. “Palm Sunday” is the day the lambs were chosen. (They could not have any spots or blemishes). It was as if Jesus was saying “pick me” as the :”chosen lamb” as he presented himself as the “Lamb of God”.
 - b) Back to the text and “Palm Sunday:
 - i) The Psalm that the crowd was cheering was Psalm 118:25-26.
 - ii) The palm branch, at that time was a national symbol” for a reigning Messiah.
 - a) When Judas Maccabee lead the revolt that is celebrated as “Hanukkah”, the revolt symbol is the palm branch (see Notes on Chap. 10, No. 19).
 - iii) Remember that the crowd wanted a “reigning” Messiah,
 - a) The mentality of the crowd was probably: “If this man could bring a dead man back to life, he could certainly overthrow Rome!”.
 - b) There is an application to us: Often people want Jesus for their personal needs, without acknowledging their *need* for Jesus for their salvation.
 - (1) To quote a famous (modern) Christian phrase:
 - (a) “Jesus did not come to earth to lower my golf score!”
 - c) This is the reason the crowd could turn on Jesus so quickly.
 - (1) They wanted a *reigning* Messiah, not a *suffering* Messiah.
 - (2) It isn’t until we realize that we are *sinners* and *need* Jesus to suffer *for* our sins that He can begin to work in our life and change us!
 - c) To finish this section of the text (which all took place on Palm Sunday)
 - i) The quote in John, Chapter 12, Verse 15 is from Zechariah 9:9
 - (1) Verse 15: “Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt.”
 - b) What it means is that the Messiah will be presented without any pomp or parade. To be presented on a donkey is very lowly and humble.
 - c) One thinks of a king’s procession as being lead on a horse or chariot.
 - d) The other gospels mention that Jesus arranged for this colt to be used.
 - (1) By reading Verse 14, John was unaware of this arrangement.
11. Verse 16: At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.
- a) There is a necessity of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to fully comprehend scripture.
 - b) There is a great promise to believers coming up in John 14:26
 - i) But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.
 - c) I happen to love this verse about the Holy Spirit.
 - i) Next time you come to a verse in the Bible you don’t get, *claim* this promise!
 - ii) “Lord I don’t get this verse. You promised in John 14:26 the Spirit will teach me *all* things. So I lay my lack of understanding at your feet!
 - iii) Then watch (in amazement) how God will answer your questions!
12. Verse 17: Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. ¹⁸ Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.
- a) There were two groups here. One mentioned in Verse 17 & and another in Verse 18:
 - i) Verse 17. Those who witnessed the raising of Lazarus
 - ii) Verse 18: Those who were attracted to Jesus because of this miracle
 - b) This goes back to the Samuel Chadwick’s comment about how to fill a church! (See 9a).

13. Verse 19: So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"
 - a) If you are ever not sure if Jesus is doing something important, watch the reaction of the Pharisees!.
 - i) If people claim Jesus never said he was equal to God, check out the reactions of the Pharisees. (They tried to stone him for claiming he was equal with God!)
 - ii) And here they are saying "Look how the whole world has gone after him!"
 - a) My reaction to this statement: Amen!
14. The next section of the chapter deals with Jesus and *potential* believers, (and us!), Verse 20: Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.
 - a) There were many non-Jews who came up to see the Passover feast.
 - i) Some were simply intrigued by the festival.
 - ii) Some were intrigued by the Jewish belief in "One God" versus the many-god belief system of the Greeks.
 - b) Commentators also speculate how these guys may have been too intimidated to walk up to Jesus directly. Or Jesus may have been within the Temple area that was off limits to non-Jews at this point.
 - c) The question to us is what do we do with people who say "Sir, I want to see Jesus?"
 - i) There is a large church in the San Fernando Valley that has this little verse engraved on a plaque on the pulpit: "Sir, we have come to see Jesus".
 - ii) It is a reminder to all teachers and witnesses of Jesus that people are *not* coming to here *you* speak, but are coming to learn more about Jesus.
15. The next set of verses is Jesus response to the Greeks (and any other believer from a non-Jewish background). Notice the lack of Old-Testament idioms in these verses: Verse 23: Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.
 - a) First, notice in Verse 23: The hour has come
 - i) Several times in John, Jesus said "my hour has not yet come (2:4, 7:6, 7:30, 8:20)
 - a) Now he is saying "my hour has come.
 - b) He was speaking of the necessity of his Death as a substitute for sins.
 - b) Verse 25 is *essential* to Christian living: The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."
 - i) There is more to being a Christian than understanding Jesus.
 - a) There is an application to live a life *like* Jesus.
 - b) To give oneself to the needs of others.
 - c) Just as Jesus gave us life as a sin-substitution for ours,
 - d) we should (out of gratitude, not pay-back!) to live to serve others.
 - e) Again, Verse 26a: "Whoever serves me must follow me".
 - ii) This simply means to base one's priorities outside of yourself.
 - a) To be a Christian means to put other's needs in front of your own.
 - b) There are few greater joys in life than helping others, *especially* without any human recognition for our deeds.
 - c) "Living for yourself will *never* supply what you want out of life."
 - (1) This is a quote from Dr. A.W. Tozer.

- iii) Our rewards for this service is summarized in the last part of Verse 26b:
 - a) "My Father will honor the one who serves me."
 - b) Salvation is not based on our service on earth.
 - c) But our *rewards* in heaven *are* based on our loyalty as servants.
 - d) Jesus said: "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done." (Rev 22:12 NIV)
- 16. Next is a *pubic* message from God for our sakes: Verse 27: "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? `Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. ³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for *your benefit, not mine.* (*Emphasis added*)
 - a) If you read the account of Jesus right before the crucifixion in all 4 gospels, you can sense the real fear (trepidation) that Jesus had about the cross.
 - i) Jesus, as God-becoming-man (referred to as "Son of Man") had the human fears that go with the punishment.
 - a) Jesus *never* doubted his moment of destiny. He knew his purpose for coming to earth and He understood his role.
 - (1) "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42 NIV)
 - ii) How did Jesus deal with his grief? He prayed to God! A good lesson for us!
 - b) The key to understanding this passage is the only way to salvation is through Jesus.
 - i) One of the great ideas to mediate upon is the thought of
 - ii) A God of Perfect Justice and a God of Perfect Love
 - a) A Perfect God *is* perfectly just and has perfect love"
 - (1) Psalm 9:16a The LORD is known by his justice;
 - b) God's perfect standards also require perfection.
 - (1) "There is no one who does good, not even one". Psalm 14:3 NIV
 - c) Now compare that standard with God's love for us:
 - (1) Jeremiah 31:3: The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; (NIV)
 - iii) The more you think about these two qualities of God, there is no way to have salvation for mankind. God can not forgive us of our sins and still be *perfectly just* in not allowing *any* sin .
 - a) The Greek philosopher Socrates understood this when he said "I believe God can redeem man, but I don't understand how."
 - iv) The only way to reconcile "perfect" love" and "perfect" justice is for God Himself to pay the price for our sins.
 - v) Since there is no other way for God to redeem
 - c) Last thing to point about this passage: Verse 28: Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."
 - i) Three times in the life of Jesus, the voice of God was heard.
 - a) The 1st was at his baptism - the beginning of his ministry (Matt. 3:17)
 - b) The 2nd was at the "transfiguration" when Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus - the *middle* of his ministry. (Matthew 17:5, et.al.)
 - c) The 3rd time was here – at the *end* of his ministry.
 - ii) All three times God is validating Jesus role on the cross.
 - a) Note (the first was at his baptism, which *identifies* him with sinners. All three times the purpose is for God if validate his role on the cross as a substitution for our sins.

17. Verse 31: Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world *will be* driven out. (*Emphasis added.*)
 - a) Question: The prince of this world...What was he driven out of?
 - i) Judging by all the evil that exists, he still exists on earth, (Ephesians 6:12).
 - a) but his power over salvation is taken away.
 - b) Satan is still active on earth, but it is only out of *desperation*, because he knows he has a fixed time before he is forever cast out of this world (Revelation 20:3).
 - c) Notice this verse: "Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." (Rev 12:12 NIV).
 - i) One of the reasons that Satan does *not* want you to be a good witness for Jesus is that the day that Jesus comes back is based on a specific, fixed, number of people becoming Christians.
 - a) Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. (Romans 11:25b, NIV)
 - b) For every person Satan can prevent from becoming a Christian, the longer he has to live!
18. Verse 32: But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." ³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.
 - a) The Greek word for "lifted up" has a double meaning.
 - i) It does mean to be lifted, as up on a cross
 - ii) It also has a "spiritual implication" as in lifted up into heaven.
 - iii) I believe John intended it to have a double-meaning.
 - b) When Jesus says "He will draw all men to myself",
 - i) this does *not* mean all people will be saved.
 - ii) That would be contradictory to other statements made in the 4 gospels.
 - iii) It means that people of *all* races, ages, nations, will be drawn to Him
 - a) The cross is "cross-generational", indiscriminate.
 - b) The preaching of the cross is *central* to drawing people to Jesus.
19. Verse 34: The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"
 - a) The Jews understood what "lifted up" meant. They understood crucifixion.
 - b) They thought the Messiah would live forever.
 - i) They are right. He does live forever. But even though Jesus raised someone from the dead, they could not comprehend the fact of the Messiah being resurrected. John will explain why later in the text.
20. Verse 35: Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.
 - a) Jesus is saying "You want a reigning Messiah, and I'm trying to teach you about a relationship with God.
 - i) You have to have the *relationship* before he can reign in our lives
 - ii) You need to acknowledge your *need* for a substitution for your sins.
21. Verse 36: Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.
 - a) There are 3 key verbs in the first part of Verse 36:
 - b) 1) *trust* in the light
 - c) 2) while you *have* the light
 - d) 3) so you *become* sons of the light.

- i) Ever heard the expression “You are what you eat?”
 - a) This is also true based on what you worship.
 - b) Study people and what they worship, and they will eventually *become* (or become like) what they worship.
- ii) This applies to our Christian life too!
 - a) The more time we learn to trust him
 - b) The more time we spend with Jesus,
 - c) the more we will *become* like Jesus.

22. The next set of verses contemplates our roles with non believers. Remember that Jesus said at the end of Verse 36 that “he hid himself from them”. Therefore, this is John’s interpretation of the prophet Isaiah about non-believers. Verse 37: Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.³⁸ This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: “Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere:⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn--and I would heal them.”

- a) I believe John spent a lot of time thinking about these verses and contemplating his Jewish roots. The Jewish people have been waiting *centuries* for their Messiah to come. And now that he finally came, they missed the obvious.
 - i) There are two quotes from Isaiah.
 - ii) Verse 38 is a quote of Isaiah 53:1
 - iii) Verse 40 is a quote of Isaiah 6:9
 - a) God told Isaiah to speak to the people of Israel *even though the people wouldn’t believe Him*.
 - b) So if God knew the people would not turn to them, why did he bother?
 - (1) So that the people would be *without an excuse* for rejecting Him.
 - (2) For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--*have been clearly seen*, being understood from what has been made, so that *men are without excuse*. (Romans 1:20 NIV, *emphasis added*.)
 - c) The same thing applies to Jesus:
 - d) If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin. John 15:22 (NIV)
- b) The greatest tragedy of history can be summed in Verse 37: “Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.”
- c) There is a common Bible heresy that can be summarized in Verse 39.
 - i) Some “scholars” (and I use that term loosely) believe there were Two Isaiahs.
 - ii) They teach that one person wrote chapters 1-39, and another wrote 40-66.
 - iii) This is because the style changes in Chapter 39 to 40.
 - a) (As if an author can not change style!).
 - iv) The danger of believing this type of lie is to not take the Bible *seriously*.
 - a) The argument is “If there is no “Isaiah”, what else is not true?”
 - v) The question is “Do you believe the “scholars”, or do you believe Jesus?”
 - a) Jesus says in Verse 39: For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere.
 - b) Remember John quotes from Isaiah Chapter 53 (the so-called 2nd Isaiah).
 - c) And quotes from Isaiah Chapter 6 (the so-called “1st Isaiah”).
 - d) And Jesus says “they could not believe” as Isaiah says elsewhere
 - (1) The New King James says “because Isaiah said again”

23. Verse 41: Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.
- a) This verse is also a good verse to share with a Jehovah Witnesses.
 - i) The main reason Jehovah Witnesses is considered a cult is that they deny that Jesus is God. They believe he is an arch-angel sent by God.
 - ii) Jehovah Witnesses believe that the Old Testament word "LORD" (all capitols), refers to God the Father only (Jehovah, or JWTH). Yet in Verse 38, John is clearly referring to *Jesus* in this verse, thus making Jesus equal with God.
24. Verse 42: Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.
- a) This is one of the great tragedies of why people don't become Christians:
 - i) "for they loved praise from men more than praise from God." (Verse 43)
 - ii) Many people who refuse to become Christians for fear of being unpopular.
 - b) We as American's ought to feel privileged that we only get "ridicule" for our belief!
 - i) There are many cultures and countries *today* that professing Jesus as your Lord and savior is a death sentence.
 - ii) To those Jews, confessing Jesus as the Messiah meant ex-communication.
 - a) This meant they could not attend church (synagogue)
 - b) And they could not do business with other Jews.
 - iii) Today, if an Orthodox Jew becomes a Christian, they hold a funeral for that person. (Remember the youngest child in "Fiddler on the Roof").
 - a) The family will treat that person as if they don't exist.
 - iv) To quote a Christian bumper sticker: "If being a Christian were a crime, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"
 - c) Here is a question. If a person *believes* in Jesus, but does not *act* upon it, like the people in Verse 42, are they saved?
 - i) I would argue no. They could *grow* in their belief to the point of *acting* upon it. But simply *believing* without acting upon it is *not* salvation.
 - ii) You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:19-20 NKJV)
25. The commentary by John (about Jesus) continues in Verse 44: Then Jesus cried out, "When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. ⁴⁵ When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.
- a) Here is another passage of Jesus claiming equality with the father.
 - i) He is saying in 45 & 46. If you believe in me then you "automatically" believe in God, as we are one.
 - b) This is a favorite theme of John: Light and Darkness.
 - i) It seems funny that a person who you spent three years of your life with on a daily basis is being described as "The light".
 - a) The interesting thing to me is, although I have never met Jesus the way John did, he is the "light" to me.
 - b) You know those moments in your life, when you have been contemplating a situation and you finally say "Now I get it"
 - (1) Like a "light bulb" going on in your head.
 - c) This is what happens to people when they first become born-again
 - (1) They get it. They see the light.
 - (2) And once you have that light, you never lose it (Verse 46).

26. Verse 47 As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. ⁴⁸ There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. ⁴⁹ For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. ⁵⁰ I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."
- a) An important bit of theology to understand and grasp is that Jesus did not come to this world to condemn it. It is *already* condemned. He came to *save it*.
 - b) Blaming Jesus for our condemnation is like blaming a judge who sentences you for committing a crime.
 - c) Remember Jesus words to the Jews in Chap. 5: 45-46 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you; Moses, in whom you trust. (NIV)
 - i) Jesus is saying the *law* is the one that condemns. (Paul also teaches that even those who *don't know* the law are also condemned by the obvious evidence of the existence of God – Romans Chapter 1).
 - a) Sin is a deadly poison. It already exists in *all* of us!
 - (1) Jesus is simply the *remedy*.
27. I mentioned in my opening remarks that the last passages is mostly about Jesus relationship with unbelievers.
- a) God takes people who *will* not believe, and eventually leads them to a point in their live where they *can* not believe. (Read Verse 37 again for better understanding.)
 - b) There is a "hardness" of the heart that comes from *continual* rejection of the Gospel.
 - i) This is what "blasphemes against the Holy Spirit" is all about.
 - ii) But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will *never* be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin." (Mark 3:29 NIV, *emphasis added*.)
 - c) So does this mean we "give up" on people that are hardened to the gospel?
 - i) Of course not. We don't know who is and who is not saved.
 - a) Our job, like Jesus is simply to present the message.
 - ii) As Dwight Moody preached a long time ago: "I wished God would paint a big green stripe on the back of those who were saved. It would save me a lot of time knowing who to witness to!"
28. Let's Pray: Father, we thank you for these lessons. Open their hearts to the truth and what you are teaching them. Help us to remember by good stewards of what you entrusted to us. To be Like Lazarus and just spend time talking with you. To be like Martha and be a faithful in service. But most of all, to have the qualities of a "Mary" and just spend time worshipping at your feet. Also Lord, help us to be open to listening to the words "Sir, we have come to seek Jesus". Help us to lead people down that path. Help us to be good witnesses to those who need to understand the Gospel message. And finally, we pray for our family and friends who have rejected the Gospel message. Open their hearts to the truth and help them to get out of the darkness, and see the light which is shining all around them. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.