

## **That You May Believe & Follow Jesus**

John 21

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, December 16, 2018

We are back in the Gospel of John this morning, to say goodbye to this old friend. And the message of this friend, the message of the Gospel of John as you've heard me say, is that you need to believe in Jesus. We've talked about that over and over again in this series because John says over and over again, you need to believe. That's what the book is about. In fact, we've called this series the "That You May Believe" series because John 20:31 says, "These things have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." John says, "That's why I wrote this book. That's why it's in the Bible, so that you may believe and be saved."

But the question I want us to answer this morning is this, what does it look like when you believe? What does it look like to be saved? We said a lot about belief in this series and faith and the different angles of it, but we haven't said much about what it looks like. And this is how John closes out the Gospel, by telling you what it looks like to be a Christian.

To introduce that a little bit, a man in Asia was once asked how much it cost to build a certain temple he was working on. And he said, "I don't know because we don't count the cost. We don't talk about the money for our temples," which is very touching. You can appreciate that. He meant that we give whatever it takes. We don't talk about the money or the commitment ahead of time. But I want to tell you this morning, Jesus never said that. He said, "You need to talk about the commitment ahead of time." He said, "You need to count the cost of being His disciple." In His own words, in Luke 14, the Lord said, "For which of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Or what king, when he sets out for war, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough to win? So then none of you can be my disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."

Jesus said that believing in Him is costly. It will cost you something; not in a physical sense, but in a personal sense; not in a financial sense like you're going to have to pay this much money, but in a spiritual sense. You'll have to give up all your possessions or give up the hold they have on your life. They can't control you anymore. They can't be all you think about. And you have to give that up willingly, thoughtfully, prayerfully, like a man building a tower or a king going to war. It can't be a last-minute decision for you. Salvation can't be something that you do when the lights are down low, when the mood is right and the music is right, and then you forget about the rest of your life. That is not what the Gospel of John is describing here.

Jesus said this sort of thing over and over again. He said salvation is costly. It's free, but in the words of one theologian, it's not cheap. You can't buy with money, but it'll cost everything you have. And I think it's safe to say a lot of people don't get this today. Would you guys agree with that? A lot of people don't understand this. They don't count the cost.

We can say it this way, the church today is full of half-built towers. It's full of people who started a war they couldn't finish, because it got too hard, it required too much of them and they thought

it wasn't worth it. Sometime ago, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada did a study where they discovered that only one in three people in Canada who attended church as a child still go today—one in three. And of those who stopped going, half don't even call themselves Christians anymore. They've totally abandoned the faith.

And they said the number one reason is hypocrisy. The number one reason that they left according to this survey, is the dishonesty in the church. But I would say the number one reason is probably because they didn't count the cost. They didn't consider what it would take to be a Christian. They thought it would be easier. One pastor's daughter said, "I was never taught that the Christian life was going to be hard. I discovered that it is, and I am not ready." She went on to say, "Not only that, but I'm shocked. I feel deceived." Well, I want to tell you that's not Jesus' fault because He made it clear. He told you it would be hard to follow Him.

I remember talking to a friend at university several years ago who was not a Christian. She didn't believe, but she was very spiritual. She liked to come to our Bible studies on campus. And after attending one of those, she said, "You know, I would be a Christian if it wasn't so costly." She said, "I would follow Christ, I would believe all this stuff if I wouldn't have to lose so many friends in order to do it." Now, let me ask you something, what do you think Jesus would say to that? You know what He would say? He would say, "Okay, okay. You can't be a Christian then. You can't follow Me."

Do you know what a lot of churches would say today? They would say, "No, no, no, no, no. You've got it wrong. It's not that hard. You can still be a Christian and keep your friends. You can still believe and live like the world." Listen, friends, salvation is simple, but you can't live like the world. It's free, but it's not cheap. It cost Jesus something, and it will cost you something in return. John Stott said it this way, he said,

Jesus never concealed the fact that His religion included a demand as well as an offer. Indeed, the demand was as total as the offer was free. Jesus never lowered His standards to make His call more acceptable. He asked the same thing of His first disciples that He asks of all of us - total and absolute surrender. Nothing less than this will do.

I bring all this up to say, this is how John finishes his Gospel. This is how he brings it to an end. By reminding you what it will cost to believe in Jesus. And we see this laid out in John chapter 21. So, if you haven't turned there yet, that's the chapter we're in this morning. We just read that a moment ago. John 21, the last chapter in this book.

As you're turning there, you would think that as John closes this out, he might say something like, "They all believed in Jesus and lived happily ever after." Right? Wouldn't that be a good ending to a book? That's how I would end it. Or he might say, "They believed in Jesus and they never had a problem again. They lived a pain-free life." He doesn't say that. As a matter of fact, he goes on and tells Peter how he's going to die.

Just to catch you up to speed with where we're at this point. At this point in the Gospel of John, Jesus has been crucified and resurrected, which means His days on earth are limited. Acts 1:3 says that Jesus was on the earth for 40 days after the resurrection. So, the Lord walked the earth

for about a month in a resurrected body before He ascended into heaven. He was crucified at Passover, He ascended into heaven right before Pentecost. So, that's the timeline there, between those two holidays or those two holy days.

John 20:21 tell us about some of the appearances He made. So, in chapter 20, after He resurrected, He appears to Mary Magdalene and to the disciples, if you remember that from last week. He goes to Mary at the empty tomb, which would have been interesting because that means as a resurrected man, he was walking in a graveyard. I don't know about you, but I would love to see a resurrected man walking in a graveyard. That's what Mary saw in John 20. Then He goes on to appear to the disciples at a house in Jerusalem and He passes through walls and He shows them His hands and His side. Then after all of that, He makes one more appearance in the next chapter, chapter 21.

If you want to know the disciples' mood at this point, they're discouraged. I mean, you would think they would be excited after seeing Jesus - and they were. But they failed Him, right? I mean, they absolutely failed Him. When the Roman soldiers came to arrest Jesus, they all ran away (and they knew it) like a bunch of cowards. And then to make this worse, Peter denied Him three times. Peter was their leader. On three separate occasions, he said to a slave girl, the lowest person in that society, "I don't know Jesus, I am not His disciple." So, they're on the floor at this point. They're devastated.

So, in John 21, they go back to what was familiar to them. They go back to fishing. Not as a hobby like a lot of people do in Chilliwack, but as a job. They go back to fishing as a way of life. It's almost like they didn't think they were called to ministry anymore. They didn't think they were qualified, and so they said, "Let's just go back to what we know best." And if you read in verses 3 through 8, this kind of tells you a little bit of what they're doing. It's a very interesting story. Verse 3 says,

3 Simon Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing." [Just as simple as that. Right?] And they said to him, "We will also come with you." And they went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. [He was so far away, it was early in the morning] 5 And so Jesus said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" And they answered, "No." 6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." [Now you got to love Peter here] So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. [It doesn't even say that he jumped in. He threw himself into the sea, head first probably, knowing him.] 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.

Now, just to explain what this is about, that may sound kind of strange as to why Jesus does this. But back in Luke chapter 5, it says that right before Jesus made them disciples, He did this very same miracle. It says that they had been up all night fishing and they had caught nothing, just

like right here. And so, Jesus told them to cast their nets one more time and they brought in so much fish that their nets began to break. They couldn't even get them into the boat. And at that time Jesus said the very famous statement that you're familiar with, He said, "Follow Me and I'll make you fishers of men." That was their call to the ministry. That was their call to discipleship. "Leave the nets behind and follow Me."

Now at this time, at this low point in their lives, when they think it's all over for them and they're done with Jesus, not because they don't love Him anymore, but simply because they failed - Jesus repeats this miracle to remind them of that calling. He said, "I didn't call you to fish for fish, I called you guys to fish for men. What I said then still applies today. What I told you then, still holds right now." In other words you could say it this way, Jesus says to them, in a sense, "You guys don't get off that easy. You don't get to quit being my disciple just because you had a bad day. You don't get to leave Me because you blew it at My trial." You have to keep following Him. That's how you're saved. You build the tower and you keep building the tower. You go to war and you keep fighting.

It's been said that one way you're winning the race is that you're still running it. That's how you know this thing is real for you. That's how you know your faith is real. You have to keep counting the cost.

To walk you through what He says to them here, what I want to do is talk about what He says when they come to shore. I want us to look at what Jesus tells the disciples when they come back from fishing. He has their attention now. They remember they're called a ministry, and now He explains this to them: what does this mean now? And to walk you through this, Jesus says that true belief consists of three things. So, that's our outline for today. It's pretty simple. When the disciples come back to shore from their fishing expedition, Jesus tells them that true belief consists of three things, because this is what the Gospel of John is about, isn't it? The whole book is about true belief. What does it mean to believe in Jesus? What does it mean to have faith in Him? Is it an easy thing to do? Is it a fly by night kind of thing? When you believe in Him, do you get to keep all your friends and keep your former way of life? Do you get to do whatever you want? And Jesus says here, "No you don't. True belief is costly."

Let's talk about what that means this morning. It consists of three things. The first thing is this, true belief consists in love - very simple. That's where Jesus starts. He says, "If you believe in Me, you will love Me." True belief consists in love. It doesn't consist entirely in doctrine, although doctrine is part of that - very important part of that. It doesn't consist entirely in facts. Facts are part of it, but you have to love Him. This is where your commitment comes from. This is where your devotion comes from. It comes from loving Jesus. You do all these things, you give up your life because you love Him. You treasure Him above all else.

If you look down in verse 15, Jesus explains it this way. And verse 15, skipping down a little bit, He makes them breakfast. That's kind of interesting because He's showing them that he is not a ghost. He is a resurrected man. He's eating in front of them. Ghosts don't eat, resurrected people do. So, He does that.

Then in verse 15 it says, “So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?’ And He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Tend My lambs.’” Just a couple of things to point out here, I told you that Peter was the leader of the disciples. He was their spokesman. So, oftentimes what you see in the Gospels is that Jesus has a conversation with Peter that reflects on everybody. He was the most vocal disciple. Some called Him the disciple with the foot-shaped mouth because he was always getting in trouble with his mouth. But what he says here applies to all of them.

Jesus starts off the conversation by asking Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?” Some have taken that phrase “more than these” to refer to the disciples, because there was a time when Peter says, “I will follow you more than these. I love you more than these men.” And it could be a reference to that, but if you think about it, the disciples had all failed Jesus. They'd all abandoned Him as a group. So, that's a pretty low standard. This could mean, it probably means “more than these nets”, “more than these fish”, “more than these boats”, “more than your former way of life”. “Peter, do you love Me more than going back to this?”

You see this in the phrase “Simon, son of John”. Jesus calls him that several times in this passage. Every time He talks to him, He calls him “Simon, son of John,” because before he met Jesus, that was his name. Before Peter became a disciple, that's what everybody called him; Simon, son of John. But Jesus changed his name to Peter, and now He's asking him, “Do you want to go back to that? Do you want to go back to being called Simon again? When you were a fisherman, that was your name. Is that what you want to go back to?”

To drive this point home, he asked it three times - once for each denial. So, it must have been very painful and humbling for Peter to have this conversation with Jesus in front of everybody. But if you remember, Peter denied Jesus three times. So, three times Jesus asked him, “Do you love Me?” This is his reaffirmation as an apostle. If you want to read all of this with me, just so you see the flow of this, verse 15 says,

15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?” And He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My lambs.” 16 Jesus said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” So He said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.” 17 Jesus said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” And Jesus said to him, “Tend My sheep.”

It's interesting, some people would say Peter needed to go through therapy after what he did to Jesus. He would need maybe six months of counselling. Maybe he needs to go back to seminary and get another degree. Jesus just asked Him one question, “Do you love Me? Get that right Peter and everything else will fall in place. Take care of that and you're going to be fine. And if you do that, if you love Me,” He says, “You will tend My lambs.” That phrase “tend My lambs or shepherd My sheep” is a reference to the call to ministry. It's a reference to serving the church. If you notice, Jesus calls them “My lambs, My sheep.” “Peter, the church is made up of

My people, but I'm giving them into your hands to shepherd them. In fact, this is how you will show your love for Me. This is how you will show your devotion to Me, Peter, by loving My sheep.”

Peter's answer here shows he's a changed man. If you notice before, to answer that Peter would have said, “Of course I love you, Lord. What a stupid question.” Right? “Of course, I will tend Your lambs. I'm the best lamb tender in the world. There's never been a better lamb tender than me.” What does he say now? Now, he says, “Lord, You know all things, You know that I love You.” In other words, “My confidence is in You now, Jesus, not in me anymore. Now I trust in You because You know all things - I don't.” J. C Ryle said about this passage. He said,

Peter's answer is one that we all can relate to. We may be weak, fearful, ignorant, unstable, and a failure in many things, but a true believer, like Peter, is real and sincere. Ask him whether he is converted and whether he's a Christian, he may wrestle with that at times because of the sin in his life. But ask him whether he loves Christ and he will say, “I do” Ask him whether he adores Christ, he will say, “With all my heart.” He may add that he does not love Him as much as he should, but he will never say he does not love Him at all. This rule will be found everywhere without any exceptions.

Which leads me to ask just a very logical question, do you have this this morning? Do you love Jesus? And I'm not asking, do you know a bunch of doctrine or a bunch of Bible verses. As important as that is, but do you love Him? Does He mean everything to you? Does He have your heart? Do you treasure Him more than the fish and boats and tackle, more than your friends and possessions and things? Do you love Him more than the person you used to be? Do you look back on the person you were before Christ and say, “Man, I miss that, I want to go back to that?”

It's been said that there are currently over 200 million starving people in India. 200 million people dying of hunger, which is bizarre because India has something like 200 million cows. They have enough food to feed all those people seven times over, but they won't eat them because they consider them sacred, because they love them too much. Friends, I want to be honest, sometimes I wonder if we love Jesus as much as they love their cows; if we love Him enough to starve for Him, to be inconvenienced by Him. I bring that up because this is where salvation starts. This is where belief starts. This is what it all comes down to. First John 4:19 says, “We love because He first loved us.” We believe because of what He has done for us on the cross.

The great reformer John Knox once said, “Because of what Jesus did, other gods might be as passionately worshiped, but no god is as passionately loved as Jesus Christ.” There's a big misunderstanding, I think, in the Christian life. And it's this, it's that, “If I do certain things, if I give up certain things, if I'm a good person, then Jesus will love me.” But that's not the way it works. It's getting it backwards. You do certain things and you give up certain things because He loved you first. You didn't earn it, you don't deserve it. He gives it to you only through faith.

And that's how Jesus starts this conversation with Peter. This is how He reinstates him, because Peter had nothing else to give but his love. That's all he had. He had failed Jesus, he had sinned

horribly. He had done a despicable thing in any religion. You don't deny the master, right? And you don't do it three times. So, all he could do is humbly love Him. And that's all Jesus asks.

That leads to the next thing true belief consists of, and it just goes in line with that one - and that is sacrifice. Jesus starts out with love and it just moves quite naturally into the area of sacrifice. Because if you love Jesus, you will sacrifice for Him. We've talked about that before. You will give everything you have. It's been said that the Christian life is real simple at the end of the day because it asks you to do two things: love God and love your neighbour. You do that, you have fulfilled the law and the commandments, right? But if you do that, it will require a tremendous sacrifice. You will give everything you have. Jesus says this to Peter in a very graphic way in verses 18 through 19. So, if you want to look there, He says to him, He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you ...". That phrase "truly, truly" was often used when Jesus was going to say something astounding. It says,

18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you [or clothe you], and bring you where you do not wish to go."  
19 Now this He said [Jesus] signifying what kind of death Peter would glorify God.

If you think of the context for this, it seems like a very strange thing to say to Peter, because he's discouraged. I mean, all the disciples are discouraged. They've been beaten up, they failed, and now Jesus is talking about their death. That seems to be a very odd thing. But there's actually some encouragement in this because Peter had denied Jesus under threat of death. He had denied Him when his life was on the line. And now, what Jesus is saying here is that, "Peter, I can assure you, you will never do it again. I can promise you, you failed Me once, but you're not going to fail Me again. The next time you have to die for My name, you will take it to the end."

That phrase "stretch out your hands" is a reference to the way Peter would die. He would die on a cross with his hands stretched out. Church history says that after watching his wife being crucified before his eyes, Peter joined her on the cross. He had to watch his wife being crucified, and then Peter was crucified. And not only that, but Peter asked to be crucified upside down because he said he wasn't worthy to die the way Jesus did. So, he asked them to put his head upside down and they did. But the point is that Peter would never deny Jesus again. He would never fail Him again. None of these men would, because they understood that their faith would require a sacrifice. They didn't get that before. Before, they thought it's going to be easy. "Jesus will be king. I'm going to rule with Him, simple as that, piece of cake, no real commitment." But now, they realize they were totally wrong, and they would never fail Him again.

If you tie this into the rest of the passage, Jesus tells Peter to "tend My sheep." And then in a sense, He says, "This is what the sheep are going to cost you. They're going to cost you your life. This is what it's going to take for you to do this, Peter, you're going to have to die for My people." There's a logical progression here, and that is that if you believe in Jesus, if you are His disciple, you will love Him and then you will love His people. Those are the two great commandments, right? Love God, love your neighbour.

I mentioned this because I talk to a lot of people who say they're Christians. I think some of you talk to people that say this as well. They say they are Christians, they love Christ, but it's almost like they hate His church. You ask them if they go to church, they say they don't. You ask them why, and they say it's full of hypocrites. You ask them if they fellowship, they don't fellowship. You ask them if they do for others, they don't, but they say they follow Jesus. Jesus here says it doesn't work that way. He says, "If you love Me, you will love My sheep and you will love them to the end."

And people get this. I told you the number one reason folks leave the church is hypocrisy, but the number one reason they stay, is because they feel loved, right? They feel accepted. Because they understand the church is supposed to love people. That's what it does. We're supposed to be giving for the sheep.

A brand-new Christian was talking to an older Christian at a car dealership and he said, "I can't go to church because I feel like such a failure. I feel like I don't measure up." And the older Christian said, as they were standing in this car dealership, he said, "When your car is messing up and you have problems with it, you don't take it to showroom, do you? You take it to the service department." He said, "You need to stop looking at the church like a showroom and start looking at it like a service department. The church is there to help people. The church is there for others to come and serve you and you to serve them." In fact, this is how you know who the true Christians are. This is how you know who really believes - is they serve others.

Jesus doesn't say to Peter, "Look, this is how you're going to die. This is how you're going to suffer and all the rest of you are off the hook." He doesn't say, "This is what's going to be expected of you, Peter, but the rest of you are going to have it easy." As a matter of fact, I don't know if you guys have ever seen a list of how the apostles died, but all of them were martyred, but one. And if you read a list of what happened to them, it was horrendous, because true faith requires a sacrifice.

That leads to a final thing Jesus says about this. Just to review, as He's standing by the Sea of Galilee and talking to the disciples, to these men who failed Him. And Jesus forgives them and He reinstates them and He reminds them what true belief is all about. It's about love. If you believe in Jesus, you will love Him. It's about sacrifice. You will give to Him, you will hold nothing back. That leads to a third and a final thing true belief consists of. And this really sums the whole list up, and that is action. True belief consists in a call to action. You act on what you believe. You act on what you know is true. I don't eat dirt because I don't believe it's safe to eat dirt. My sons would disagree with me. We're having a long discussion about that every day as to the values of eating dirt. But I don't believe it's good for me, so I don't do it. I believe it's good to eat vegetables with ranch dressing because you can't eat those things ... I don't know how you eat those things raw. It just seems like it's wrong. It's unnatural. In a similar way, John says that you act on Jesus Christ. If you believe in Him, you will put it to action. And he says it this way in verses 19 through 22 - this is kind of a long passage, but I will walk you through this. But you're going to notice the action verb "follow Me" in this passage. He says, verse 19, "Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death Peter would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, 'Follow Me!'" There's the call to action there.

Now Peter, being a naturally inquisitive person, turns around, “saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, ‘Lord, who is the one who betrays You?’ And so Peter seeing him said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!’” As you know, Peter was a very curious person. It got him in trouble a lot. And after hearing that he would die, he kind of looks around and he's trying to get the attention off himself for a minute. That was probably a very sobering conversation. “This is how you're going to die, Peter.” Peter's probably looking around at his friends and he sees John and he says, “What about him? Let's talk about how he's going to die.” Jesus says in verse 22, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?”

There's been a lot of different interpretations for that passage, a lot of explanations. But one common one is that Jesus would come back within John's lifetime. But if you notice, that's not what it says. It says, “If I want him to remain until I come,” not “since I want him to remain, but if ...” It's a hypothetical statement. To say, “If I wanted to do that, Peter, even if I wanted to keep him alive until I return, that's none of your business. You need to follow Me.” It's repeated twice here for effect. You see it in verse 19 and in verse 22. Jesus says, “Hey, pay attention, Peter. Look at Me Peter, You need to follow Me. Don't worry about My plans for John's life, don't worry about My will for other people - you need to follow Me.”

This is how the Gospel of John ends. This is how it comes to a conclusion. And John's going to say a few words about Jesus in verses 24 through 25. He's going to say the whole world could not contain the books that would be written about Him. But this is the last command in the book. This is the last call to action: “Follow me.” If you believe in Jesus, you will go after Him. You will follow Him.

I've told you before, you can't eat the bread and drink the water from a distance. You have to do it close up. It's the same way with Jesus. If you believe in Him, you stay close to Him. You follow Him. It's also been said (or I think we talked about this) nobody else can drink water and eat bread for you. You have to do it for yourself. That's the idea here. That's the note on which John ends this Gospel. The disciples said they would follow Him, but they blew it. When the rubber meets the road, they had failed. But now Jesus tells them, “It's not over, you still need to follow Me.”

Teachers in Jesus' day often traveled a lot, they would go on the road. Which means if you wanted to learn from them, you had to go on the road with them. There was no radio back then, there was no internet or TV. And so, if you wanted to learn from a teacher, you had to literally follow them from town to town to town. And John ends this Gospel by asking the question, will you do that for Jesus? Will you follow? Will you live like He lived? Will you go where He went, not because you have to, but because you want to, because you love Him; not because it saves you, but because you are saved through grace. Will you sacrifice for others? Will you treasure Him above all else?

In one of the preaching magazines that I read, there was an article about a wealthy man in England who had an old shabby dog that he kept around because it was so loyal to him. He was so devoted. It was an ugly dog. I'm not going to talk about any of your dogs here. You all have

pretty dogs and beautiful dogs. But this guy had a mangy dog, full of fleas. But it was entirely committed to this man and so he kept it around. And the people in town would often remark that as the man walked around town with that dog, other dogs would come up and try to pick a fight. And other distractions would come along like cats or squirrels running by, but the dog just kept its eyes fixed on the master.

It's my prayer that the Gospel of John would have had this impact on your life. That it would keep your eyes fixed on the master. There's a lot of distractions in the Christian life, isn't there. There's a lot of things you can get caught up on. A lot of squirrels running by. A lot of dogs trying to pick a fight. But if you look to the master, He will never turn you away. If you look to Jesus, He will save you. That's the message of this Gospel. And let's close on that note and thank Him for what we've learned in this book.

Father, we thank you for the words of the Gospel of John and just for the clarity that it gave us on what salvation means. Father, we thank you so much for what Christ has done and just the simplicity of our faith. We believe in a resurrected Saviour who was crucified for our sins. Father, we rejoice in that, and we're just humbled by it. Help us to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Help us to keep our eyes focused on the one who saved us. And when distractions come along, we just keep going back to Him.

Lord, as we take the Lord's Supper this morning, I do pray for those who are saved. That all of this would encourage them and remind them of the greatness of Christ and what He has done. If there are any here this morning who are lost, Father, I pray You would break their hearts for Jesus. Give them a love for Him and a desire to be saved. Thank you, Father, for this time together. And we pray this all in Jesus' name, amen.