

## Gospel of John Study Session 37

In the last session we witnessed the foundation on which the entire Christian faith rests, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The evidence John wrote about to discuss the reality of the resurrection dealt with the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus to various people or groups of people. He used these narratives to show how faith comes about. John and Peter saw and inspected the empty tomb but didn't see Jesus. Mary Magdalene saw Jesus in the garden by the tomb. Next, Jesus appeared to ten of the remaining twelve disciples on the evening of Easter. Then lastly, a week later, Jesus appeared to the all eleven of the living disciples, this time including Thomas. As we noted, Thomas uttered a confession concerning Jesus which was the climax of the entire gospel of John. John was showing that this confession of faith in Jesus was what was necessary for genuine salvation. After this, John revealed that his purpose in writing his gospel was to show that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and the Messiah, the Savior of mankind. His resurrection vindicated all of His teaching and signs that He performed as coming from the Heavenly Father and validated His true identity as He was God's unique Son.

In this session, we see a postscript that John includes as the conclusion to his gospel. This chapter highlights the results of belief in Christ. John will also use this section to dispel a widely held rumor that had been circulating in the early church but was false. In addition to this, we will see Jesus restore Peter to the ministry after his denials of Jesus on the eve of His crucifixion.

### 1. Jesus appears to His disciple by the sea

#### **[John 21:1-11]**

Q: Where did Jesus appear to His disciples in this account? (*v.1 - the sea of Tiberias*)

John is the only gospel to use the name "Sea of Tiberias" in a gospel account. It has been called the Sea of Galilee originally, named for the region of northern Israel where it is located. About 20 A.D., Herod Antipas founded the city of Tiberias on the western shore of this lake in order to honor the emperor Tiberias. As the city grew in size and prominence, over time, it came to be referred to as the Sea of Tiberias. This fact shows us that John was written late in the first century as it wasn't commonly called the Sea of Tiberias until later in the first century. This is the lake where the disciples who were fishermen did their commercial fishing before they were called to follow Jesus.

Q: How long after the appearance in the locked room on the Sunday after Easter did this appearance of the Lord take place? (*We don't know for sure but it was certainly before the ascension and probably not too long after the appearance to where Thomas made his confession. Chances are the disciples left Jerusalem after the feast of unleavened bread and returned to Galilee.*)

Q: Why do you think these disciples returned to Galilee after the feast of unleavened bread? (*The command of Jesus given to them through Mary Magdalene and also they probably needed to make some money.*)

**[Matthew 28:7]**

Q: How many disciples were present at this event and who were they? *(There were 7 present: Nathaniel, Thomas, Peter, James, John (sons of Zebedee) and two unnamed disciples. It is possible that they were Philip and Andrew - Peter's brother - but this is pure speculation.)*

Once back at home in Galilee, going fishing was a natural thing to do. It was not abandoning their commission as Jesus had not given them any specific directions yet other than He would meet them in Galilee. The Holy Spirit certainly was not upon them yet and the reality of the resurrection was now sinking in. Being in Galilee gave the disciples some time to reflect upon what had happened without the frenzy of the chaotic atmosphere of being in Jerusalem. Fishing was a better alternative to than being idle and this was a possible way to make some money while they were waiting on Jesus. According to the wording (the definite article before the word "boat", this probably was Peter's boat.

Q: What time of day was it when the disciples went fishing? *(v.3 - night time)*

This is John using his light/dark symbolism to stress that the disciples were still in the dark concerning Jesus' resurrection. They were still aimless at this point and in the dark as to what to do with themselves. Without Christ, they could do nothing of kingdom worth.

**[John 15:5]** - The were certainly living this verse out at this time.

Q: After a night of fishing, how many fish did they catch? *(v.3 - none, obviously it had been a frustrating night in that regard)*

Q: As the dawn broke, who showed up on the beach and spoke to the disciples? *(v.4 - It was Jesus)*

The disciples did not know it was Jesus yet. We don't know why the disciples didn't recognize Jesus initially. Whether it was the time of day and the breaking light making it impossible to tell who was talking to them or whether there was a mist on the lake that obscured their vision or maybe they were weary and the distance of 100 yards made identification impossible. It could also be that somehow the physical features of Jesus had changed during the resurrection. In **Luke 24:16** we are told that the eyes of those two disciples along the road to Emmaus were actually prevented from seeing Jesus' true identity. But no such statement is made here so we don't know the reason for the disciples not recognizing Jesus at this point. (Later in the narrative an possible explanation may surface.) Jesus addresses them as "Children". This is a hard word to translate due to cultural distance. It's what Australians would call to a person, "Oi Mate". We'd say, "Hey Buddy" or "Guys". The NIV translates it "friends". It's not derogatory in any way but a word used to hail or greet a stranger.

Q: What does Jesus ask the disciples in the boat? *(v.5 - Children, you do not have any fish, do you?)*

Jesus is actually asking the disciples if they had anything to eat. The word "fish" in v.5 is

not the normal word for fish. In fact, this is the only place in the New Testament that this word is used. It means a “bit to eat” a “snack or small meal”. In this context, since they are fisherman on a boat, the translation “fish” is what Jesus was asking about but He’s actually asking them whether or not they have any fish for a light meal.

Q: By the wording of Jesus’ question, is Jesus expecting a positive or negative reply from the disciples? (*negative - the wording makes it clear that He knew they caught nothing*)

Q: What does Jesus suggest that they do? (*v.6 - cast their nets on the right side of the boat and there they would find a catch. His words are similar to one fisherman telling another fisherman to try casting ‘over there’.*)

The question is why would the fishermen listen to the advice of a stranger? It’s possible that the disciples saw that this stranger had a different view of the water than they did. It’s also possible that they just didn’t see that they had anything to lose by throwing the net over one more time. The results could be no worse than what they had experienced throughout the night. Whether it was tired resignation or some hope or both, the disciples followed the stranger’s advice.

Q: What was the result of the disciples following the stranger’s advice? (*v.6 - They caught a huge number of fish, so many that they couldn’t haul them all on the boat.*)

Q: What insight does the experience give to John and who does he tell about it? (*v.7 - John figured out that this was actually Jesus on the shore and he told Peter.*)

How did John recognize Jesus through this event? Let’s read the following.

### **[Luke 5:1-11]**

This event happened at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry and call to His disciples. There are certainly differences in this account than in the one in John but there is also some similarities. Jesus told the fishermen, who had worked hard all night and caught nothing, to cast their nets again. As a result, they caught such a huge number of fish, their nets began to tear and it took help from their partners on another boat to get the haul ashore. This event in John sparked a memory in John who recalled the previous experience with Jesus.

Q: In the Luke passage, what was the condition of the nets after the big catch? (*Luke 5:6 - the nets begin to break.*)

Q: In the John passage, what does John note about the condition of the nets after the big catch? (*v.11 - the nets did not break/tear*)

Q: At the end of the Luke passage, what did Jesus say the disciples would be doing from then on? (*Luke 5:10 - They would become fishing for men - evangelizing*)

Here’s the symbolism for the nets. The nets represent the two different covenants at play.

The net at the beginning of the Luke account represented the law. It tore or gave way as the disciples were going to be proclaiming God's grace. The law was not intended to catch fish (make converts). By the net breaking, it shows that the law was in the process of being broken and would need to be replaced in the near future for productive "fishing". In John, the net represents grace, the new covenant. It surrounds those caught up in it and does not tear or give way as it has strength the law never had. It was designed for such a big haul and encompasses the lives of those in it.

Q: What does Peter do when he hears that this is Jesus on shore? (*v.7 - He put on his outer garment, jumped out of the boat and swam to shore.*)

Q: What does this tell us about Peter's feelings for Jesus at this moment? (*Peter was anxious to see Jesus. This showed his enthusiasm and zeal to be with Jesus again.*)

Peter is showing a response to the forgiveness and grace of Jesus. If he were still unsure of his relationship with Jesus, he probably would have stayed on the boat or jumped out and swam the other direction. Yet, he wanted to be with Jesus desperately as Jesus had forgiven him through His amazing love.

It is important to keep in mind that Jesus appeared to Peter once for the purpose of bringing reconciliation to Peter for denying Him three times on the night of his trial. (**I Corinthians 15:5**). This is not the action of a disciple who is hiding or running from Jesus or isn't sure how he'll be received by Jesus. He is doing what he can to be with Jesus as fast as he can.

On the other hand, the other six disciples are left with the task of maneuvering the boat back to shore while dragging this massive quantity of fish along with them. Such a large haul would have been hard to manage. The custom was that when the boat got to the shallow water, the fishermen could begin sorting the fish based on size.

Q: What did the disciples see when they got to shore? (*v.9 - a charcoal fire with some fish already on it and some bread*)

Q: What did Jesus ask of the disciples? (*v.10 - to bring some of the fish they caught to the fire*)

This portion of the account shows us two important things about Jesus and His remaining ministry among His disciples. If you recall, back in the upper room on the night He was betrayed, the disciples had been arguing about who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus shut down this discussion with the foot washing demonstration showing that the greatest would be the servant of all. Even though He was their teacher, He served them in humble fashion. Now He is reinforcing that point by serving them a hot breakfast - something they truly need after a hard night of fishing that ended with such a large catch they had to get to land. Jesus wants them to remember that serving each other is the path to kingdom greatness.

This scene gives us one more lesson from Jesus to His disciples. When Jesus distributed food to feed the multitudes, He created more food than was given or originally present. We see this happening again. During the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus created fish and bread from what was given to Him to share with the multitude. There were a few fish on the fire and some bread

but more were needed and He had told them where to get them. Jesus is still miraculously providing for them by multiplying the fish on hand. This would be a lesson they would need to remember as they were going to move forward in His ministry in the upcoming weeks. He would continue to bless their efforts and provide for them.

V.11 tells us that Peter returned to the boat and finished the job of pulling the full net with all the fish still in it onto land. The weight of the net plus the fish could easily be over 300 pounds. This shows us that Peter was physically very strong to be able to do this by himself. Having this sort of physical strength may also show us why he took up the unofficial self-proclaimed leader of the Twelve. Another thing this portion of this account shows us is that the author of this gospel was an eyewitness to all of this and that he was a fisherman. Notice the details John mentioned. The number of fish as they were counted for business purposes and also that the net didn't break. A fisherman's perspective focuses on such details.

Now the following is going to disappoint some of you but the number 153 does not mean anything special. It symbolizes absolutely nothing. The only thing it shows is that this was a huge catch of fish, much larger than anything most fishermen would ever catch. The fact that the catch was this large shows itself as special. This would provide funding for them for quite some time.

#### **[John 21:12-14]**

Q: What does Jesus do after the fish are sorted and the boat and nets are all back on land? *(v. 12 - He invites them to breakfast. This was not a second communion as there were no symbols being presented, no commands to do this again - ever. It was just a breakfast for His disciples who are now His brothers.)*

Q: What did the disciples want to ask Jesus? *(v.12 - they wanted to ask Him directly if it was Him but they refrained from doing so. They probably all wanted to ask "Is this You, Jesus?")*

Q: What does this tell us about Jesus' post-resurrection body? *(It had different appearance than His pre-cross body did)*

The important point of this verse is that while Jesus' physical body was in some way different looking, the disciples were still able to discern that it was Jesus by how He spoke and acted. Their prior relationship with Jesus verified His identity to them. Remember, this entire resurrection was a new experience to them. It wasn't what they expected or fully understood yet. We've had 2,000 years to digest the resurrection and dissect it and examine it whereas this was probably three weeks after the event. While hesitant and uneasy to join Jesus, they did so knowing it was Him. He was doing things that they had done together during His ministry and it was giving them mental signs that this was Jesus. By giving them the fish and the bread, it reminded the disciples of the feeding of the 5,000 and probably the Last Supper in that He was serving them. He's trying to help them adjust to the new era of grace that is dawning.

Q: According to John, what number was this appearance of the post-resurrected Jesus? *(v.14 - It was the third appearance.)*

This is actually the seventh appearance of Jesus after His resurrection. John reckons it the third time because it is the third time Jesus appeared to a group of His disciples. The first was on Easter evening. The second was a week later that included Thomas. This was the third appearance to the group.

## 2. The reinstatement of Peter

### **[John 21:15-17]**

This section is critical to Peter and his ability to minister after Jesus ascends back to heaven. Remember, Peter publicly denied Jesus three times on the night of Jesus' trial despite his boasts to sacrifice his very life for Jesus. While not all the disciples were present at the denials, all the disciples and probably most of the followers of Jesus knew about this incident at by this time. It was public knowledge among the faithful. We know that Jesus appeared to Peter personally and it was at this meeting that Jesus forgave Peter for his denials. Yet, that was a private reconciliation conference. Something had to be done publicly to restore Peter to a place among the "Twelve" so that it would be confirmed that he was still loved by Jesus and that the Lord wanted him to continue with the commission that had been given to all the disciples. Any public ministry Peter would have in the future would require Peter to be publicly reinstated by Jesus to the disciples ranks (in the disciples' minds - not Jesus'). This is how Jesus restored Peter publicly before His disciples.

Q: How many times in this passage does Jesus ask a direct question of Peter? (*vv. 15-17 - 3*)

Q: How many times did Peter deny Jesus (*3 times*)

Each one of these questions is intended to replace one denial by Peter. The three denials are countered by Jesus by asking Peter three times whether he loves Him or not.

Q: What was Jesus' first question to Peter? (*v.15 - do you love Me more than these?*)

Q: What does Jesus mean when He said "these"? (*It can mean one of three things based upon the context of the question: 1) Do you love Me more than these other men do?, 2) Do you love Me more than you love these other men?, 3) Do you love Me more than you love these things - the boats, the nets, fishing, your former way of life?*)

The most logical choice of the three is the first one. Jesus is asking Peter, "*Do you really love Me more than these other men do?*" This goes along best with Peter's boasts on the night Jesus was betrayed followed by His failures of denying Jesus (thus the reason for this dialogue.) The least likely would be "*Do you love Me more than these things - your former life?*" Peter had given that up to follow Jesus and was only fishing to pass the time and wait for Jesus to appear to them in Galilee. As for the middle option, the tension in the narrative is whether Peter loved Jesus, not the other disciples. His love for them was never really questioned or commented upon. So the question Jesus was asking Peter was, "*Do you love Me more than these other men love Me?*" Jesus is probing Peter's heart to get him to see that his love for Jesus is more than superficial.

There are some nuances in the Greek concerning the words translated “love”. The typical New Testament word for love in the Greek is “agapao”. While the Greeks didn’t use this word very much at all, it was picked up by the Christians to express God’s type of love - sacrificial and selfless. The other word for love in this passage is “phileo” which has the meaning brotherly love. Both words describe a high, honorable and lofty type of love. Both even have some overlap. What adds a challenge to get a solid interpretation is that John largely uses these two words interchangeably. In Jesus’ first two questions to Peter, Jesus uses the word “agapao” for love. In Jesus’ third question to Peter, He uses the word “phileo” for love. In all three of Peter’s responses, he uses the word “phileo” for love.

In addition to this, the word for sheep or lamb is different. In the first charge to Peter (v.15) calls those Peter is to tend “lambs”. It is the diminutive form of the word for lamb which means little lamb. One would speak of a lamb as an individual animal. In the second two charges to Peter (vv. 16 & 17) Jesus uses the word for sheep, which was used usually to denote part of a flock. In v.16 the Lord uses the diminutive form meaning little sheep. While in v.17 it’s the normal form of the word. I had several relatives who owned working ranches while I was growing up. On my first trip as a child to uncle John’s ranch, as a child, I asked him how many cows he had. He told me that he didn’t own any cows. Cows refers to the animal itself. Cattle refers to the commodity and the animals on his ranch were all commodities that were born and bred and taken care of to be one day be sold. That’s similar to this distinctive. A lamb is an animal. A sheep is part of a group that is going to be used for the will of the owner. However, the individual lamb as well as the animal in the flock all need tending and guardianship exercised over them.

Then there is the verb in each charge Jesus gives to Peter. In vv.15 & 17, the verb “tend” means to feed or lead to pasture. It refers only to the aspect of making sure the sheep are fed. In v.16 the word “shepherd” is used and refers to the complete care of the sheep - feeding, herding, protecting, sheering, etc. All the sheep needs is encompassed by this verb. What is interesting is that the charges or commissions Jesus is making to Peter are all verbs. Jesus is saying that the ministry of the gospel is doing more than being in a specific office or possessing a certain title. The Pharisees loved their titles and lorded them over the masses instead of feeding those under their care. Jesus is correcting this problem so that His disciples know that the ministry is taking action for those the Lord puts in their care.

Lastly, the word translated “know” that Peter uses in his response to Jesus’ probing changes in the last response. In each of the three initial responses (vv. 15-17) Peter uses the word “oida” which means knowledge gained as a known fact. It is intellectual knowledge. Yet, at the end of v.17, Peter not only repeats what he has said in vv. 15-16 but then adds to it a tag in which he changes the word for knowledge to “ginosko” which means knowledge gained by experience.

So now, let’s take a look at this exchange in an expanded form:

v.15 - Jesus asked Peter, “*Simon (Peter) son of John, do you selflessly love Me more than these other men love Me?*” Peter said to Jesus, “*Yes, Lord; You know as a fact that I love you like a member of my own family.*” (Notice that Peter does not at this time dare to indicate that his love for Jesus is any greater than the other disciples. He has learned some humility through the experience of denying Jesus.)

To this Jesus tasks Peter with, “*Feed or pasture My lambs, those individuals who belong to Me but I’ve put them into your care for a time. Make sure my little lambs do not go spiritually*

*hungry.*” (This also indicates evangelist activity was part of the commission as a lamb would indicate an animal not associated with a flock yet. So, those who come to know Jesus for salvation, need to be fed and put in a flock in order to get their proper feeding.)

v.16 - Jesus asked Peter a second time, *“Simon, son of John, do you selflessly love Me?”* (Notice Jesus drops the word “these” from the question this time. He modified the question to fit Peter’s first response. Take away your boast of loving Me more than these guys do and just answer if you love Me at all.) In other words, Jesus was asking him, *“Ok Peter, let’s leave the other disciples out of this. Do you selflessly love Me?”* To this Peter answers the same thing, *“Yes Lord; You know as a matter of fact that I love you like my own family.”*

To this Jesus tasks Peter with, *“Shepherd or render complete care over my little sheep. They are part of My herd now and I expect you to responsibly care for them fully those I put in your charge.”*

v.17 - Jesus asked Peter a third time, *“Simon, son of John, do you even love Me like a member of your own family?”* (Notice, Jesus switches verbs here from agapao to phileo. *“OK Peter, you haven’t responded with the selfless love so using your own type of love, do you even love Me like a member of your family?”* At this point Peter is deeply grieved or made sad over being asked the same question three times by the Lord. This time he responds to Jesus, *“Yes, Lord; You know everything intellectually. You also know by experiences that we’ve had together that I love you like a part of my own family.”*

To this Jesus commissioned Peter, *“Then feed My sheep - the portion of the herd who I put in your care you are responsible to feed.”* Thus, there are three humble affirmations made by Peter of his love for Jesus that are meant to counter the three denials he made. Through this, Peter came to a place of honesty with himself. Jesus’ intent is not to cause Peter more shame but to build him up by showing him that he does truly love Jesus. Note also that by this point, there is no boasting or self-righteousness or pride in Peter’s responses to Jesus. This allowed Peter and the others to witness Jesus restoring him to His ministry.

In Peter’s last response, he is humbly asserting that his love for Jesus is known by His experiences of him. The Lord does not give Peter sole authority over all His sheep. In fact, none of the sheep are ever Peter’s sole possession or any that of any other human disciple. The sheep belong to Christ alone and He gives stewardship over certain of His flock to mature believers to care for.

### **[I Peter 5:1-4]**

All Christians are to shepherd or render total guardianship over those the Lord commits to their care. All spiritually mature believers are called to be shepherds. For Peter, this set of commissions were challenges that demanded a total renewal of his loyalty and also this reaffirmed his responsibilities before the other disciples. Thus, the public full restoration of Peter to the ministry that the others would also be sharing. They did not get this sort of questioning because they did not deny Jesus three times after making loud boasts of their loyalty to Jesus before His arrest.

### **3. Jesus, Peter and John**

## **[John 21:18-23]**

This section details a walk that Jesus took with Peter and John followed close behind, within earshot.

Q: What did Jesus say Peter could do when he was younger? (*v.19 - He could dress himself and walk wherever he pleased*)

Q: What was going to be Peter's lot when he got older? (*v.18 - He would stretch out his hands, be dressed by others and led about by others, taking them where he didn't wish to go.*)

In Peter's younger days, he had a certain freedom about him. He could act independently of others and according to his own will. The phrase "stretch out your hands" was a well-used figure of speech for crucifixion. So, Jesus was prophesying to Peter that later in life he would not only lose those youthful freedoms but also be crucified. In other words, the freedoms of the flesh that Peter had known before coming to follow Christ were going to be replaced with service to the Lord and crucifixion. While this sounds terrible (and crucifixion always was terrible) it marked the new responsibilities Peter would have as well as the new dangers that would be a part of his life now. Jesus is telling Peter that he is in a certain different class now - one led by the Lord and will require him to spend his life for the glory of God. V.19 explains this prophecy.

Q: What was Jesus' command to Peter after this prophecy? (*v.19 - Follow Me!*)

This is a present imperative which could be translated, "Keep following Me!" Jesus was telling Peter that if he were fulfill the earlier commissions of feeding and shepherding His flock, he'd would have to follow Jesus every step of the way - including to a cross. His eyes needed to remain upon Jesus, not anything else, especially the past and his past notions of the kingdom of God. In this way, Peter's death would bring God glory, just as Jesus' had done. Peter came to realize through this that anytime a Christian follows Christ to suffering or even death, it brings praise and glory to God. This is because the believer is showing their faith in God and their love for Him over this world and the things in it.

## **[I Peter 4:14-16]**

Think of how devoted Peter was to Christ in that he lived and faithfully ministered for probably two decades after this prophecy being made knowing that for certain his life was going to end by crucifixion. This was hanging over his head the whole time yet he never mentioned it in his letters as a source of motivation for anything other than to keep following Jesus. By the way, there is no proof that Peter was crucified upside down.

By the time John wrote this gospel, the prophecy had already been fulfilled. It most likely happened during the reign of Nero. What is undisputable is that the very shame Peter bore from the night he denied knowing Jesus through the overwhelming forgiveness and restoration Jesus imparted to him motivated him to a very fruitful ministry.

We are told to also follow Jesus, like Peter, allowing us to be overwhelmed by Jesus' mercy and grace over our past failures so that we live fruitful lives for God. We are to walk with Jesus in consistent discipleship until God calls us home.

Q: What historical significance does v.20 give us? (*John identifies himself further through this verse. It states that the one following Peter and Jesus and who wrote this book is the same person. Now we know that it is the disciple that rested on Jesus chest at the Last Supper. Again, this shows us the intimacy involved in writing this gospel. It was written by an insider.*)

Q: During this walk with Jesus, Peter sees John following them. What does he ask Jesus? (v.21 - *“Lord, and what about this man?”*)

Peter’s question shows some uneasiness and curiosity. He is asking, *“My outcome doesn’t look that bright Jesus, what about that guy? Is he going to come to the same terrible end?”* Jesus had given Peter an important command to follow Him. Would this disciple face the same perils and fate as him for doing the same task?

Q: How does Jesus reply to Peter? (v.22 - *“If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you? You follow Me!”*)

This reply led to an urban legend in the early church. They took it as John was not going to die until Jesus returned. So, in their minds (and this was very widespread throughout the faith in the first century), Jesus was coming back at some point when John was still alive. John was writing this account to straighten out this issue in the early church and to correct this false rumor which had been circulating for decades at this point.

Back to Jesus’ response. In essence, Jesus is telling Peter, that it isn’t any of his business what happens to John. Jesus has something in store for him, too but he need not worry about it because Peter needs to focus on Jesus alone - not the others. Peter should not be comparing his life and ministry with the life and ministry of anyone else. (This is still an important point that must be overcome in many Christian’s lives.) Jesus wanted Peter (and us) to take our attention off others and put it on Him.

This is one of the very few clear references to Jesus’ second coming in the book of John. In His answer about John’s fate, Jesus was offering a supposition not a promise. His answer was hyperbole - an huge exaggeration about John’s life and ministry. Even if Jesus wanted him to remain until He returned, it wasn’t to deter Peter from following Jesus. One of the things that actually gave legs to this rumor about John’s life was the fact that he did live an extraordinarily long life, especially compared to the other disciples. He was the only original disciple that wasn’t martyred for his faith. As far as we know, he died of old age while in exile on Patmos.

#### 4. The finale of the gospel

##### **[John 21:24-25]**

Again, John identifies himself as the author of the gospel and the one who testifies to its truthfulness and accuracy. The “these things” is the entirety of the fourth gospel. The “we” in v.24 is most likely the “editorial” use of the plural. John uses this in the prologue (1:14) as well as extensively in I John. Paul uses it in II Corinthians 12:2-4 when talking about himself in the third person. It was a common way to describe oneself without mentioning oneself directly.

Q: What word do you see in v.25, the very last verse in the book, that doesn't appear anywhere else in this book? (*The use of the word "I". This is John's only self-reference.*)

While John does finally mention himself, he doesn't linger on himself but rather returns to Jesus, who is the theme of the book.

Q: What does John say about the works of Jesus in v.25? (*That they are too numerous to be recounted in full.*)

While John lets us know that his book only contains a fraction of the tremendous volume of works done by Jesus, this book remains one of the most valuable assets of the church.

Q: What are some of the greatest "take aways" for you from John?

Q: Do you have any questions, comments, rebukes or rebuttals?