

**New Testament Recovery Version**  
**Study Guide**  
**For Vital Groups**

**Gospel of John**

**Series I- Gospel of Matthew to Gospel of John**

## Week 1 John 1:1-4:54

### I. Key Verses:

- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- John 1:51 ... Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.
- John 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.
- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
- John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

### II. Central Lane:

*Please read the corresponding outline.(NT RcV pp. 359-360)*

### III. The Light of the Truth:

#### REGENERATION

—*John 3:3, 5-6; John 3:2 note 1; 3 note 3, 5 note 2; 6 note 2; 14 note 1.*

*Further Reading: Life-Study of John, Msg. 9.*

### IV. Life Supply:

A kingdom is always related to life. The vegetable kingdom is related to the vegetable life, and the animal kingdom is related to the animal life. If you want to share in a certain kind of kingdom, you first need the life of that kingdom. Only birds can partake of the bird kingdom because only they have the life of a bird. Likewise, only men can participate in the human kingdom because only they have a human life. So, without the life of God, how could we ever share the kingdom of God? ... We need the divine life. We need to be born again. Regeneration is the only way, the unique entrance, into the kingdom of God.

The divine life brings us into the kingdom of God. We were all born into the human kingdom. No one has ever been naturalized into the kingdom of man. For example, when a dog is born, he immediately finds himself in the dog kingdom. He knows everything about being a dog. There is no need for anyone to teach him to be a dog, saying, "Little dog, you must know that you are a dog, that you are in the dog kingdom, and that from now on you must bark every day." A dog is in the dog kingdom and knows all about being a dog by birth. This is why the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus that he had to be born into the kingdom of God. We cannot enter into the kingdom of God by learning or by being naturalized. Although you may be naturalized to be a citizen of a particular nation, you can never be naturalized into a kingdom. A dog cannot be naturalized into the cat kingdom. Suppose someone would say to a dog, "Little dog, I like you. I want to change your nationality. You were born into the dog kingdom, but I want to naturalize you into the cat kingdom." If you try to do this, you will cause the cat kingdom a great deal of trouble. The correct way to bring a dog into the cat kingdom is to regenerate the dog with the life of a cat.

When we were regenerated, we were translated into the kingdom of God. Colossians 1:13 says that God "delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love." We were translated by being regenerated and now we are in the kingdom of God. When we called on the name of the Lord, the divine Spirit came into us, regenerating us and causing us to be born into the kingdom of God. Although you may know very little about the kingdom of God, your spirit within you knows about the kingdom. (*Life-Study of John, pp. 107-109*)

## Week 2 John 5:1-8:27

### I. Key Verses:

- John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.
- John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
- John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever ...
- John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- John 7:17 If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.
- John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.
- John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

### II. Central Lane:

*Please read the corresponding outline.(NT RcV pp. 360-361)*

### III. The Light of the Truth:

#### THE SPIRIT

*—John 7:38-39; John 7:38 note 1, 2; 39 note 1.*

*Further Reading: Life-Study of John, Msg. 18.*

### IV. Life Supply:

In Genesis 1 we have the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is just God Himself coming out to reach His creation. At the time of Genesis 1, within the Spirit of God there was only divinity. One day God became incarnated to be a man who was Jesus Christ. Thirty-three and a half years later, Christ was crucified. After crucifixion, He passed through resurrection and ascension, and the Spirit of God became the Spirit of the incarnated and resurrected Jesus Christ. Now the Spirit of Jesus Christ is reaching out to touch human beings. Formerly, it was the Spirit of God reaching out to touch God's creation only with divinity, but now the Spirit of Jesus Christ comes out to reach human beings with divinity, humanity, the effectiveness of His all-inclusive death, and with the element of resurrection. Before Christ was resurrected, such a Spirit was "not yet."

We may use the illustration of a glass of pure water into which many other ingredients are added. The pure water passes through one stage, and the milk is added. It passes through other stages in which honey, tea, and salt are added. Eventually, it becomes an all-inclusive drink. Before the pure water passed all these stations, such a wonderful drink was "not yet," although the pure water in the glass was there already. Now it is an all-inclusive drink. Likewise, the Spirit promised by the Lord Jesus in [John] 7:39 and 14:16-17 is not the Spirit with only divinity as His content, but the Spirit with divinity, humanity, the all-inclusive death, resurrection, and ascension. Now we not only have the Spirit of God, but also the Spirit of Jesus Christ. It is such an all-inclusive Spirit that gives us the flow of the rivers of water of life.

Sometimes when a child needs medicine, his wise mother will hide the medicine in a drink. When the child takes the drink, he gets the medicine. There is medicine in the all-inclusive Spirit. This medicine is the killing death of Christ that is in the Holy Spirit today. The more you say, "O Lord Jesus," the more you receive the all-inclusive Spirit. After a few minutes, you may feel the Spirit killing your temper, pride, selfishness, and other negative things.... As this Spirit moves within us, the killing effect of the cross penetrates into our being. He will kill every negative element in our being. Furthermore, in this all-inclusive drink there is the nourishing ingredient. In this Spirit is all that we need. (*Life-Study of John, pp. 220-221*)

## Week 3 John 8:28-12:50

### I. Key Verses:

- John 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.
- John 9:3 Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned nor his parents, but he was born so, that the works of God might be manifested in him.
- John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.
- John 11:4 But when Jesus heard it, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, in order that the Son of God may be glorified through it.
- John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
- John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.
- John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.
- John 12:36 While you have the light, believe into the light, so that you may become sons of light...

### II. Central Lane:

*Please read the corresponding outline.(NT RcV pp. 361-362)*

### III. The Light of the Truth:

#### THE PROPAGATION OF LIFE

—*John 12:23-24; John 12:23 note 1; 24 note 1, note 2.*

*Further Reading: Life-Study of John, Msg. 26.*

### IV. Life Supply:

The Lord is a grain of wheat, and there is no other way for that grain of wheat to increase except for it to fall into the ground and die. This is the way to have the multiplication of life.

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it will simply remain one grain and will never produce anything. But, praise the Lord, after it dies and grows up, the one grain becomes the many grains or the much fruit. These many grains or much fruit are the church. This is the way for the church to come into being. This is also the way for the Lord to increase the church. This has to be the way for us to bring the church into existence and to increase it. We must face human welcome by death, by taking the cross. The way for the church to come into being and to increase is not by human glory; it is by the death of the cross.

Among the many missionaries who went to China was a sister named Margaret E. Barber who was sent there by a British mission. She was accused falsely, called back to England, and later vindicated by the Lord. Then the Lord burdened her to return to China. She was not sent by any mission but went there by faith, settling in a little town named Pagoda, very close to Brother Watchman Nee's hometown. She stayed there purposely, not visiting other places. In a sense, the Lord sowed her there as a grain of wheat. She remained there for years, dying there in 1929.

Do not be troubled by the temporary success of others' outward activities. Let the Lord have some time, and He will vindicate His way in life.... Such a work is not a matter of activity, but of life. This is the work of life to produce and increase the church.

We may use the illustration of making artificial flowers. If you were to hire people to make artificial flowers, a great number could be produced within a short time. However, if you are going to grow flowers, it will take a longer time. You must first sow the seed. The seed will grow and multiply. Then more seed will fall into the ground and grow and multiply again and again. This kind of multiplication will last for a long time. What kind of increase do you expect to have—artificial flowers produced by outward labor or genuine flowers produced by life? (*Life-Study of John, pp. 313-315*)

## Week 4 John 13:1-17:24

### I. Key Verses:

- John 13:14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.
- John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
- John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
- John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.
- John 17:11 ... Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given to Me, that they may be one even as We are.
- John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

### II. Central Lane:

*Please read the corresponding outline.(NT RcV pp. 362-363)*

### III. The Light of the Truth:

#### THE ORGANISM OF THE TRIUNE GOD

—*John 15:1, 5; John 15:1 note 1, note 2.*

*Further Reading: Life-Study of John, Msg. 33.*

### IV. Life Supply:

In 15:1-11 we see that the vine and the branches are an organism to glorify the Father by expressing the riches of the divine life.

What is the difference between an organization and an organism? A table, for example, is an organization, for many pieces of wood are assembled to form one entity. Why is a table an organization and not an organism? Because in the table as a unit there is not one organ. There are no organs in a table because there is no life in a table. Apparently, our body is also an organization. However, it is much more than an organization because we have both organs and life. Since our body has both organs and life, it is an organism, not merely an organization. In like manner, the church, the Body of Christ, is an organism.

In John 15 this organism is likened to a vine tree. The grapevine is used as a figure of this wonderful organism. Within this vine tree we have the tree itself and all of its branches. The Lord Jesus said that the vine tree is just Himself (v. 1). He is the tree, and we are the branches of this tree. By this clear picture we can see that we are the branching out of the tree, for the branches are the branching out of the vine tree. If you were to cut off the branches, you would have just a bare tree without branches, and there would be no branching out of the vine. But today this universal vine tree has many branches, and these branches are simply His branching out.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was just a small man living in a certain place. But look at His branching out today: He has parts in Washington, D.C., New York, Los Angeles, London, Frankfurt, Tokyo, Manila, Taipei, Hong Kong, and throughout the world. Praise the Lord that throughout the whole earth we see the branching out of this vine tree! This is not an organization; it is an organism that has life with many organic elements, organs, and organic systems growing in it. (*Life-Study of John, pp. 394-395*)

## Week 5 John 17:25-21:25

### I. Key Verses:

- John 18:37 ...Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I would testify to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears My voice.
- John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.
- John 20:1 Now on the first day of the week, Mary the Magdalene came early to the tomb while it was yet dark and saw the stone taken away from the tomb.
- John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.
- John 20:31 But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

### II. Central Lane:

*Please read the corresponding outline.(NT Rcv pp. 363-364)*

### III. The Light of the Truth:

#### RESURRECTION

—*John 20:1-9, 19-23; John 20:1 note 2; 5 note 1; 17 note 1; 19 note 2.*

*Further Reading: Life-Study of John, Msg. 46.*

### IV. Life Supply:

Christ ascended to the heavens with a resurrected body, and now, in John 20, He comes back to the disciples also with a resurrected body (Luke 24:37-40; 1 Cor. 15:44). With a resurrected body, the Lord came into the room where the disciples were with “the doors shut” (John 20:19). Since the doors were shut, how could He enter with a body of bones and flesh? Our limited mentality cannot comprehend it, but it is a fact, and we must receive it according to the divine revelation.

Consider the illustration of a carnation seed. A carnation seed has a tiny, round body. But when it has been planted and has grown out of the ground, it has a stem and a blossom. Is this not also a body? Before the carnation seed was sown into the ground, it had a little body. After growing out of the ground, it had a different body. This is exactly what Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 15:44: “It is sown a soulish body, it is raised a spiritual body.” The body is sown in one form and raised up from the ground in another form. The one sown is the original, natural body, and the one grown up is the resurrected body. After His resurrection, Christ had a resurrected body; yet it was physical and could still be touched. Even though the doors were shut, Christ entered into the room with this body.

[In John 20,] after the Lord showed them both His hands and His side, the disciples “rejoiced when they saw the Lord” (vv. 20). This was a fulfillment of the Lord’s promise in 16:19 and 22, where He said, “You therefore now indeed have sorrow; but I shall see you again and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.” Now the disciples saw the newborn “child” (vv. 21), who was the resurrected Lord born in His resurrection as the Son of God (Acts 13:33). As we shall now see, this fulfillment by His coming back to His disciples brought them five blessings: His presence, His peace, His commission, the Holy Spirit, and the authority to represent Him (John 20:23). (*Life-Study of John, pp. 553-554*)