

Terrace Studies Term 1, 2017

**Jesus, the Passover Lamb,
who died and rose again**

JOHN 18-20

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In these four weeks leading up to Easter, we're going to look at the Gospel of John's account of:

- Jesus' arrest and trials (18:1-19:16);
- his crucifixion and burial (19:16-42);
- his resurrection appearances (20:1-18, and 20:19-31).

John is one of the apostles, the son of Zebedee (Matthew 10:2), who labels himself several times as "the disciple Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). John's gospel basically falls into two halves:

John 1-10: Jesus is the Son of God who came down from heaven to reveal his Father.

John 11-21: Jesus, the Son and Christ, is returning to heaven to open the way to His Father.

John states his purpose in writing his gospel in **20:30-31**:

³⁰Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Throughout the gospel, John records the testimony of eyewitnesses about Jesus – what Jesus taught and did. This evidence is laid out so that readers will trust in Jesus – the promised Messiah, Son of God – and by doing that they will have eternal life.

Key questions to ask as you read these passages (and any part of John's gospel) are:

- As people encounter Jesus, what signs or evidence do they see?
- How does that lead to belief?

In week 3 of this series, all of us will get the opportunity to have a go at reading the bible and talking about it in pairs. Each week at Terrace Studies, we gather in small groups around God's word – to wrestle with the text and its application to us, and praying for and with each other – before the talk. But, meeting 1-1 around the bible is great to do in addition to bible study in a group. It gives more flexibility to address specific questions, and can provide greater accountability, as we share and pray together in response to the passage.

However, it may feel intimidating to meet 1-1 without a set bible study. That's why in week 2 of the series in the bible study groups, and in week 3 in pairs (see p8-9, 12-13), we're going to use particular questions to guide us through the passage in these categories: just remember **COMA**:

Context

Observation

Meaning

Application

There is more information about the COMA structure in the Appendix on pages 20-21. This structure is adapted from David Helm's book, *One-to-One Bible Reading* (Matthias Media, 2011). It is so useful because it reflects the process of reading and understanding the Bible, and the questions under each heading can be slightly modified for the different types of literature in the Bible – we'll be using questions that are helpful for narrative passages. You could use these questions in your own bible reading, or meeting 1-1 with someone, or in a bible study group.

So, in week 3 of the series (Tuesday 4th April) meet briefly in your groups, and your leaders will split you off into pairs (or threes), and you'll have the rest of group time to meet in your pairs. Go and meet wherever you like, and enjoy unpacking the passage together. Come back for morning tea and the talk and encourage each other with what you've learnt!

rooster crowing (John 13:33-38)? How do you think Peter felt when he heard that rooster?

3. Jewish leaders: Caiaphas' words in 18:14 are central to understanding the agenda of the Jewish leaders. How do we see them working towards this agenda throughout this passage, specifically in their interactions with Pilate (18:30-31, 38-40 19:4-7, 12, 14-15)?

4. Pilate:
 - a) What is your impression of what Pilate is trying to do throughout this 'trial'?

 - b) What finding does he make about Jesus (i.e. 18:38, 19:6, 12)?

 - c) What does he ultimately do?

5. Jesus: By the end of the passage, what situation is Jesus in as a result of the actions of Peter, the Jewish leaders and Pilate?

6. How does this passage change, or confirm, your view of God's sovereignty and his plan for salvation? How does it challenge you to

Context

What has happened so far in the narrative (eg any major events, characters, themes)?

What has happened just prior to this section?

Observation

What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them, or how do they describe themselves?

In the events in this passage, is either time or place significant?

Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?

Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?

Are there any editorial comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?

Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What do they learn?

What does the passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?

How could you sum up the meaning of the passage in your own words?

Application

How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?

Is there some attitude you need to change?

What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?

“Shall I not drink the cup my Father has given me?”
Jesus the innocent, condemned on behalf of the guilty

John 18:1-19:16

The swap ...

Jesus resolutely heads towards the cross, to ‘drink the cup’ of God’s wrath

Jesus knew all that was going to happen to him

Jesus’ death is propitiatory

Jesus, the innocent, condemned on behalf of the guilty

Jesus’ death is substitutionary

Jesus, the Passover Lamb

Jesus, the heavenly King, has come to testify to the truth

Responding to the King

"It is finished."

Jesus the King of all, dies as the Passover Lamb.

John 19:16-42

The king of all is crucified ... (19:16-22)

... according to God's salvation plan revealed in Scripture (19:23-37)

God's Passover Lamb is dead (19:38-42)

Context

What has happened so far in the narrative (eg any major events, characters, themes)?

What has happened just prior to this section?

Observation

What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them, or how do they describe themselves?

In the events in this passage, is either time or place significant?

Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?

Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?

What surprises are there?

Are there any editorial comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?

Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What do they learn?

What does the passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?

How could you sum up the meaning of the passage in your own words?

Application

How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?

Is there some attitude you need to change?

What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?

Encounters with the Risen Jesus, Part 1: the empty tomb and the tearful women.

John 20:1-18

Real life encounters

Peter and John: eye witnesses to the empty tomb (v2-10)

Mary Magdalene: an eye witness to the empty tomb, who meets the risen Jesus (v1-2, 11-18)

Her tears

Her misunderstanding

Her message

1. In v19, as the disciples gathered in the locked room for fear of the Jewish authorities, what had they already heard and seen concerning Jesus' resurrection (esp 20:6-9, 17-18)?
2. On two different occasions when Jesus appears among the disciples, he says, "Peace be with you!" (v19, 21, 26). How does Jesus showing the disciples his wounds (v20,27) give them peace (see John 1:29, 14:27, 16:33)?
3. In v21-23, Jesus commissions his disciples, symbolically reminding them of the promised Holy Spirit they will receive, once he returns to the Father. How will the Spirit equip them to be obedient to this commission (v23, see also John 14:15-17a, 25-27, Acts 1:4-5)?

**Encounters with the Risen Jesus, Part 2:
fearful disciples and the hardened sceptic.**

John 20:19-31

Further information about COMA questions

Adapted from David Holm, One to One Bible Reading (Matthias Media, 2011)

We use the categories of the COMA questions when we read anything, whether a novel or the newspaper. For example, we read any item in the paper with an understanding of what type of writing it is (e.g. an editorial versus a comic versus an advertisement, each of which we read differently), and how it fits with the items around it (i.e. **context**). We read the words and sentences and paragraphs, and note the main events, people and content (**observation**). We integrate what we've observed and form a conclusion about what the author is trying to say (**meaning**). And we reflect on whether the author's message has any relevance for our lives (**application**).

So, as we read a Bible passage, these COMA questions give us direction in asking questions of the passage, and to understand it and apply it. The questions help us to integrate what we're reading into the bigger picture of the Bible – the unfolding story of God's plan for salvation in Christ. They are useful whether we're using these questions in our own bible reading, or in a 1-1 bible reading situation, or in a bible study group.

The Bible contains a variety of types (genres) of literature, such as narrative (story), poetry, letters, and prophetic literature. All the gospels, including John, are true stories, so we need to bear in mind how stories work. There are characters (including the author / narrator, who will sometimes add editorial comments), scenes, and events, which generally involve some rising tension to a climactic event, and then resolution. The COMA questions we'll be using in studies 2 and 3 have been modified particularly to suit a narrative. The questions are listed on the opposite page, with some additional comments.

- What has happened so far in the narrative (e.g. any major events, characters, themes)?
- What has happened just prior to this section?

Observation: *What do you notice about the text: character, scenes, movement, markers of time / place, conflict or resolution of tension etc?*

- What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them, or how do they describe themselves?
- In the events in this passage, is either time or place significant?
- Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?
- Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?
- What surprises are there?

Meaning: *What do characters learn - is there a principle being taught? What does this passage teach about the Lord's character, and how he wants his people to live?*

- Are there any 'editorial' comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What do they learn?
- What does the passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?
- How could you sum up the meaning of the passage in your own words?

Application: *How do I put this into practice in my life (whether changing my thinking or my behaviour)?*

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- Is there some attitude you need to change?
- What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?

