The Gospel of John
**FAITH WITHOUT A SIGN – JOHN 2:18–22**

**So why we are going through the book of John…**

**Dr Steve Schell -** “It is my hope that as you study verse by verse through the gospel of John, it will come alive to you at a deeper level than ever before and that you’ll have an opportunity to teach what you’re learning to others. Whether you’re preaching in a church, leading a Bible study, discipling a new believer, family member or friend, your journey through John will be a life-changing event. God’s Word is full of life, and when we take the time to study and meditate on it, it always transforms us and those we teach. We become: “…like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither…” (Ps 1:3).”

I don’t know if all of us in here realize what a privilege it is to UNDERSTAND the Word…

Where we left off before was Jesus in the temple … but let’s quickly read it again:

**John 2:13–17** The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.**14**In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. **15**And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.**16**And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.” **17**His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

Well today we’re going to continue on in **John 2:18–22.** So right after the turning of tables.

**John 2:18–22 (READ ALOUD)** So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” **19**Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” **20**The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” **21**But he was speaking about the temple of his body. **22**When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

So let’s start in verse 18…

**V18 –** “So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?”

* First of all, you can tell they know they were wrong by the way that they responded.
	+ Notice, they didn’t threaten to arrest Jesus or even question why He did what He did
		- BECAUSE THEY ALREADY KNEW WHY HE DID IT
			* They just wanted to know if it was of God
	+ What they are asking is “what sign can you show us to prove that you have been sent by God to do these things”
* They are looking for something to prove that what just happened is of God…
	+ Do you ever do that? You see God act in your life or hear Him speak to you, but you still want proof…
		- **EXAMPLE:** As a teen:
			* “Lord if this is You speaking, make this apple whole again…”
	+ Did you know that if God wanted to prove Himself to everyone all at once, He could?
		- IN FACT, HE WILL ONE DAY HE WILL AND EVERY KNEE WILL BOW
	+ But He doesn’t yet. .. Why?

**Hebrews 11:6** But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him,* for he who comes to God must believe that He is…”

* + So without faith, it is impossible to please God, AND with all visible proof, it is impossible to have faith…
	+ **EXAMPLE:** My natural reaction is often to be a skeptic … probably because of heard many words over the years that were clearly of the Lord and many that clearly not…
		- **STORY: “**I know that you can talk to animals…”
		- Maybe it’s because I’ve never had a conversation with swine, but for some reason that one didn’t bear witness…
	+ So now, my natural reaction is to want some confirmation…
		- EXAMPLE: Someone says “I saw angels all around you…”
	+ They (often like us) are looking for some sort of visible proof to show that this is God
		- There’s something beautiful in having faith … not blind faith.
			* EXAMPLE: Not like Santa Claus

**James 1:5–8** (NKJV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. **6**But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. **7**For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; **8***he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

* God could solve all of this by speaking an audible voice … remove all the doubt!
	+ But He doesn’t want to…
	+ God leaves room for faith
* The Bible says that God is “in the secret place”
	+ EXAMPLE: When I hide from my kids

**Jeremiah 29:13** “And you will seek Me and find *Me,* when you search for Me with all your heart.”

So, the Lord INTENTIONALLY leaves room for faith.

Look at what it says in Matthew 12…

**Matthew 12:39** But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”

Let’s be a generation that chooses to believe what God says.

Now let’s continue in verse 19…

**V19 –** Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

* So they’re looking for a sign (probably like when Moses threw down the staff and it turned into a snake)
* Well as we know, Jesus only did what the Father led Him to do … so He had no intention of responding to their demand
* So instead, He responded by saying “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”
	+ **[READ]** His words meant nothing to the temple officials. But two years later those words became a powerful witness against them because it was that same group of men who were responsible for destroying the “temple” of His body, and then three days later discovered He had come back to life.
	+ Notice: They looked for proof, and Jesus gave it to them … however, He gave it in a form that they wouldn’t recognize for years, and for some, ever.
	+ I’ve heard this said… Sometimes God gives you exactly what you ask for in a package you don’t want.
		- Ever pray for patience? If you pray for patience, don’t be surprised when the Lord provides you with a great opportunity to grow in patience.
		- **STORY:** Asking the Lord to grow me … Car cut me off, I almost honked … I LOVE JESUS bumper sticker on the other car
		- **STORY:** Trying to teach my kids patience… “DAD, SISSY SAYS I DON’T LIKE CHICKEN”
			* **Sissy –** “You don’t like chicken”
			* **Noah –** “Yes I do!”
			* **Me –** (Feeling kind of dumb even jumping in) “Hey, hey, hey, he does like chicken.”

Let’s continue on in verse 20

**V 20 – “**The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?”

* **[READ]** When this group of leaders heard Jesus’ words, they initially thought He was boasting that He could tear down the massive stones of Herod’s temple and then “magically” put them all back in place in three days. But they were missing the whole point of what or better put, “WHO” Jesus was talking about.

**Then let me close with verse 2…**

**V 22 –** “When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.”

* John’s admitting that he and the disciples didn’t understand His words until after He was raised from the dead
* **[READ]** Sometimes Jesus tells us things we can’t understand, at least not yet. Someday we will. Someday we will look back, and it will all fit together.
	+ SO, here’s the question I have for you … are you going to wait until you see everything come to pass to believe what God is saying is true?
		- Or will you believe it now?
	+ The Word says that you are freed… “Yeah, but I don’t see it.”
	+ The Word says that you are the righteousness of God “Yeah, but I don’t feel it.”
	+ The Word says all your children shall be taught by the Lord…
	+ It says that by His stripes, we are healed
	+ It says that joy, love and peace belong to you
* May I propose that the faith of God’s people actually provokes God to act.
	+ Will you trust Him?
	+ Will you believe what He’s saying is true?
	+ So much so, that you actually follow Him, even if you don’t fully understand?

**PRAY**