

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**On-Line Bible Study**

**Topic: John 10: 22 to 44**

NOTE: This is our fourth major section of the Summary Chart of John's Gospel. This chart is available elsewhere on our website. The overview of these two sessions is to review the Work God Taught: Prep for death. Today's session is the first study in this section. It is the first of two studies. This part of our study is located under the larger heading of "Illuminating the Work of Jesus as the Word."

- I. Read the assigned reading at one time.
- II. Fantastic! This scene sets the stage for the final rush to the cross. In these few verses Jesus claims for himself that he is the Christ (he embodies the Logos), that he and God are the same, and that we all are sons [and daughters] of God the Most High (proven by quoting Psalm 85:6). This is enough to keep us busy for a brief study time.
- III. "If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." 10: 24b.  
"OK," Jesus seems to reply, "listen to this. If you don't believe me, what about the miracles? If you can't understand them, then you are not my sheep, because my sheep understand me."

First, it is helpful to remember that Jesus is the Logos. In vs. 36, Jesus explains that he is the one Perfect At-One-Ment "set aside," or *anointed* for **the task of profound obedience** that would soon occur as he intentionally jumped up on the cross to demonstrate that someone would die for those who didn't deserve such sacrificial obedience.

As an archetypal event, the crucifixion is necessary to offset the archetypal event of **profound disobedience** illustrated in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden. This disobedience illuminates the human dilemma. WE ARE FATED TO LIVE SEPARATED FROM OUR NEIGHBORS, SELF AND THE GROUND OF OUR BEING – THE AT-ONE-MENT! There is no hope for us as human beings. We are asleep to the gifts of God's grace within our lives, and in the depths of our being. We fail to fulfill the New Commandment to love God and neighbor as we love ourselves. Literally, we are damned if we do, and damned if we don't. What to do? The answer is the crucifixion.

The crucifixion is the "cross roads" event (pun intended) of history. Before this time, the High Priest offered sacrifices each day to illuminate the work given to the People Of God in the land of Israel. (See our study on the book of Hebrews.) The Jewish nations was called to sacrifice themselves to be the message of The Good News of God's Love for all the world. This never was fulfilled, because they spent so much time and energy defending themselves against the people who owned the land before God gave it to them! Go figure.

**After the crucifixion, we have in the risen Christ the sacrificial event through which we can find unity or At-One-Ment with neighbor, self and Perfect At-One-Ment. This is achieved THROUGH THE CROSS. When I relate to my neighbor through the cross (wwjd), and my neighbor relates to me through the cross (wwjd), we are made at-one through the cross.**

Interesting, eh? Can I have an amen!

IV. Now, to the miracles.

To get a hold of what's going on here, it is helpful to recall that the Bible is written in a PRE-SCIENTIFIC ERA. The Jews who lived in this world were TRIBAL PEOPLE. Meaning-of life was found in the SUPERNATURAL. The interpreter of these events were the SHAMAN (the Jewish priesthood) whose job was to tell stories making sense of the supernatural.

Later in the SCIENTIFIC ERA, during which society was INDUSTRIAL, the meaning-of-life interpreters were the (Christian) PRIESTHOOD.

Today, we live in a POST-INDUSTRIAL ERA. This is a world inhabited by humans living and finding meaning in a GLOBAL COMMUNITY. The interpreters of the meaning-of-life are global INTER-NETWORK MANAGERS.

**This, of course, is the major part of our problem. The Christian Church priesthood is attempting to be the interpreter for a Post-Industrial Global Community. But, the Christian meaning givers use old scientific language and images to explain a pre-scientific Bible. Go figure!**

**This describes the imperative for what we are doing as we use "Gut trip analysis." This is the method that transforms our old language into meaningful words and images appropriate to the kind of world in which we live.**

Using this information, it is understandable that Jesus used parables, metaphors and similes to point to the new reality. These are used to awaken us to the inner world of our spiritual resources. Jesus said, "I am the gate," "I am the good shepherd," etc. As people awaken to their spiritual resources lives are transformed; they are "saved."

The gospel writers attempted to explain this transformation by turning to the imagery and words associated with super-naturalism, the world of their time. The early church did not misinterpret this picture-graph events. They understood them to be symbol/stories, not actual events.

This is how "Gut Trip Analysis" is helpful. It helps us to push these "miracles" through its' Pre-Scientific understanding into a Post-Industrial experience. It is interesting that this is confirmed in 10:40 – 42, concerning John the Baptizer.

IV. Jesus as the Christ and God are the same

God, as the Perfect At-One-Ment and the Christ (embodied in Jesus) is the Gate through which we experience At-One-Ment. Jesus declared that this relationship was so intimate that it was as if God was his father. In the Jewish society, this relationship was very close anyway. This image would be clearly understood. Jesus is not saying that God is his father. Jesus is saying that he experienced such At-One-Ment that this is a good reflection of what Perfect At-One-Ment is. In a short sentence, Jesus was in touch with his Altar of Spiritual Resources.

V. Now, your turn!

A. Research the significance of the "Feast of Dedication." Why do you think the gospel writer, John, set this event in this context?

B. Think back on your own "transformation." What is the story you tell about it? Share something of your life here. However, write it in personal experience terms. How did this event put you in touch with your Altar of Spiritual Resources? Remember, you are born with these resources and have forgotten them. The experience of coming on to these gifts is a transforming event.

OK, let's get personal!