



Theme: Tell Me Something Good – Good News in the Gospel of John

“Murderous Men, a Silent Crowd, and a Woman Caught in the Middle”

We have a great new way for you to get these Meditation Moments each day directly to your phone. Just text “**med moments**” to **970-426-0700** to receive the **daily Meditation Moment** each morning and start your day grounded in faith and peace.

Weekly Memory Verse:

7 They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” – John 8:7

The season of Lent is the 40 days and 7 Sundays before Easter and we will be reading through the gospel of John together as a congregation. The Meditation Moments contain a reading plan for the Gospel and just a few minutes a day will take you through the entire book. If you get behind, or join us in the middle, don't worry or try to catch up...just join us where we are! Our hope is to experience something good, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, through these readings that bring life and light.

Meditation Moments for Monday, March 9 – Read **John 6:1-71**. In John 6:35, 48 and 51, Jesus used the words “I AM.” These words had deep meaning. They were the Greek equivalent of YHWH, the divine name by which God identified himself to Moses in Exodus 3:14. In the rest of John, Jesus made six other major “I Am” claims. Jesus draws from the Jewish Passover Seder when he uses the words, “I AM the bread of life.” It also is a reference to the manna by which God sustained the Israelites in the wilderness. Jesus points to the deliverance he will bring by his death, and the way ongoing belief in him sustains his disciples.

 Jesus invited his listeners to consider what kind of “food” they valued most in verse 27: “Don't work for the food that doesn't last but for the food that endures for eternal life.” Physical food wasn't bad. After all, he had just fed the hungry

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crowd with bread and fish, but that physical food didn't give lasting life. How clear is your sense of the two kinds of food, the two "worlds" Jesus spoke of? Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." In what ways do you consistently nourish yourself spiritually through a relationship with Jesus?

 Feeding the huge crowd seemed impossible to the disciples. Andrew brought a lad's small lunch saying, "But what good is that for a crowd like this?" Consider what Jesus did with that small lunch. What talents and resources do you have that you might offer to Jesus, trusting him to creatively multiply your gift(s) and bless others through what you offer?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, thank you for offering yourself as the bread of life. I trust you to satisfy my inner hunger—to fill the God-shaped hole inside me. Amen.*

Tuesday, March 10 – Read **John 7:1-52**. Jesus' brothers didn't believe in him. The crowds had mixed views and Jewish leaders wanted to kill him. Verses 28-29 make it clear that Jesus still chose his own course under God. He spoke firmly of his heavenly origin and life-giving mission. Nicodemus, who visited with Jesus at night in John 3, asked his colleagues on the council to at least give Jesus a fair hearing.

 John was a master at pointing out denial. It's what we today might call "cognitive dissonance." Verses 1 and 25 recognized that the leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Yet when Jesus challenges them directly, they denied it heatedly in verse 20: "You have a demon. Who wants to kill you?" When have you been in settings where you or others tried to deny "the elephant in the room"? How can you and Jesus face any issues in your life more honestly?

 In verse 4, Jesus' brothers used "world" to mean the physical planet Earth and all who live in it. But in verse 7, Jesus used it to mean an inner spiritual orientation that turns away from God and tries to live without God and God's values. In what ways does "the world," in that second sense, try to draw you into its values and way of life today? How is your life better when you live in Jesus' world, rather than in "the world" that hates him?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I want to be a citizen of your world, to know you and the one who sent you. Guide me as day-by-day I submit my heart to your kingship. Amen.*

Wednesday's Lenten Service and Soup Supper is at St. Columba at 6 PM.

Wednesday, March 11 – Read **John 7:53 to 8:59**. In the first story, the Pharisees were fine with shaming or killing a woman they had probably lured into the act of adultery or possibly had been sexually assaulted. Why did they let her partner escape? She couldn't commit adultery alone after all! Jesus gave her a new start. Then he said, "I Am the light of the world" and later added, "Before Abraham was, I Am." These are both claims to God's name from Exodus 3:14. In verse 23, he said he was "from above," his foes "from below". His self-righteous enemies were furious, ready to stone Jesus for blasphemy.

 Jesus' opponents asked in verse 53, "Who do you make yourself out to be?" They shortly had their answer in verse 58: "'I assure you,' Jesus replied, 'before

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Abraham was, I Am.'” They rejected and mocked Jesus’ claim. Do you believe it? What difference does your answer make to the way you live your life?

 Jesus said in verse 32, “The truth will set you free.” His foes replied, “We’ve never been anyone’s slaves. How can you say that we will be set free?” They were in political denial. One historian even called Israel’s life under Rome a “semi-slavery.” Worse, they were in the dark about their own pride. In John’s gospel, one of the main themes is that Jesus came to guide those who believe in him through the darkness. Have you ever felt, “I don’t need what Christ offers”? Is there any area now where you particularly need Christ’s light to set you free?

Prayer: *Lord God, you showed your eternity and power to Moses in the Hebrew name “I Am.” When you became flesh in Jesus, you again identified yourself with that name. Thanks for your assurance that I can be your child. Amen.*

Thursday, March 12 – Read **John 9:1-41**. John reminds his readers of the creation story from Genesis 2:7 as Jesus used mud made from dust to give a blind man sight in verse 6. The story’s deeper meaning was to point to the tragedy of spiritual blindness. Rather than admit anything good about Jesus, the religious leaders scrambled to deny the plain fact that a man born blind could now see! In his beautiful confession of faith in verse 25, the man showed that he could “see” more clearly than the religious leaders.

 John tells of 7 miraculous signs. They were not just miracles, but signs that were meant to point to something deeper. Remember that what happens AFTER the miracle is just as important as the miracle itself in John’s gospel. Here we find a powerful contrast between the blind beggar who listened to Jesus’ voice, trusted him, obeyed his commands, washed, and could see; and the religious leaders who refused to listen to Jesus and condemned him as a sinner. In telling the man’s story, this miraculous sign, John asks us, “Are you blind, or can you see?” Is there something in your life now that is blinding you? How can Jesus help you to see?

 Jesus repeated his claim to be “the light of the world.” At what age or stage did Christ’s light first shine into your life? What were some of the first things that you remember seeing more clearly in the light of Jesus’ love and grace? What are one or two ways that Christ’s light has helped to clear your sight in the recent days and weeks of your walk with him?

Prayer: *Lord, continue your spiritual “eye surgery” in me. Make it ever more true in all parts of my life that “I was blind, but now I see.” Amen.*

Friday, March 13 – Read **John 10:1-42**. Jesus said the spiritual blindness of Israel’s leaders didn’t just hurt them. It left the human “flock” God had entrusted to their care in spiritual danger. He strongly echoed Ezekiel 34:1-16 as he talked about what it means to be a shepherd. But God had promised Israel that he would shepherd them himself if their human shepherds failed. Jesus was the promised “good shepherd” who would safely guide and protect all who trusted him.

 When Jesus said, “I Am the gate,” he referred to a physical reality for those who watched over flocks of sheep. Scholar N. T. Wright noted in his commentary

John for Everyone, "In many Eastern sheepfolds, the shepherd lies down at night in the gateway, to stop the sheep getting out and to stop predators getting in. Here, Jesus seems to indicate the way in which the shepherd keeps the sheep safe, and, like God himself in Psalm 121:8, watches over their going out and their coming in." In what ways has Jesus been "the gate" who offers you spiritual safety?



"I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest," Jesus said in John 10:10. In what ways have you seen ads for everything from banks to automobiles, from alcoholic beverages to hair-care products, hold out a similar promise? How easy or hard do you find it to trust, in your day-to-day life, that Jesus' way truly offers you the fullest, most satisfying life?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I want to "live life to the fullest"—the way YOU define that phrase. I trust you will be my good shepherd, protecting and encouraging me. Help me to always hear your voice that leads to life in this noisy world. Amen.*

Saturday, March 14 – Read **John 11:1-53**. Jesus' seventh miraculous sign was his mightiest. He restored Lazarus to life, who had been dead for four days. Going to Bethany, just a few miles from Jerusalem, could expose Jesus to his enemies' malice again. Verse 15 tells us he intentionally waited before going to where his friend lay deathly ill. When he reached Bethany, Lazarus had died. Grieving her brother, Martha told Jesus, "If you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died." It's important to note that after this amazing story, the darkness hated the light more than ever as Jesus' enemies increased their efforts to kill the one who gave life.



Jesus' words to Martha are probably the most cherished of his "I Am" statements: "I am the resurrection and the life... everyone who believes in me will never die." Martha and her sister Mary had "if-only" questions for Jesus. "If only," he had done things differently, they thought, things would be better. But Jesus has many ways of bringing good news, hope, and new possibilities into the mess and grief of life. He asks us for trust, as he did Martha and Mary, because our "if-only" questions, like theirs, may simply reflect our time-limited, earth-bound understanding. We face the question Jesus asked Martha: "Do you believe this?" How easy or hard do you find it to trust that Jesus is working for your good, even when what you wish would happen doesn't?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, sometimes it is hard for me to trust you in the midst of my "if-only" questions. Thank you for offering me an eternal hope. Help me to trust your eternal ways. Amen.*