

## John 2

- As we return to chapter 2 of John's Gospel, we pick up immediately after Jesus has performed His first miracle, turning water into wine
  - Notice in v.11 John declares that this was the first of Jesus' signs

**[John 2:11](#) This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.**

- The word sign is important, because it reminds us of the purposes in Jesus' miracles
- Jesus performed supernatural displays or miracles to give evidence of His claims as Messiah
- Each time He performed a miracle, He was giving a sign to the world that His claims were legitimate
- The most compelling sign He ever performed was the sign of His own resurrection, the sign of Jonah as He called it
- That's why we said last week that Mary was wrong to seek for a miracle when there was no message to validate
  - The time had not yet arrived for Jesus to make His declaration to the world that He was Messiah
  - And so He wasn't prepared to perform a sign either
  - Nevertheless, He obeyed His mother out of respect for her, turning the water into wine
  - But as we noted, Jesus never called attention to the miracle, at least not to the public, so He didn't perform a sign prematurely
- The only ones who knew what happened were His disciples, as v.11 said
  - His disciples believed in Him
  - What exactly did they believe? They believed His claims to be the Messiah
  - But almost just as assuredly, they didn't appreciate that Jesus was God incarnate

- This was something they learned only after His death and resurrection
- Despite being the wrong time for Jesus to announce Himself, it's still significant that Jesus' first miracle involved wine at a wedding feast
  - For that is one of the clear signs of the Messiah, according to the scriptures
    - The Bible uses the wedding feast as a picture to represent the arrival of the Kingdom of the Messiah
    - Obviously, this wedding wasn't the wedding feast of the Kingdom
    - But still, Jesus' choice of miracle to begin His public ministry is telling
  - Furthermore, that Jesus' miracle brings about an abundance of great joy for the wedding party is another picture of His ministry to world
    - There will be great joy at the arrival of the Kingdom, not only for Israel but also for Gentiles
    - And that joy begins even before the Kingdom arrives on Earth
    - For the citizens of that Kingdom are enjoying it even now, even as we await the Kingdom's arrival
- So now John moves forward in his narrative

**[John 2:12](#)** After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there a few days.

**[John 2:13](#)** The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

**[John 2:14](#)** And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.

**[John 2:15](#)** And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables;

**[John 2:16](#)** and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business."

**[John 2:17](#)** His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."

- After the wedding, Jesus and His mother and brothers and His disciples all travel down to Capernaum
  - Capernaum is a town where Jesus spends considerable time during the first year of His ministry
    - It says they went down even though the town is northeast of Cana, because it's a lower elevation
  - In fact, this town in the Galilee becomes the center for His earthly ministry for a time
  - Jesus moves His home from Nazareth to Capernaum at about this time
- The fact that Jesus is accompanied by His earthly family suggests that they may all be moving to Capernaum at about this time
  - Joseph died before Jesus' earthly ministry began
  - We can safely assume this from two details in scripture
  - First, the fact that Jesus appoints John to care for Mary at the cross indicates she was a widow
- Secondly, Jesus is the last Man to hold the priesthood of the order of Melchizedek
  - That priesthood was handed down in a line of succession from Adam to Jesus
  - It's a title held for life, according to Hebrews, and it can only transfer to another man at the death of the current office holder
  - Since Jesus never dies, He holds the title now forever
  - But Jesus couldn't inherit the priesthood until the previous holder died
  - That previous holder was Jesus earthly father, Joseph
  - So Joseph had to pass away before Jesus could assume His priestly duties as a priest in the order of Melchizedek
    - For more information on this principle, we have an article on the order of Melchizedek on the website

- After spending a few days in Capernaum, Passover of the Jews comes (John explains that this is a feast of the Jews, since the early Church had now become thoroughly Gentile and didn't practice the Jewish feasts)
  - This timing places us in the Spring of Jesus' first year of ministry
    - Which also tells us that His baptism and first week of ministry happened in the late winter, early spring
    - Passover was one of three feasts on the Jewish calendar when every adult Jewish male was required to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem
    - As many as three million Jewish men (often accompanied by their families) would descend upon Jerusalem this week
  - As Jesus enters the Temple grounds, He encountered a common and sad sight
    - The court of the Gentiles surrounding the temple building itself was transformed at Passover into a merchant's bazaar
    - Two principle forms of commerce took place at this time in the temple
  - First, money was being changed
    - Much in the way we change our money at an airport before or after we take a trip to a foreign country, so was the practice for Jewish worshippers
    - They came into the temple bearing Roman coins, for that was the only kind of money accepted in the Roman empire, which now occupied Judea
    - But when you came into the Temple, the only money accepted by the Jewish authorities were Jewish coins
      - They rejected Roman coins because they bore the relief of the Roman Caesar
      - And the Jews consider such an image to be an idol in violation of the first commandment
    - So the worshippers exchanged their Roman coins for Jewish coins, which came a price

- The business of changing money was a major source of income for the priests of the temple, who ran the money changing business
- Secondly, the worshippers needed the Jewish coins money because this was the only money that could be given to the Temple as a tithe payment or to purchase sacrificial animals
  - When a family came to the Temple for passover, it was often impractical or expensive to bring the required animal to the Temple
    - Worshippers often traveled for many miles on foot to meet the obligations of the feasts and temple service
    - So instead of bringing the animal with them, they brought money to buy an animal in the temple grounds
    - And you can be sure that those animals were priced accordingly
    - Another source of profit for the temple priests
  - And even those families who chose to bring their own lambs into the Temple were still getting fleeced by the priests, so to speak
    - The priests were required to inspect every lamb brought for sacrifice
    - And in keeping with the Law, only a spotless lamb was suitable for sacrifice
    - Spotless means no evident defect, but of course the priests went to extraordinary lengths to inspect each lamb, certain they would find a disqualifying defect
    - And wouldn't you know it, the priests always found something wrong with each worshipper's lamb
  - So if your lamb was disqualified, how were the worshippers to meet the obligations of the Passover?
    - Well, fortunately the priests had a solution
    - They offered to take the defective lamb as a "trade-in" toward a new, spotless lamb they could sell the worshipper
      - Only after they changed their money, of course

- So the priests made money on the sale of these “certified spotless” lambs
- And then when the next unsuspecting family entered the temple with their defective lamb, they were likewise directed to buy a replacement spotless lamb
- And the lamb this family purchased was none other than that defective lamb traded in earlier, which had apparently experienced a miraculous healing
- In other words, it was a scam run by religious leaders to make money off of worshippers
  - Not much has changed today, has it?
- As a result of all this commerce taking place in the temple, it was literally impossible for a Gentile to enter into the temple and worship the living God
  - Remember, that Gentiles were only permitted to enter the court outside the gate leading into the temple grounds
    - This outer court was called the Court of the Gentiles for that reason
    - It represented the closest point any Gentile could approach to the God of Israel
    - This is why Paul described the Gentile worship experience prior to the New Covenant this way:

**[Eph. 2:12](#)** remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

**[Eph. 2:13](#)** But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

- We were “far off” in the sense that the court of Gentiles was as close as we could approach under the terms of the Law
- But by His blood, Jesus united Jew and Gentile in one covenant
- But now all this commerce was now taking place in the one space reserved for Gentile worship
  - So it would be impossible for a Gentile worshipper to approach the Lord in a quiet manner or even to approach at all

- And this is the scene Jesus comes into as He enters the temple on this Passover
- Seeing the priests operating in direct violation of their own code as God instructed

[Lev. 19:30](#) 'You shall keep My sabbaths and revere My sanctuary; I am the LORD.

- So Jesus finds some hemp or other suitable material, and probably sits somewhere unnoticed where he quietly strands together the cord into a whip
  - This probably goes on for some time, and we might wonder why did Jesus chose to make his own whip?
    - Undoubtedly with so many animals around, He could have found a way to borrow someone's whip rather than make his own
    - But the Lord is preparing to act in judgment, in defense of His Father's house
    - And when the Lord judges men, He does so on His own terms according to His own power and authority
    - Constructing his own instrument of judgment reinforces His authority
  - After the cord is ready, the fun begins
    - Jesus must have walked up to the first table of money changers in a calm manner, probably unannounced
    - He starts by driving the money changers out of the courtyard, beating them about the head and shoulders to make them leave
    - We can just imagine the scene as Jesus begins the whipping
      - The temple security speaking into the ear pieces ("We have a situation here!")
    - Soon the other merchants figure out Jesus is after them, and they probably flee en masse
  - After the merchants have retreated, Jesus drives out the animals, which was probably a fairly easy task
    - And then he returns to the table and turns them over

- Pouring out the money on the ground to emphasize the worthlessness of it in comparison to the value of God's glory
- In a moment of compassion, however, the Lord only instructs the people selling doves to leave
- He doesn't set the doves free, which would have been destroying their property
- This is one of two times scripture records Jesus driving out money changers from the temple
  - Jesus will repeat this scene when He enters the temple during the Passover week that leads to His crucifixion
  - The Synoptic Gospel writers all record the second of these incidents, but only John records this earlier moment
  - John also records that Jesus traveled to Jerusalem for Passover all three years of His earthly ministry
  - We can only guess what Jesus did the other two times He visited the Temple
  - Perhaps Jesus made driving out the money changers an annual tradition
- As Jesus speaks to the dove sellers, He describes the temple as My Father's house
  - In describing it as His Father's house, Jesus is referring to the role of the temple to house the Shechinah glory of God
    - The tabernacle originally held that glory
    - And later, the glory of God descended upon the temple Solomon built
    - But as Israel sinned against God and profaned the temple, God's glory eventually departed from Solomon's temple and never returned
    - At this point when Jesus visits, the temple no longer houses the Shechinah glory of God
    - In fact, Herod's temple never saw the Shechinah glory of God



- Nevertheless, every temple, including Herod's temple, housed the glory of God at least at some point in its existence
  - On this day, it contained the glory of God in the Person of Christ
  - In fact, this house is Jesus' house as much as the Father's house
  - In the tabernacle and in Solomon's temple, the Shechinah glory that occupied the Holy of Holies was a preincarnate manifestation of Christ Himself
  - Jesus is always manifestation of the Father's glory
  - No one has seen the Father at any time, except the Son, we're told
  - So any visible manifestation of God is always a manifestation of Christ, as John told us and Colossians confirms
- So here the glory of God in Christ entered His temple and cleansed it on this day
  - This scene forms a striking contrast to the one in Cana
  - Where Cana gave us a quiet and compassionate Jesus, seeking to bring joy to a wedding party, while mollifying His earthly mother
  - But the scene in Jerusalem is a visceral and passionate Jesus, seeking to inflict judgment and enforce righteousness
  - We're getting an early introduction to both sides of the Messiah's mission
- Today there is still a temple of God in the world, one that Jesus occupies, one that He cleanses from unrighteousness
  - That temple is the house of God
    - But the house of God is not the place you attend services on Sunday morning
    - The church building is not the house of God today
    - It's not a substitute for the Jewish temple
  - The Bible says our very bodies are the temple of God, since the Spirit of Christ lives in us

[1Cor. 3:16](#) Do you not know that you are a **temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

[1Cor. 3:17](#) If any man destroys the **temple of God**, God will destroy him, for the **temple of God** is holy, and that is what you are.

- But our temple isn't pure any more than that temple was on that Passover day
- We need cleansing too if we are to be a suitable dwelling place for the Lord
- As Paul said

[1Cor. 6:19](#) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

[1Cor. 6:20](#) For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

- It's tempting to reflect on this story, imagining Jesus whipping all those evil, sinful money changers, and taking great satisfaction in the thought of it all
  - You almost wish you could be there to cheer Jesus on
    - We enjoy the prospect of bad people getting what they deserved from God
    - After all, how dare they pollute the temple of God?
  - But then I have to stop myself and remember that I'm guilty of the same thing from time to time
    - I have a temple I'm supposed to guard from sin, that is my physical body
    - And when the Bible speaks of us guarding our bodies as the temple of God, it's not talking about don't "smoke, drink, or chew or date girls that do," as the saying goes
    - It's talking about sin
    - Every time I chose to sin, in a sense I'm like those money changers in Herod's temple
    - Unrighteousness is setting up shop in my temple
    - Rather than making my temple of holy place for God to dwell

- And if I'm not willing to police my temple myself, then I should imagine Jesus beginning to weave a cord quietly, which He will use to discipline me
  - Sooner or later, He's going to pick up that scourge and use it to drive unrighteousness out my temple
  - So given the choice of policing my temple myself or prodding Jesus into the doing it for me, I'm guessing it's better to avoid the whip
  - Because Jesus is willing to apply the pressure, as Hebrews says

[Heb. 12:5](#) and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,  
 "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,  
 NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

[Heb. 12:6](#) FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,  
 AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."

[Heb. 12:7](#) It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

- Can you imagine what His disciples were thinking as they watched the whole scene?
  - Perhaps a few were ready to bolt at that point
    - They're thinking Jesus is a mad man
    - And even if He isn't crazy, He's going to get us arrested
    - They must have been completely besides themselves watching Jesus at work
  - I think the Spirit understood they would have this reaction
    - After all, it's a natural human response to the scene
    - So in grace and mercy, the Spirit brings to their minds a passage of OT scripture to help them understand what they were watching
  - In v.17 John writes that they remember a verse of scripture found in Psalm 69:9

[Psa. 69:6](#) May those who wait for You not be ashamed through me, O Lord GOD of hosts;  
 May those who seek You not be dishonored through me, O God of Israel,

[Psa. 69:7](#) Because for Your sake I have borne reproach;  
 Dishonor has covered my face.

[Psa. 69:8](#) I have become estranged from my brothers  
 And an alien to my mother's sons.

[Psa. 69:9](#) For zeal for Your house has consumed me,  
 And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

- Remembering this psalm, the disciples begin to see the moment with spiritual eyes
  - They knew that Psalm 69 is a Messianic psalm
  - And as they witness Jesus wrecking havoc in the temple, the Spirit connects the dots in their head
  - They realize this is what the Psalmist meant by the Messiah having zeal for the Father's house
  - This insight confirms again for them that Jesus is the Messiah
- But only the disciples know this truth, for only by the revelation of the Holy Spirit does anyone connect these dots
  - All the crowd saw the same crazy behavior the disciples witnessed
    - They also knew the same Psalm the disciples learned
    - But without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the crowd was incapable of making a connection between the psalm and the things they saw on that day
    - Despite the very public nature of this event, Christ wasn't revealed to the crowd as Messiah because apart from the disciples, the Holy Spirit wasn't at work to make that revelation known
  - As we said earlier, only by the Spirit do we gain spiritual understanding
    - As Paul writes in 1Corinthians, a person comes to understand that Jesus is Lord only by the Holy Spirit
    - The truth that Jesus is the Messiah lies outside the grasp of mere flesh

- There is no better group in which to find this principle at work than the Pharisees of Israel
  - They were the most educated religious men of their day, and yet their studies never brought them to recognize Jesus as Lord
    - These men were first mentioned in John's Gospel in chapter 1, as the men who sent priests to inspect John the Baptist's ministry
    - But now they make their first appearance in the Gospel during Jesus' outburst in the temple
  - This is the first time Jesus has caught the attention of the religious authorities
    - In a sense, this was Jesus' coming out party, though His true identity will remain hidden to them
    - He is declaring war against the hypocrisy of the Jewish authorities
    - So it's only fitting that Jesus should make His declaration of way in the Temple in Jerusalem
  - From the perspective of the religious leaders, Jesus' antics threatened to undermine their entire business model in the temple
    - So a few of the leaders approach Jesus as the turmoil dies down

**John 2:18** The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?"

**John 2:19** Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

**John 2:20** The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

**John 2:21** But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

**John 2:22** So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

- For the Pharisees, this key issue in this moment was not Jesus' identity, but His authority
  - They ask Him to provide them a sign for His authority to do what He did
    - They give no thought to whether what Jesus did was correct or not

- They already have an opinion, and they don't want to be confused by the facts
  - Interestingly, they don't they take immediate action against Him
  - Perhaps they sensed that Jesus possessed some kind of authority, so they step carefully in this conversation
- Their request for a sign is typical of what unbelieving men have always expected from God and those He sends in His name
  - Skeptics demand that God's messengers perform a miracle to support their claims
    - Something in the fashion of Elijah or Moses with fire coming down from Heaven or burning bushes
  - The point in the request is to remove all doubt, to compel agreement
  - As if Jesus needed authority to point out the obvious sin taking place in the temple that day
- The Pharisees' reaction was the polar opposite of the believing disciples
  - Jesus' followers had recognized Jesus' actions as the fulfillment of scripture, but the Pharisees were blind to that connection
  - The Pharisees couldn't recognize the sign because their hearts were not illuminated by the counsel of the Spirit
- Unbelievers are no different today
  - Until a person is given eyes to see by the Holy Spirit, they will react to any revelation of God in Christ in a similar manner
    - Unbelievers demand that God prove Himself to their satisfaction
    - They demand proof that the Bible is accurate before they will believe the Gospel
    - Or that the Trinity exists before they will accept it Jesus as God
    - Or that we reconcile Evolution and the Creation account before they can consider it Genesis as literal
  - In other words, unbelievers demand that God remove the need for faith
    - But as Paul says, who hopes for what he already sees?

- God demands acceptance of His word on faith
- These Pharisees are just one example of many John will provide showing how Jesus' claims were met with unbelief by those who should have been best prepared to recognize Him as Messiah
- Later Paul explained the reality that Israel rejected their own Messiah sent to them this way

**Rom. 9:30** What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith;

**Rom. 9:31** but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.

**Rom. 9:32** Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone,

- The irony in this situation is Jesus did give them sign of His authority
  - He fulfilled Psalm 69:9
  - The disciples recognized the sign because they were given spiritual insight from the Holy Spirit to see it
  - But the Pharisees missed it, and even if the sign had been more dramatic, they wouldn't have recognized it
- As we said, no sign can substitute for faith in the word of God
  - A sign can be used by God to connect those dots in a believing mind and thereby strengthen faith and bring encouragement
  - But a sign never substitutes nor creates faith
  - We must have faith in the Lord by His word alone if we ever hope to see and understand the Lord and His work around us
- As Jesus Himself said

**Luke 16:31** "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

- Nevertheless, in response to their demands, Jesus announces another sign to prove His authority
  - Jesus says if the Pharisees would destroy this Temple, He would raise it in three days

- Obviously, if we assume by “this temple” Jesus meant the stone building standing nearby, then the sign He proposed was just going to perplex the men all the more
- They couldn’t destroy the building, and even if they could, they wouldn’t do it
- The Jews revered their stone temple
- And Jesus is highlighting that fact with His choice of this sign
  - It’s a wonderful picture of what faith requires
  - Before we can know God truly, we must be willing to turn our back on those things we trust in
- The Pharisees worshipped the law and the sacrificial system in the temple, rather than the God Who dwelled within it
  - And Jesus is drawing attention to their hard hearts living by law instead of by faith
  - And at the same time, He’s emphasizing the impossibility of satisfying their demands for proof
  - Jesus could no more have granted them a satisfactory sign than they would have been to tear down the temple
- This is the first of many conversations John records of Jesus and a protagonist engaging in two different conversations simultaneously
  - While Jesus speaks in spiritual terms, using metaphors to express important spiritual truths, His unbelieving audience remains clueless
    - In this case, the Jews heard Jesus’ words to mean destroying the stone temple
    - So they respond that a stone temple that required 46 years to construct couldn’t possibly be rebuilt so quickly, let alone by one man
      - By the way this gives us a precise date for this moment in Jesus’ life
      - History records that Herod’s temple took 79 years to build and wasn’t finished until AD 63



- So at 46 years of construction, the year would have been AD 30
  - They lacked the the spiritual insight to see beyond the literal
- Three years later when Jesus was placed on trial by the Jewish authorities on the night of Passover, one of His accusers recalled this moment testifying that Jesus threatened to destroy the temple,
  - Like all the accusations against Jesus, it was a lie
  - Jesus never said He would destroy the temple
  - He said if the Pharisees destroyed the temple, He would rebuild it
- John explains to us that when Jesus said “this temple,” He was speaking of His body as the temple of God
  - And we can see why Jesus would call His body the Temple, because in fact it was in that day
    - His physical body was the dwelling place of the Father’s glory on earth
    - That’s why the Lord never brought His glory to reside in Herod’s temple
    - The glory of God was to occupy a far greater temple, one not built by human hands
  - That temple was destroyed on the cross by these unbelieving men
    - Literally, they did destroy the temple of God
    - And after three days in the grave Jesus rebuilt it, as He promised
    - Jesus’ body was raised from the dead
  - As Jesus made this statement, even His disciples were confused in the moment
    - John says it was only after the death and resurrection of Christ three years later that they came to understand what Jesus meant by this sign
    - And no doubt, His words were a great help to them in understanding the circumstances of His death

- That's why Jesus choose to speak in this way, with a riddle that He knew His audience wouldn't understand in the moment
  - Signs from God are always crafted to bolster the faith of the believer, never as a substitute for faith in the unbeliever
    - Moreover, the Lord designs spiritual signs to have maximum impact on the intended audience
    - Usually, the meaning of a sign will remain hidden even to the believer until the right moment, when an understanding is most beneficial
    - And then as we come to understand the sign, we also come to recognize that the truth was there all along
    - The fact that it was revealed in advance and yet hidden until an appointed moment reinforces for us that the message was truly from God
  - We're going to see this pattern many times in John Gospel
    - Jesus speaks to His audience in spiritual terms
    - The unbelievers in His audience miss His point entirely, while even the believers miss His point for a time
    - But then later, at a moment the Lord determines, the spiritual truth of His words become evident
    - And the power of the delayed revelation is evident in the believers' response
  - Luke records one such moment at the end of His Gospel, on the road to Emmaus

**[Luke 24:13](#)** And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.

**[Luke 24:14](#)** And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place.

**[Luke 24:15](#)** While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and began traveling with them.

**[Luke 24:16](#)** But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.

[Luke 24:28](#) And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther.

[Luke 24:29](#) But they urged Him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them.

[Luke 24:30](#) When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them.

[Luke 24:31](#) Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.

[Luke 24:32](#) They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

- In the way that situation played out, Jesus made His appearing all the more powerful and instructive through careful timing
- He also taught these disciples a valuable lesson about expecting the Risen Lord to reveal Himself through an examination of the Scriptures
- John concludes his account of Jesus's first ministry visit to Jerusalem by telling us this moment in the temple was not the only sign Jesus gave the crowds

[John 2:23](#) Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.

[John 2:24](#) But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,

[John 2:25](#) and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

- Though the Pharisees rejected Jesus' authority in the temple, many other Jews in the city were believing in Jesus
  - And as Jesus encountered the believing crowds, He performed signs for them
    - We don't know what miracles Jesus did specifically, but it's safe to assume He healed people as a routine
    - But despite their belief in Him, Jesus was not entrusting Himself to them
    - What John means is Jesus was not relying on their belief to protect Him nor to promote His ministry

- Notice John says Jesus knew all men and didn't need anyone to testify concerning man, or to explain the duplicity of human beings
  - Jesus knew the hearts of men all too well
  - Despite what men said or claimed, Jesus always knew the truth behind the words and actions
  - While the crowds were adoring and supportive now, they would not always be that way
  - When religious leaders came offering false praise, Jesus knew it was a trap
  - He wasn't naive to assume that men's hearts remain true or that they always speak in honest ways
  - So Jesus did not commit Himself to anyone, thinking that He could trust them or depend upon them
- Perhaps one of the reasons Jesus was so wary of depending upon the crowd's support was because He knew that some were accepting His claims merely on the basis of the miraculous signs He performed
  - Those who embraced Christ on the basis of signs and wonders rather than by faith in His word would be the first to fall away
    - As the religious leaders turn up the heat on Jesus and the disciples, even those of faith were tested and failed at times (Peter for example)
    - So clearly, those followers who pursued Jesus for the miracles or healing were not truly His sheep
    - And therefore, He knew to expect the devotion and joy of many to be temporary at best
  - The Bible warns us that within the Church will always be those who come to Christ in a superficial manner, apart from saving faith
    - They approach Jesus based on some perceived benefit in knowing Him
    - Whether because they believe He will heal them or free them from oppressive circumstances or make them rich
    - Or in some other way because they expect Jesus to give them their best life now

- They are not rooted in a belief in Jesus by His word, and so as Luke records, they fall away in a time of testing

**Luke 8:13** “Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

- In coming chapters, John will illustrate this dichotomy time and time again
  - He contrasts the true believers, who obtain a faith in Christ despite lacking religious training and knowledge of scripture
  - With unbelievers, who possessed great knowledge of the scriptures but lacked the spiritual insight to recognize the Messiah
  - Through these encounters, we’re going to learn a lot more about Jesus and the nature of saving faith
  - As well, we’ll gain greater insight to the deadness of unbelief and the power of God’s word to raise the dead to new life