

W358_John's_Gospel_And_The_Mystery_2.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapel of the opened book and is number two of the series entitled The Gospel of John and its relation with the dispensation of the Mystery. I want to read together and would like you are listening to this recording to read with me a part of the 21st chapter of John's Gospel. The 21st chapter of John's Gospel. After these things, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberius, and on this wise showed he himself. There were together Simon, Peter and Thomas called Didymus and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee and the sons of Zebedee and two other of his disciples. And Simon Peter saith unto them. I go fishing? They say unto him, we also go with thee. And they went forth and entered into a ship immediately. And that night, they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore and the disciples knew. Now knew. Not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said unto them, children have ye any meat. They answered him, No. He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship and you shall find. They cast, therefore. And now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore, that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter. It is the Lord. Now, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his Fisher's coat about him, for he was naked and did cast himself into the sea.

[00:02:00] And the other disciples came in a little ship, for they were not far from the land, but as it were, 200 cubits dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land. They saw a fire of coals there and fish laid thereon and bread. And Jesus said unto them, bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes and 150 and three and for all there were so many. Yet was not the net broken? Jesus said unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples Durst ask him Who art thou? Knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh and taketh bread and give it them and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples. After that, he was risen from the dead. We should have to look further at this chapter. But for the moment, that is the reading that I want you to ponder both now and afterwards. Last week in our opening study, we drew attention to the parable of the marriage of the King's son. There was an invitation to those who were called and they refused. But instead of cutting them off. The invitation was repeated this time with the added words come for all things and necessary. And

then we found that they used the messengers despitefully and they slew them and they neglected.

[00:03:44] And each one of those words are used later on about the people of Israel. They did use these messengers despitefully They did slay some of them. And the word how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation is the word that they treated it lightly, Then you will remember that as a consequence of this action, the king was wrath. He destroyed those murderers. He burnt up their city, and then he sent out into the highways. What is the same word is the ways that we get in the limitation of Christ's ministry. He said, go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans. Enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Now that's altered. Go into the ways, the outside ways and the good and the bad compel them to come. That my marriage may be furnished with guests. And our suggestion was last time that John's gospel fits. That ministry, which was put into operation after Israel had received the second invitation and failed, and after Jerusalem had been destroyed, the temple burned and John received a ministry which was addressed to the wide world. We are glad of that. But the problem before us is that some have conceived the thought that John's gospel believed by anybody practically makes them without any further preparation or belief.

[00:05:21] Members of the Body of Christ. Well, we're considering it. And we're going on with our second study in that direction this afternoon. I think you would agree with me that if Christians generally and the church. Have given very little heed to the point in this parable of Matthew 22. There were three men who would remember it. Peter, James and John. Well, James doesn't come into the story so far as we are concerned, but Peter and John do. If we look at the last chapter of the John's Gospel, we've just read a portion of it. We discover that we have. The balancing the closing sign of this of the series, which we have to consider, but that is followed. Portion I didn't read. That is followed by a commission given to Peter. The Lord pointedly spoke to him three times. Lovest thou me, I suppose, to bring home to his heart how he had three times denied his Lord, and it was now all over. And he was given the commission, feed my lambs, feed my sheep. Well, now, strangely enough, from our point of view, but not strange when you know that these men were alive to what the Lord had said. The Lord had said to Simon. Peter. He said verse 18, Verily, I say unto you, when thou wast young thou

Kurdish thyself and walkest, whither thou wouldest? And when thou shalt be old, I should stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee.

[00:07:12] And candidi whither thou wouldest not? That's a very cryptic statement, but it says this. He spoke concerning a signifying by what death He should glorify God. And when he had spoken thus this he said unto him, Follow me. Well, now, Peter said, strangely enough, Peter turning about, see if the disciple whom Jesus loved following, which also leaned on his breast at supper and said, Lord, which is He that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him, he saith to Jesus, Lord. And what shall this man do? Now you say, why should he ask a question like that? Don't you see? Working in the minds of these men were the words which the Lord had said. And he told them in the very Gospel that when the spirit of truth was come, he should bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever. He said unto them. And he said that parable, so that when the spirit of truth came, they should wake up and say, you know, that meant something. That meant a ministry was going to take place after Israel was gone and after the house was left desolate. And he looked at John and he said, Is that the man? Well, now you see, why didn't Christ just say, yes, You're right, Peter. Well, let me ask another question. My Bible is open to the last chapter of John and the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. In the Acts of the Apostles first chapter, they came to the Lord and said, Wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom of Israel.

[00:08:44] If they do, said, Lord, wilt thou ever restore the kingdom to Israel? He said, Of course, for the Scripture cannot be broken. But they pointed it. Wilt thou at this time? Well, now, supposing they said, Well, strictly speaking, no, because he's rather not going to repent. Although they'll have a 30 years ministry, they won't repent. Well, they said that would have taken the wind out of ourselves. And what's the good of going speaking, knowing full well that it's going to bring forth no fruit? So he said, you just do what you're told and leave the times and the seasons and the various other things in the hands of the Lord. So the Lord never said to Peter, You've guessed right, Peter. This is the man who is going to receive the last message to go out into the world and the highways and the byways and bring them in. But that's assuming that the ministry, which is now going to start in the acts of the apostles and go right through that, what, 35 years is going to be a failure speaking humanly. So he said, Peter, he said, if I will, that he tarry till I come. What is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then this saying got a bit

garbled. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that the disciple should not die.

[00:09:54] Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die. But if I will, that he tally till I come. What is that to thee? And he says, Now this is the disciple which testifies of these things and wrote these things. And we know that his testimony is true. Well, there's John just being made conscious that he had a ministry to perform yet. And the very words What if I willed it I eatery you see. And a strange thought. What is he never going to die. Quite fitted the thought that he outlived every one of them. As far as we know, he outlived the whole of the apostolate, including Paul and the rest. Right out to the end of every aged man. And then at the long last, after Jerusalem had been sacked, at the long last, he wrote this fourth gospel. And this fourth gospel was the literary means of going out into the highways, into the wide world, and whosoever will be leaving. What for? Why that the wedding should be furnished with guests. Now I'm keeping strictly to what the Scripture says, but never do we read in John's gospel or anywhere else that Peter or John were going to bring anyone into membership of the Body of Christ, which was the peculiar prerogative of Paul the prisoner. If I get many more words beginning with P, you think I invented it? The peculiar prerogative of Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.

[00:11:27] He alone received the dispensation of the mystery. And from him only could it be learned. That is the testimony of Scripture. That is the testimony of Ephesians three and Colossians one. So I believe that we're on the right track, that John's gospel is ensuring that the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is a part of John's testimony in the book of the revelation that the marriage supper of the lamb shall be supplied with guests, that the Son of God be not dishonored. Well, guests is a marriage is a high honor, but it's certainly not equivalent to being made members of the Body of Christ. Under the terms of a dispensation which John never received. Well, now we take a stage further. Peter was told, Feed my sheep. Now, supposing I asked Peter. Peter? You were given a commission at the end like that. We are told by John that you were given a commission to feed the sheep. Who are the sheep? Well, he looked me up and down and say. Sheep. Don't you know the Old Testament that the people of Israel in their service always remember we are the sheep of thy pasture. Israel. Don't you remember that The Savior himself said, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house

of Israel. So Peter would never dream that feed my sheep meant make members of the body of Christ.

[00:13:02] Under the terms of a dispensation that Paul himself received and Peter himself confessed, it was hard to be understood. But I can quote Peter. I needn't tell you. Some long time after Pentecost, Peter was brought face to face with a lost sheep. But he wasn't a Gentile. It wasn't a Jew. He was a Gentile. He was a centurion of the Roman army. He came inquiring the way of salvation. And would you believe it, Peter? Who is supposed to open the door of the church but didn't because his keys were the keys of the kingdom. He wasn't so foolish as to try to do that. Peter looked him up and down and said, you know, it's a thing unlawful for a man that is a Jew to be seen in company of one of another nation. That's Peter. Well, now, did he go back on the condition of John 21 or was he just fulfilling it? He was told to feed the sheep and the sheep at that time when it was said meant no other people than the people of Israel. So Peter writes his epistle to the scattered tribes of the people of Israel and calls upon them who were one day to be a royal priesthood and a holy nation, and that they were now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of their souls. So he's all in harmony. Now, John comes along with his testimony in this gospel.

[00:14:29] And he says something that Peter didn't know, or if he did know, he couldn't do anything about it. John says in the 10th chapter of this gospel that the Lord said, Other sheep I have. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. They also must be. And there shall be one flock. Do all the authorized version there. Two different words. They were not of this fold, but they will be one flock and one shepherd at the last. Now, if you've got any logic in our make up and don't despise logic because although we can never discover God's truth by reasoning, we do discover that there's no nothing unreasonable in anything God's ever said. If we've got any logic in our make up, we shall begin to say this here. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. If the other sheep. Which are not of this fold are members of the Body of Christ, and they are ultimately going to be one flock. Then the sheep, which are the lost sheep of the House of Israel, which are included, they're members of the body of Christ. And yet there you denied all the distinction that we surely discover in the New Testament. So we might as well give it up. But there is a distinctness in these ministries which are not confounded and not confused. Well, there was another feature. The critique I have in mind, whose name I'm not mentioning and I'm not bothering about justifying myself in his eyes.

[00:16:00] Has thrown us back very considerably on John 20 verse 30 and 31. The way I read his words as though I didn't know this verse existed. I suppose you do know that I've written a book on the gospel, according to John, and I've actually called it Life through his Name. Well, that's in this passage, so it looks as though I do know the verses are there. Now, this is what it says. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and the believing. You might have life through His name. Now to you and to me, that may mean something a little different from what was intended when that verse was first written. What do you say? What do you mean? Well, I say, What do you mean when it says The great point in this is to convince the reader that Jesus is the Christ? Now, instead of telling you myself out of my own idea, I'm going to let John talk about this. Would you go to the first chapter? The first chapter of John. And I would like you to feel that I'm putting into practice a principle which I believe is just as important as right division. And some people would think I must have.

[00:17:29] Not mean which to say that there's anything more important than right division, the way I've emphasized it for 50 years. But there is, and that is in one Corinthians, chapter two, when it says the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth comparing spiritual with spiritual, I dare not attempt to tell you what the Christ means if it's already explained by the Spirit of God. And you wouldn't wish me to, would you? Wouldn't you rather have God's own interpretation than anything I could give you? I'm sure you would. All right. Chapter one of John's Gospel. Verse 41. He first founded his own brother, Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messiah. Then. Because you may not know it. Which being interpreted is the Christ. When I read John 20, it's to make me believe that Jesus is the Christ. And even our version has got V in front of it. The Christ who is the Christ? John says, Haven't you read the first chapter? Oh, yes, but I forgot it. Well, don't forget it. I've told you in the first chapter that the Christ is the Messiah. So John has a testimony to bring to the outside world who didn't know these things that the one he is speaking about, whom you Gentiles called the Christ is the Messiah. And the Messiah is the hope of Israel embedded in the prophecies of the Old Testament? Look further down in chapter one.

[00:19:08] Verse 45, Philip Findeth Nathaniel and saith unto him we have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph. They found him. The law of the prophets all speak concerning this coming Messiah. The anointed one he set forth in type and symbol. The high priest was an anointed one. The king was an anointed one. The prophet was an anointed one. And this one is God's anointed prophet, priest and king. He is the Messiah. Well, if God speaks once, it ought to be sufficient for us. But he's very condescending. He says it again in this very gospel. So if you look at chapter four, you'll hear a Samaritan, this time using the same argument or using the same expression. Where's the verse? I've lost it. What number? Yeah, that's the one. Thank you. John 4:25. The Lord is speaking to this woman. And she said to him. I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ. Do you mean to tell me that that's put twice in John's gospel and it doesn't mean anything? Isn't it insisting that whether you're speaking to this person or to that person, when you're dealing with John's Gospel, the Christ is the Messiah. If that doesn't mean it, why is it emphasized? Are we not honoring the words of the Holy Spirit and comparing spiritual with spiritual? So that's twice when he comes. Then further down, verse 29, come see a man which told me all things that ever I did.

[00:21:09] Is not this the Christ? Well, now we know that she's say this is the Messiah. And so all the way through this gospel, we should take the hint that he's setting forth the fact that this Son of God is the messiah of the Old Testament, who now for the first time is being preached to the outsider. You see, he doesn't leave it in the first chapter to the people who lived at Jerusalem. In the fourth chapter. It's already reached the Samaritan. And in Matthew, they were forbidden to go into the ways of the Samaritans. Here they are going outside, you see, and the Samaritan woman, a poor outcast Samaritan woman, uses the word messiah, believes him, and will one day sit down at the marriage supper of the lamb when some of the Jewish people that despised her will be outside. That's the testimony, friends. That's the way in which this is worded. So now we begin to sense that we've got a key to help us, that God is intent, that the guests shall be there and those who despised it were not worthy. And the ones who were the outcast and the despised are now coming in represented by the first one that uses the word messiah. After that, the Samaritan woman. Well, now we could go on like that for some time, but I want to go further.

[00:22:34] John 22, which we've already referred and which we still have in mind, associates this testimony that Jesus is the Christ. Well, I'm going to alter it for a moment, that Jesus is the Messiah with the signs that He chose by the Spirit of God leading the signs Thatrillionun through this gospel. And there are eight of them. It starts with the marriage at Cana. It then goes on to the raising of the sun at a distance. Who was at the point of death? And then you have the man who was 38 years waiting to be healed and was was waiting to go into a pool. Then you have the walking on the sea and the feeding of the 5000, and then you come to a balance again, another pool. The pool of Siloam and the man who was blind from his birth. And then you have not a man who was at the point of death, but a man who had been dead and buried for days and was raised. And then you're back again. The the the point in the manager Cana is that Christ was there and he provided a necessity at a meal. And in the resurrection, he stood on the seashore. And sure enough, he does it again in the first and last of these signs. It's the people that he's speaking to are our guests. One lot at a wedding and one lot on a seashore.

[00:24:02] But guests to which he provided something that was missing. Is it an accident? Let's look at this. We won't look at the eight signs and we'll leave you something to do for yourself. But we will look at the first and the last, because you see, they so knit together by the use of terms that you'd have to be blind and obdurate to say there's nothing in it. So shall we look, First of all, we have Nathaniel, who is just a very just before the Kinder of Galilee incident. And Nathaniel, he was diffident at first, you remember. And then he made a confession. And he was an Israelite without guile. And at the other end, here we have Nathaniel coming again. But Thomas is also joined together with him. And he was not only diffident, but he wouldn't believe. And then he was convicted and confessed. Well, that's all right. They are both. What are they doing? They are both saying you're the messiah. Nathaniel didn't say thou art the Messiah. He said, Thou art a son of God. Thou art a king of Israel. That's the Messiah. And Thomas, he went further than any of them. He went down on his knees and he said, My Lord, and my God. He went further than them all. And that is true in the Old Testament when you size it up. The Messiah. All right. The place is Galilee. When he said, Don't bother about that.

[00:25:35] Oh, why not? What is the description given in the gospel? According to Matthew? The Jewish Gospel of Galilee. It's Galilee of the Gentiles. Yes. These these

two miracles were performed in Galilee of the Gentiles. You see. Here we are again. And so it goes on. There we have the third day stressed, and here we have the third time stressed. We have there an invitation. Jesus and his disciples were called. The guests were called. Do you remember? And here we have the invitation. He called them. He says, Come and dine. And then there was a failure. No wine left. And you must enter into the spirit of this. It wasn't. They were wanting drink unnecessarily. But just as we have in an ordinary wedding today, a little custom of a toast to the bride and the bridegroom and wishing that they have every happiness. So they had something similar in those days. And to be without come right straight in friends. That's right. To be without it would have meant a certain amount of feeling that there was a shadow cast over the wedding. And so our Lord came to the rescue. No wine. I think we are told there was a number six water pots of 2 or 3 firkins. And down here we have a number 200 qubits and 153 fishes. If you expect me to tell you what 153 fishes represent, there are so many explanations we're getting into such a tangle.

[00:27:09] I think we'll leave it. I think we have the cupboard filled with water and then we have the command. Cast your net into the water. The obedience they filled and the obedience they cast. And I filled up to the brim and I'm filled with so many that it ought to have broken the net. But it didn't. And then the servants they bear. There's the Greek word and the disciples they bring. There's the Greek word, the same word in both cases. And the result? He manifested his glory. The result? He was manifested or showed himself as the word is translated. It walks together too much, doesn't it, to be accident. That's the first and the last of these eight signs to demonstrate that Jesus was the Messiah. Now, what's the first act of the Messiah when he comes riding out of his heaven with his, with his horses, following him and so on? Well, the first most gracious act is the statement of the angels. The marriage of the lamb is come and his wife is made herself ready. Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the lamb. That's the Messiah. And here we have at the end. In resurrection. He just condescends to meet their need again and acts again as the host. And they the guests. I don't see how you can avoid this testimony. It's so on the surface and an integral part of the story without it's as we've gone so far.

[00:28:46] Let's look at this marriage of K2 by itself. We are supposed to be battling for the teaching that the church of the one body of the mystery doesn't come in John's gospel. Would that be not mean that we mustn't spend a few minutes in our meeting

from getting something positive out of a passage? So we'll look at this marriage of K2 a little bit more closely because there is one feature in it which has troubled God's people very much. Now, first of all, it says in chapter two, verse one. And the third day there was a marriage. But you can't reckon the third day, can you? Unless you know where you start from. Well, we've have to go back into the chapter one and we find there were four days before that. First of all, we have in 19 verse 19 that they met John, and then that is followed in verse 29 the next day. And then you'll find further down, verse 35 the next day, and then you will find that presently there's the day following verse 43, and then where's the last one? It's somewhere there. But you will find that by the time you've gone through chapter four, you've got four days accounted for. Well then three more on top of that makes seven, and the seven brings you to the climax of Prophetic Truth, the seventh period. And you've got the marriage of the lamb, symbolized by the marriage at Cana.

[00:30:18] But. In this sign. Our savior wasn't the bridegroom. He was just invited. He was one of the guests. They didn't know the character of the guest. His mother evidently was a friend and the disciples and Christ came because of that. They were just guests and they had no great place until the moment when he had to reveal his glory. And he did. This was the first time. So it says in verse two, and both Jesus was called and his disciples, you remember in the parable they called them to be guests. So the word is persisted it. And it says, when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no wine. Now, why should she say to him, He's a guest? He doesn't expect he's brought bottles with him. Do you? I don't know what some people might do if they think there was going to be a failure, but we know in this case he wouldn't, nor his disciples. Oh, don't you see the heart of Mary? She knew that that child that was born at Bethlehem, that caused the angels to come, and the wise men to visit and bring all their gifts and the prophecies that were going on him. She knew something must take place soon, and it must have been a very hard thing for her to hold back and not talk to him about it and say, Well, when's he going to start? And here she said.

[00:31:45] To herself. I wonder. I wonder if this is going to be the moment. They have no wine. And Jesus said unto her. Now, this may sound strange to our ears. Woman. It didn't say mother because mother would put him under an obligation. But don't forget, he said the same word when he was actually on the cross itself and commended his mother to this John. And he said, woman. This is Dyson. They handed him over to

John, so it was no disrespect, but it was neither father or mother in this case with Christ. You see, he says, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. It was almost, but not yet. You've seen the hand go round on the television, haven't you? And you watch it round at the moment it gets to the top. This is the duty is out and not yet come. And it couldn't be hurried by anybody, but it was right imminent now. And I believe his mother knew it. She guessed it because she leaned over to the servants and she said. Whatsoever he saith unto you, you do it. That that brings with it a thought that he's going to ask you to do something perhaps strange. Now, don't you be bought by that. Remember, Do it. And then she left it. Now. It says they were set there six waterpots of stone after the manner of the purifying of the Jews containing 2 or 3 firkins apiece.

[00:33:20] Now, I have at the bottom of this chart just a little symbolic set of Perkins. And I've told you that a firkin is between 8 and 9 gallons. And there are some who estimate that there was 162 gallons and Orford is a bit more moderate. And he said that's 120 gallons. Now, you imagine you imagine that at a little country village wedding when they just wanted a little wine to finish the whole thing. We are told by some people that Christ made 120 gallons of wine. Do you believe it? Would you say you must? Ah, that's because you missed a point. All right, let's have a look. These water pots. Were fueled to the brim with water. Well, where does he get the water from? Time to get there. No tax in those days. They had to go to the center, either of the village or of the house itself outside and draw water from a well, a bucket at a time, so that by the time the servants had brought 120 gallons. Attack it at a time. Everybody in that little house will be wondering what it was all about. And they know full well that there was no possibility of tampering with the water in the well, wouldn't they? You remember, this is the first miracle that Christ performed.

[00:34:51] So it was necessary that he should say, look, there's nothing up my sleeve. Wasn't it? Well, now it's obvious, wasn't it? Well, now, instead of saying he's going to turn all that into water and water into wine, he said, draw out now and take that to the governor of the feast. And that's where we've slipped up in the next chapter. Book one, Chapter four. A woman is sitting on a well bank at the side and she says, verse 15, Sir, give me this water that I thirst, not neither come hither to draw. And in verse 11, she said, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with. The Old Testament uses the same word with joy. Shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation? This word is never used except to

take water out of a well or out of the bilge of a ship. It could not possibly be used for anything. You drink in the sense of drawing. You see, you don't use it. And I've used a little illustration. Well, I can't invent another one on the spur of the moment. Supposing, say, a young German student is coming over to this country for six months to be entertained by English family. He wants to learn the language and the customs of the people, so he primes himself up a bit, you see, with an English German dictionary. So he's invited as soon as he gets here to an afternoon tea.

[00:36:28] He's got to be honest, you know, he's got to be so eventures, he said. You. You give me another. Another bucket of tea? Yes. Look him up and down and say, look, we don't say a bucket of tea. With a cup of tea. Oh bracket. A receptacle for containing liquid. Say, yes, I know it's a resettable, but you don't say a bucket of tea that's only for bilge water. And pail falls out of a well. That's what we've done. The Lord never said. Draw out now of that water and take all that lot to him. He said draw out of the well for the last time and don't bring it back to me. Take it to the head. One of the and when I got there, I wonder what they thought. Were they going to say? Here they said, look at one another. Are we going to be made fools or not? We're going to take this bucket of water. And he wants wine. And I don't know how it happened. We don't know. It's no good trying to explain. But when I got there, it was such good wine that the bridegroom and the other said, Yeah, what have you done? You've kept the best of the last. Of course, that's the stuff that Christ makes you see. I remember. One who has a mission in Bermondsey. And is beset by people who are addicted to drink. Their homes are wrecked.

[00:38:02] And he said, Oh, he said, You better leave me, because I'd never know what to say to these people when I've spoken to them about the terrible business of this drinking all the time. They throw back at me all these gallons of wine that Christ made. Oh, he said, I'll be able to go now and put them right. See? Well, it's worth knowing the Word of God is trustworthy. Well, now, you see. It is within the rule of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine and knew not whence it was. Then there's a nice little bit in brackets. But the servants which drew the water, they knew. Ah, yes, they knew. The governor of the feast called the bridegroom and said unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine. And when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. But thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles. You see, John said, Maya must start with that one. This is the beginning of his miracles in

Galilee. It sets forth the whole thing of a marriage and guests. And that's the very, very thing that I'm out to do in this gospel of John. I'm out to bring the guests to the wedding. So he put it in and then he closes with something very similar from another point of view there. There were a little handful of them. Instead of having no wine, they caught no fish.

[00:39:27] I caught no fish. Fisherman caught no fish. But at his word. They got such a catch that he was awarded the knight next didn't break, but there was fish there waiting for them before they brought this to land by the net. Oh, yes, He provided they were guests. They brought nothing. What they did with the fish was their affair. They could sell it or do what they like. But he provided. He said. Have you any meat? No, Lord. Come and dine. So whether it's a marriage supper come or whether it's just a breakfast or a scratch lunch only to manifest himself and his glory. Well, here we have. Just as testimony again. I'll go back now for a moment to John 20, because we shall come back to that several times. Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. So therefore there was a selection. And only God himself could guide us to what this election should include or leave out. Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. And at the end of chapter 21, you see again indicating that there must have been a spiritual overruling with regard to selection. Verse 25. And there are also many other things which Jesus did and which, if they should be written, every one.

[00:41:05] I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. If you take as a figure of speech, it doesn't matter, he said. I've been guided in selecting these. There, of course, as the signs to prove that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. And what's the object? Not that you may be members of the Body of Christ that's never coming into the story, but this you should have life. Life through His name. There is no indication, apart from the emphasis on the guests, that those who believe that belong to any peculiar calling. But the first essential is surely that we should have life. Unless we have life. It's no good arguing about Ephesians or Philippians or Colossians or the mystery. We are still as dead as ever. I want to show you presently. Not today, of course, later on that this John's gospel has been the door through which many a person has gone from life through his name to membership of the body of Christ. Oh, yes. And if you don't believe that you couldn't shake me because I came out of darkness. I sat and heard these words. He that believeth on the son hath everlasting

life. That's John. And I believe it. But I didn't become a member of the Body of Christ. I didn't know a word about the body of Christ at that time. I didn't know Paul had a distinctive ministry that came later.

[00:42:40] So we'll see that John has a ministry which is worldwide now. So when you try to imagine or draw on your sheet of paper, a large circle, that's John's ministry and inside it, a small one, that is the Ministry of Paul during this peasant period as well. They may be working together, but they don't overlap or coincide. So what are the questions we shall have to ask and try to settle? Is can two dispensations run together? One person says You might as well say that April and May can go together. That's because we say a dispensation is a period of time, isn't it? But we won't attempt that this afternoon. We'll leave the story as we brought it to you and ask you to go on and supplement as you read these eight signs that they have one purpose in view to stress that Jesus is the Old Testament Messiah now presented to those who are in the first case were not the ones to who became. He came to his own. And his own received him not, says John one, but as many as received him that another company to them gave the authority to become children of God. So we leave it there for the time being. Hope to pick it up when we meet together again on this Sunday afternoon and pursue this question. John's Gospel and its relationship with the dispensation of the mystery.