



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

JOHN

Week 2

DAY 8

The Greatest Miracle

John 5:1-47

OPENING
up to the Word

What was Jesus' greatest miracle? (a) changing water to wine, (b) giving mobility to the lame, (c) giving strength to the weak, (d) giving sight to the blind, (e) granting life to the dead.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How did the lame man reply to Jesus' question (v. 6)? Why were the Jewish officials upset about this amazing miracle by Jesus (vs. 9-11)?
2. Once the lame man was made well, what advice did Jesus give him (v. 14)?
3. What is the work of the Father and Jesus (vs. 17-23; 4:34)? Why were the Jewish leaders upset (v. 18)?
4. In Jesus' teaching on the resurrection (vs. 24-30), how do actions lead to end results?
5. How did Jesus testify about himself (vs. 31-47)? Consider the four witnesses Jesus calls to testify about himself: John 5:32-39.

LIVING
out the Word

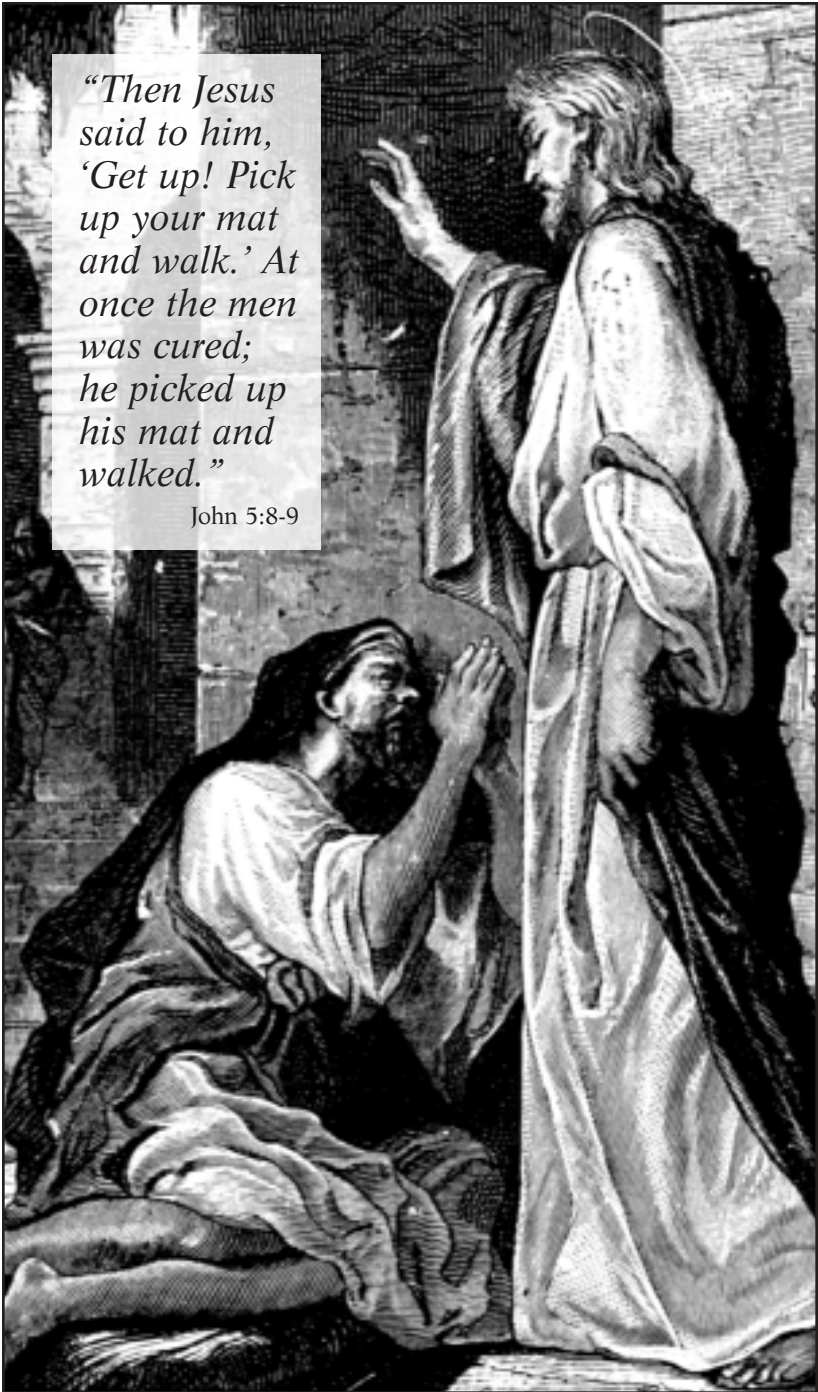
1. Does everyone really want to be healed—especially when it comes to spiritual healing? Is that why Jesus asked the man if he really knew what he was asking (v. 6)?
2. Have you ever been physically healed? Did you express your gratitude to God?
3. Do you look at the Bible as an end in itself, or does it point us toward Someone much greater (vs. 39-40)?

WINDOW
on the Word

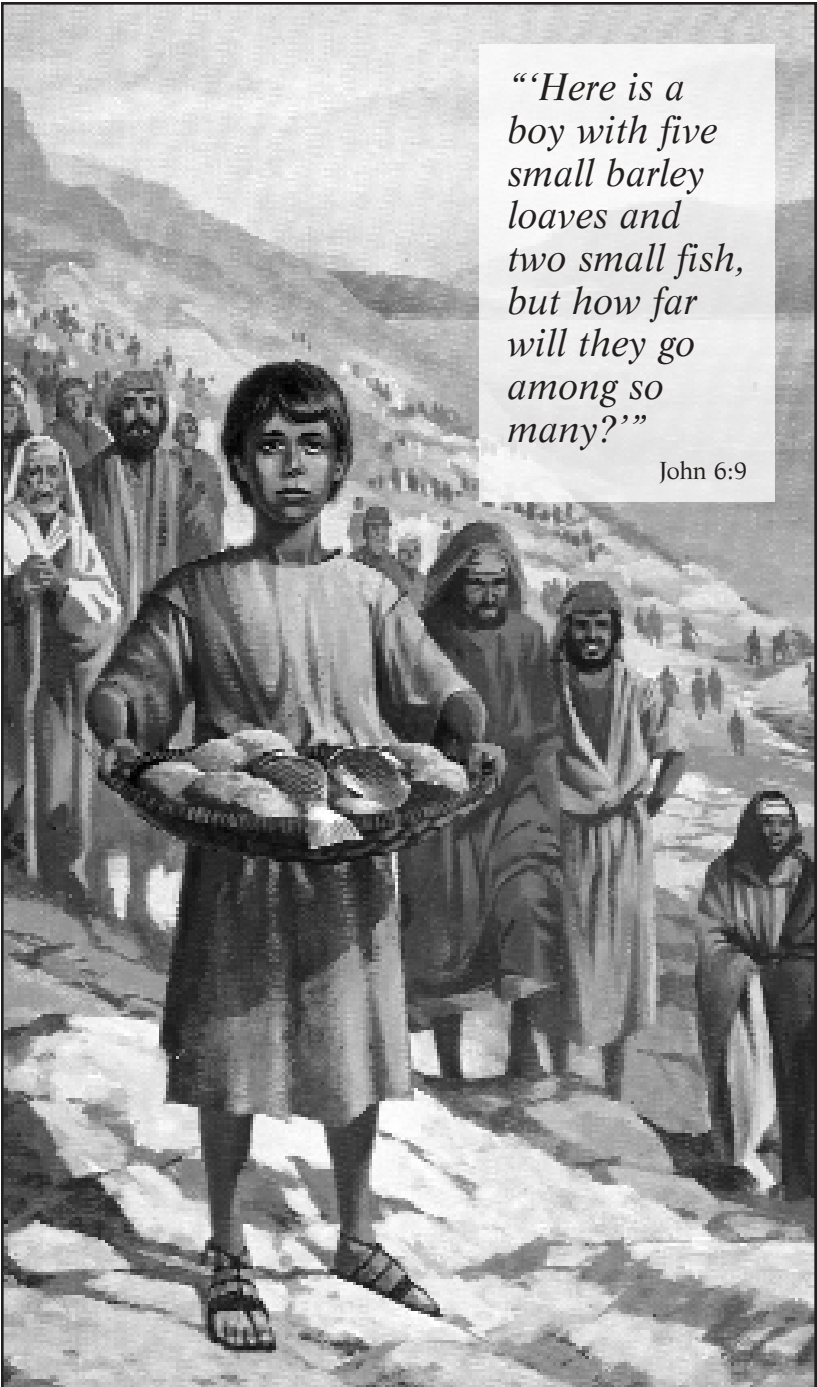
*Just north of the temple in Jerusalem was the **pool of Bethesda**, where sheep were cleaned for the sacrifices. Many sick and lame people believed that an angel occasionally disturbed the water and then healed the first person in the water. Early church fathers deduced that this story took place at the Feast of Pentecost based on the references to the law of Moses, which was believed to have been given from Mt. Sinai on the Jewish holy day of Pentecost.*

“Then Jesus said to him, ‘Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.’ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.”

John 5:8-9



Artwork by Gustav Doré



*“Here is a
boy with five
small barley
loaves and
two small fish,
but how far
will they go
among so
many?”*

John 6:9

Unexpected Guests

DAY 9

John 6:1-21

Leap of Faith was a satirical movie in which Steve Martin, playing the part of a faith healer, tried to take advantage of gullible people, but in the end he came to believe in God. Although a leap of faith would be great, do you believe God would be happy to see a baby step of faith?

1. What human needs did Jesus attend to in Galilee (vs. 1-14)? What miracles occurred?
2. Why was Philip tested by Jesus (vs. 5-7)? What did he learn?
3. What did this miracle of feeding the 5,000 teach about faith (vs. 10-14)?
4. As Jesus appeared out of the dark, walking on water, why were the disciples afraid (vs. 16-21)? What did they learn about fear? What did they learn about Jesus' power over the elements?

1. Name three miracles in your life. Were they physical, spiritual or both?
2. Are you thankful for the daily nourishment of God's blessings? Consider the miracle of the loaves and fishes, the food of peasants, as you eat your next meal.
3. Has anyone ever misunderstood your intentions? How would you deal with that situation?
4. What fears do you have today? Can you trust Jesus to help you?

"Eight months' wages," or "200 denarii" (v. 7, KJV). A denarii was about a day's wage for an unskilled laborer. Two hundred denarii might have purchased small meals for 600 people. Here were 5,000 hungry people. After the miracle of feeding the 5,000 in Galilee, the men understood Jesus to be the prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15-19. However, as did many of the Jews, they believed this prophet would forcibly remove Roman rulership and, as king, lead Judea to freedom. Because of this misunderstanding, Jesus withdrew from the crowd (v. 15).

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

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LIVING

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The True Manna

John 6:22-71

OPENING
up to the Word

What's your favorite bread? (a) sourdough, (b) rye, (c) whole wheat, (d) pumpernickel, (e) pita, (f) Jesus.

DIGGING
into the Word

- 1.** Why were the people trying to find Jesus again (vs. 22-24)? For spiritual direction? Or for him to solve their physical problems?
- 2.** How is bread used as a metaphor for life (vs. 11, 26-27, 30-35, 41, 48-58)?
- 3.** How did Jesus define the work that needs to be done (vs. 27-28, 38-40, 45)? What, exactly, is the "work of God" (vs. 29)?
- 4.** Jesus used symbols of bread, body and blood (vs. 51-59). Does this remind you of communion? Do you think John intended this when he wrote his Gospel—even though he does not mention the first Lord's Supper?
- 5.** Why was his teaching about his body and blood so hard to understand (vs. 60-61)? What point concluded Jesus' teaching here (vs. 62-71)?

LIVING
out the Word

- 1.** Why do you work? Do you labor more for physical things or for the spiritual?
- 2.** Consider eating a meal or a snack of bread and water. Meditate on their symbolism. Thank God for the bread of eternal life!
- 3.** Where do you go for the words of eternal life (v. 68)?

WINDOW
on the Word

***Manna** had come to Israel as the gift of life from God (Ex 16). It came by God's grace, not by Israel's good works. It was provided daily, with double on the sixth day and none on the seventh day, which was their commanded day of rest. In the New Testament, God sent his Son, Jesus, to be the spiritual manna, the bread of life, so we might have eternal life.*

The Authority of Jesus

DAY 11

John 7:1-36

Have you ever gone camping and spent a stormy night in a tent? Did it make you wish for a solid roof over your head?

1. In Galilee, Jesus' brothers, who did not believe in him, tried to instruct him nevertheless (vs. 1-13). Why didn't they yet believe?
2. What message, more than any other, stirs up anger in society (v. 7)?
3. Jesus did not make an open, public showing when he entered Jerusalem for his last visit for the Feast of Tabernacles (vs. 10-13). What argument arose among the people?
4. In the temple, what is the essence of Jesus' opening remarks (vs. 14-20)? Why refer to Moses, a hero of the Jewish people, when teaching about righteous judgment (vs. 21-24)?
5. Although the people knew of Jesus' human origin, they did not comprehend his divine nature (vs. 25-27). What lack of understanding resulted (vs. 28-36)?

1. Have you ever been threatened as a result of something you said? Would it have been wiser to keep your opinion to yourself?
2. "Timing is everything." How might this adage apply to sharing your faith with others (v. 6)?
3. How do you "make a right judgment" (v. 24)?

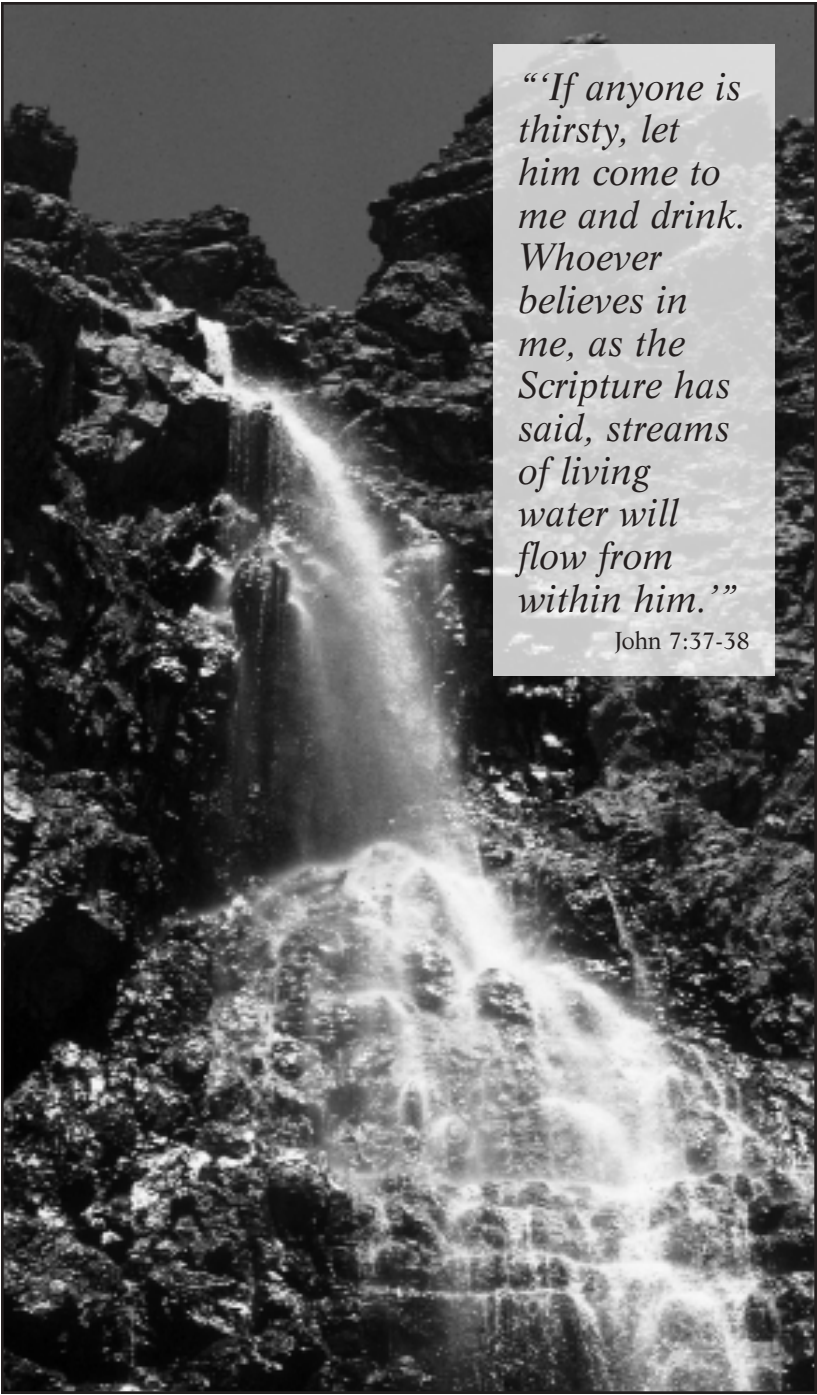
*John 7-9 takes place in Jerusalem during the **Feast of Tabernacles**. This eight-day autumn festival celebrated the fall harvest and commemorated the forty years Israel wandered as a nation from place to place in the wilderness of Sinai, awaiting entrance into the promised land. During those years they lived in tents or "tabernacles."*

OPENING
up to the Word

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*“If anyone is
thirsty, let
him come to
me and drink.
Whoever
believes in
me, as the
Scripture has
said, streams
of living
water will
flow from
within him.”*

John 7:37-38

Are You Thirsty?

DAY 12

John 7:27-53

If you became lost in a desert, what would your priority be? (a) food, (b) sleep, (c) candy bars, (d) soda, (e) water, (f) map, (g) prayer, (h) a compass, (i) the Holy Spirit.

1. What promise did Jesus make on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (vs. 37-39)?
2. How does Jesus show God's purpose in this passage (see Jn 15:26 and 16:7-11)?
3. What was the reaction to this teaching (vs. 40-53)? What kept the officers from taking Jesus into custody (vs. 32, 45-46)?
4. How did Nicodemus react (vs. 50-52)? Did he remain a secret believer (see Jn 3:2)?

1. Thank God for his gift of living water.
2. Do you believe to convince others of your faith in Jesus by your words and even arguments, or do you believe it is better for them to observe the Light of this world who lives his life in you?

The context of "the last and greatest day of the Feast," is either the seventh or eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles. At the end of this Feast, water was drawn from the pool of Siloam, carried to the temple, and poured as an offering on the altar. This set the old covenant background for Jesus' message, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."

OPENING

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Do You Take Light For Granted?

John 8:1-30

OPENING
up to the Word

Until the invention of the electric light, activity at night was limited. What might change in your city if nightlife were restricted to oil-burning lamps?

DIGGING
into the Word

- 1.** What is unusual about the story of the woman caught in the act of adultery and brought to Jesus (vs. 3-11)? Where was the guilty man? What do you think Jesus wrote, in this, the only account of him actually writing something? Why did the accusers leave? What was Jesus' response?
- 2.** Can your lifestyle demonstrate that you are walking with Jesus (v. 12)? How?
- 3.** In what ways are the Son and the Father forever united (vs. 13-27)?
- 4.** In what two ways was Jesus lifted up (vs. 28-30)?

LIVING
out the Word

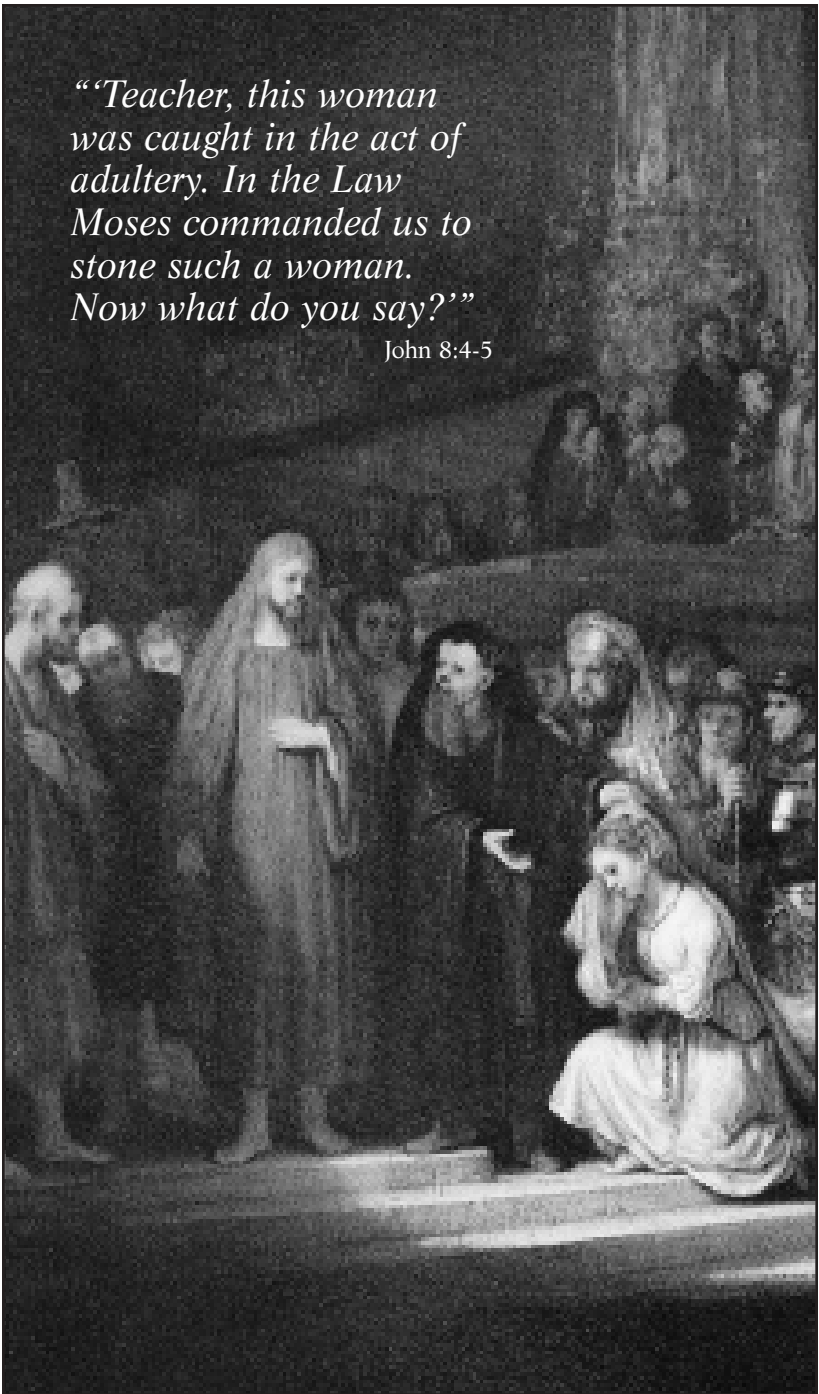
- 1.** Consider forgiving someone who has sinned against you. You might ask God to inspire this person to sin no more—but you might forgive them whether or not you feel they have repented.
- 2.** Thank Jesus for replacing the darkness in your life with light.

WINDOW
on the Word

*The account in John 8:1-11 does not occur in the earlier and best manuscripts of the Bible, although it is found in over 900 later manuscripts of John. It is possibly an addition based on another document or witness to the event. Regardless, the story is theologically consistent with the teaching of Jesus. During the Feast of Tabernacles, huge **torches** were lit each night in the large temple compound and people danced and sang in celebration. This was unusual, for little activity occurred after sundown in that culture. In this context Jesus declared himself to be the light of life.*

*“Teacher, this woman
was caught in the act of
adultery. In the Law
Moses commanded us to
stone such a woman.
Now what do you say?”*

John 8:4-5



Artwork by Rembrandt van Rijn, National Gallery, London

Is There Truth in the World?

John 8:31-59

OPENING
up to the Word

Diogenes was an ancient Greek philosopher who sought truth. Where would you send him in today's world to find truth?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. In what context did Jesus claim the truth will set you free (vs. 31-36)? How free were the Jews?
2. Although these Jews claimed to be descendants of Abraham, whose sons does Jesus claim they were (vs. 37-47)? Was this claim because of their attitudes, actions or both?
3. Do you think racial pride played a part in the confrontations with Jesus (vs. 48-51)?
4. How does one's personal action reflect internal belief (v. 44)?
5. Why did the claims of Jesus, in speaking of his relationship with God and his knowledge of Abraham, infuriate the Pharisees (vs. 52-59)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How does truth set you free (vs. 31-36)? See John 14:6. Who is the Truth?
2. If racial bias underlies your attitude toward others, consider praying for healing so you can respect and value all people, regardless of their ethnicity.
3. Give honor to Jesus, the great *I Am* (v. 58)!

WINDOW
on the Word

*Jesus claimed to be the **I Am**. This name of God was first revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Ex 3:13-15). Jesus made repeated claims to this title (Jn 4:26; 8:24, 28; 13:19; 18:5-8). This was understood by the Jews as a claim to equality with God; indeed, Jesus was revealing himself as God.*