

7781U

THE DISCIPLES OF THE LORD

Speaker: Bro. Roger Lewis

Study #2 John - Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire?

Reading: Luke 9:49-56

.....I'm sure the brother's right, I think that's something that we become more impressed with as we go through the story of the disciples, that, you see, it's obvious really, isn't it? all of us have got problems in life, but the whole story of the truth is, **that the truth is designed to change us**. It will change us and it can change us if we're prepared to allow it to work in our lives, but if we're not prepared to do that, then we'll become a Judas and the Lord ultimately will have no further use for us; and so the thing about that is, that none of us have come to the truth with a ready developed character that's mature in the truth, we have to allow the influence of the Word to work in us over a period of time. So Peter had to learn that too, didn't he?

Well, the man that we're going to look at now, is a very different person to Peter. How would you describe Peter? how would you sort of summarize Peter's character? Enthusiastic! that would be a good word for Peter, wouldn't it? he would have to be enthusiastic to get out the side of a boat and walk on water, he was that sort of person, but at the root of his enthusiasm was a **sort of confidence in his own ability**, 'oh, I'll be able to do it!' and, of course, that was the key to Peter's weakness, wasn't it? he had to learn not to trust in himself. Now John never had that problem, you know, John was a very different disciple to Peter. John never had a problem about being confident in himself; John's confidence was always **founded on the Father**; he actually was a much more spiritual person than Peter. He was actually a much deeper thinker than Peter, he had a better spiritual mind than Peter, he was more attuned to the Lord's teachings than Peter; in some ways we might say therefore, that John was actually more spiritually mature in some ways, but John had a problem all the same, and it was quite a different problem to Peter's.

Now the key to John's life is in Mark 3, and here's the key reference that really opens up for us the problem in John's life, and what it was that Jesus was trying to work on here. Of course, you see, what we're really learning here is that Christ had to work with all of these disciples to help to change them. Jesus knew whom He'd chosen, He knew the strengths and weaknesses of everyone of His disciples, and He certainly knew the problem that John had. Now here's the problem! In Mark 3 we have the story of the calling of the twelve; it says in verse 13, 'He goes up into a mountain, and calls unto Him whom He would' (and what we're not told there, but Luke's gospel record tells us in Luke 6 verse 12, was that Jesus actually spent the whole night in prayer before He made this decision. So He didn't choose these 12 men lightly and He didn't make

mistakes). He spent the whole night agonizing over those 12 names and John's one of them. Here he is, verse 16, here's the list, 'Simon He surnamed Peter; and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and He surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James etc. etc'. So John is one of the two sons of Zebedee, we know, but they're called here **Boanerges** (993) which is the sons of thunder. Now what we have here is a Greek form of a Hebrew word; what's the Hebrew word for 'son'? ben, now how does that come through in the Greek, how do we normally see it? it's normally actually 'bar' so we have, Simon bar Jonah, instead of Simon ben Jonah. Well, this 'boa' is actually another form of 'ben' really, and you see at the end of that you've got the word 'rges', so you've got 'boane' and then 'rges' and that actually is an abbreviated form of the Hebrew word 'regaz'(7266). So if you like, in the Hebrew form of Boanerges, we have 'ben regaz' that's the Hebrew form of Boanerges, the son of regaz; now it says in Mark here that it means 'the sons of thunder' but Gesenius says that this is what the word 'regaz' means, it means to be moved by anyone of the following things (now listen to these, I'm going to put 3 of them on this side and 3 of them on that side). It means to be moved with:

rage
anger
wroth

and on the other side is that it can also mean to be moved with:

grief
awe
joy

That's what 'regaz' means. Now I'll just say those again, can you see the two sides of the word? To be moved with rage or anger or wroth, but also to be capable of being moved with grief or with awe or with joy. So Strong's says that 'regaz' means 'to quiver with any violent emotion', that's what 'regaz' means. To quiver with any violent emotion! now here's John and here's his problem, he is, because Jesus gave him this name, he is the son of 'regaz'. John's problem was **he was very intense!** that was his problem; Peter had to learn to overcome **impetuosity**, John had to learn to overcome **intensity**; whatever he felt he felt very intense, he was a very intense sort of person. He felt strongly about things, that was a problem because sometimes John felt so strongly that he trod on top of everybody else. Jesus was going to have to take John and say, 'now look, John, you might be right on the principle but you've got to learn to temper that strength of feeling with a little care and consideration for others'. He was far too strong, have you ever come across people like that? I guess we all can be like that at times, if there's something we feel strongly about and we get involved in an argument and we sit there shaking and we can feel the blood pounding in our temples, and we get far too strong about things. That was John! he was always like that! he was a naturally intense person and everything he did was very intense. They are not a relaxed person, they're not relaxed at all. Their whole life is wound up like a spring and you're very careful not to touch it, in case it uncoils rapidly.

Now you see, when Jesus gave John that name, what Jesus was really saying was, I know this man's problem! Now come and have a look at what happens! Three times the Lord has to rebuke John for that spirit of intensity; now here's the first one, it's in the gospel of Mark (we'll use Mark, it's in a number of records but we'll use the one in Mark 9 by way of illustration). Verse 38, 'John answered Him saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us'. Now notice the spirit of John on this occasion! first of all, do you see the key words? one thing we can say about John is, that he might have been intense but the one thing was, above anything else, he loved Christ; in fact, we know that, don't we? because of what he's described as in his own gospel record? 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'. Now you stop and think about this, it's an amazing thing, do you think there was a touch of pride in Peter? I think there was at times, you know, he felt himself a pretty capable bloke, and at the forefront of things; but I don't think there was that sort of pride in John, John never had a problem with pride in that way. He was very intense about things, but how could you write a gospel in which you describe yourself as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'? without pride! could you write that? most of us would have just a tinge of pride in saying that, wouldn't it? You see, John knew that was true! he was the disciple whom Jesus loved, and he loved Jesus. You know, it says, doesn't it? it says of Jesus in John 1, 'that no man hath seen the Father, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him!' remember that phrase in John 1? 'the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him', and that phrase '**in the bosom**' represents the tremendous closeness between God and His Son; and there's only one other person of whom that phrase is used and it's of John himself, 'who **lay on the bosom**' of Jesus, at the time of the Upper Room, and there was a tremendous closeness between John and his Master. **JOHN LOVED CHRIST** and he knew that Christ loved him. There was no pride in that, he was able to write that in his gospel without any trace of pride, it was a humble statement of fact.

But he was too **strong**! now here it is, 'verse 38, 'Master' (you see, everything that John said always revolved around anything that affected Christ; he was very sensitive to what affected Christ.) 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he follows not us, and we forbade him, because he follows not us'. He says 'he follows not us', but what he really means, of course, is that he wasn't following Christ. That's what upset John, it wasn't so much that he wasn't following us, but what upset John about this man was that he was casting out devils in the name of Jesus, **but he wasn't following Jesus**, and that's not good enough as far as John was concerned. He was very upset about that, he felt that was wrong! and can you see John quivering there? why, I can just see him shaking, and do you see how Jesus handles the issue, verse 38, 'and we forbade him'. Oh, can you see John? striding up to this man with flashing eyes, 'how dare you do that! you stop that at once; in fact, the word 'forbad' here means 'to prevent by word or act' (2967). To prevent, oh boy, John stopped him alright, he said, 'I fixed him'. **Far too strong**, wasn't he? do you see the problem with the man? now he might have been right, there may have been a principle here that John was right on, but the way he went about it was far, far too strong.

Jesus said, verse 39, 'Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of me'. Now you know this whole incident is actually strangely reminiscent of something that happened a long time ago. Come back to the life of Moses. See if you can recognize this story in the life of Moses, Numbers 11, remember this little incident in the story of Numbers, see how strangely similar this story is! It says in Numbers 11 verse 25, 'But Yahweh came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon Moses, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but they didn't go out into the tabernacle, they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them (do you see John there?). And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all Yahweh's people were prophets, and that Yahweh would put His Spirit upon them'. Now do you see the aggressiveness of Joshua here? alright, there was a decisive strength of purpose here! You see, they said, 'these men haven't followed you, Moses, they have partaken of your spirit, and here they are prophesying in the camp and they ought not to do that; now you forbid them, says Joshua. But Moses says, 'Joshua, Joshua, would to God that all the ecclesia have that spirit!'

Now you see that answer of Moses there, 'Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all Yahweh's people were prophets', now come back to Mark 11, (now it's in the margin in case you didn't notice that, it's not really a clever reference, it's just a case of using your margins carefully, in Mark 9 verse 38 it's under 'p', but you can see how that that incident in the Old Testament is clearly the foundation for this little story here in Mark; and no doubt, by the way, Jesus knew that). Jesus said, verse 39, John, forbid him not, for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, who can lightly speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is on our part'. It's the same spirit as Moses, isn't it? Look, says Jesus, whoever is not against us is for us. Would God that **all the ecclesia** had that power to do so. Don't be like that, John. Now you see, what Jesus is doing in this story of Mark 9 verses 38 to 40 is, He is rebuking John on this occasion **for short sighted aggressiveness**, that's what it's about! He's rebuking John for short sighted aggressiveness; John saw a problem, he felt so intense about it, he said, 'forbid him!' Jesus say, you're being far too strong, John; in fact, do you see how he uses John's own terms, verse 38, John says, 'he follows not us, and we forbade him because he follows not us. Verse 40, Jesus says, 'John, he that's not against **us**, John, is on **our** part'. He throws John's own terms back at him; now sometimes we're a bit like John in life, aren't we? we feel strongly about an issue, we get all het up about it and we go steaming into battle, ready to do what John did here, and it's not the right way, it's not how you handle things in the truth. You never ever handle issues in the truth that way, it's not the right way, we don't show that intensity of spirit, that is intolerant or aggressive towards others!

Well, of course, some time later on, if you come to Luke 9 which was the reading that we had; some time later on, of course, Jesus was on the way down south to Jerusalem and He decided He would go through the area of the Samaritans. It says in verse 51 of Luke 9, 'That it came to pass, when the time was come that He should be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before His face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for Him. And they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and **John** saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elijah did?' You see where it says in verse 54, 'when His disciples James and John **saw** this', the word 'saw' which is the Greek word 'eido' (1492) indicates the direction of thought towards the object seen; you know how we say something in life, someone explains something to us, and we say, 'oh, yes, I **see** what you mean!' and when we use that phrase 'I see', we don't actually mean something we've seen with our eyes, but as something we comprehended with our brain.

So when it says His disciples, James and John saw this, what it really means is that they understood that these Samaritans **had snubbed Christ**. Well, you don't do that, not with John around! John's far too protective of Jesus, for anyone in the vicinity to snub Him. 'They just snubbed our Lord! immediate reaction from John! So you see what John says with his brother, they said, 'Lord, wilt Thou that we **command fire to come down from heaven**, and **consume them**, even as Elijah did?' Oh, this is grand stuff, isn't it?

Any idea why John said that? well, I think there are actually two things that could be brought to bear upon that! If you come back for a moment to Matthew 11, John had already heard these words: verse 20, 'Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day'. So Jesus has already brought down just recently, judgment on the cities of Galilee, and so one can imagine John thinking, 'well, if Jesus can bring down judgment upon the cities of Galilee in Israel, what about these Samaritan cities, let's blast them off the face of the earth! that will solve the problem!'

Not only that, but if you come back to Luke 9, one of the things about this was, you see, Luke 9 tells us that they'd only recently come down from a high mountain, and who'd they seen on the high mountain? Peter was one of the ones up there, who'd they seen talking with Jesus? Why one of the very men they'd just seen on the mount of transfiguration was Elijah, and Elijah was in John's brain, and they come into the Samaritan village, Christ was snubbed and John's immediate action was 'right!' and the

spirit of Elijah flashes back into his mind and he says, 'let's blast them off the face of the earth'. Actually the Diaglott says, 'Master, dost Thou wish that we command fire', and you see, again, what's it motivated by? John's jealous love for Christ; he felt very jealous about Christ, he didn't like people snubbing Jesus, and you see, in a way, that was a wonderful spirit, wasn't it? Wouldn't you like to feel so strong about Christ as John? wouldn't you like to have that strength of feeling? Do you feel that way? Do I feel that way? do we feel as intense about the truth as John? in a way, that's a good thing, isn't it? You see, that intensity wasn't based on confidence in himself. John was 100% committed to the truth, but along with that there was a problem here, with regard to his attitude.

Verse 55 says, 'But Jesus turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye don't know what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them', and so was the spirit of Elijah, wasn't it? because the spirit of Elijah was really the spirit of the still small voice, to build up and to heal and to restore; and He says, you think you know all about Elijah, John, He said, 'you don't know what spirit Elijah had! So what does Jesus do? at the end of verse 56, 'they went to another village'. So Christ avoided the confrontation? because it wouldn't have been any benefit in the truth, would it? it wouldn't have done any good for the truth, to have an argument with the Samaritans on this occasion. You see, there's a key here, you see, what the Lord is doing is He's rebuking John on this occasion for **vindictive intolerance**; a slightly different story to the previous one, he's rebuking John here for **vindictive** - command fire, **intolerance**, - and destroy them. Jesus said, 'John, that's far too strong, that's far too extreme, that's far too judgmental, that's not how you act in the truth. Doesn't matter how right you think you are, there is never, ever room for that sort of spirit of intensity. Jesus gave an example of what to do; let's just leave it alone! and they walked to another village. You see, there are some people who are unnecessarily combative in the truth; they always want to have an argument, they always want to pick a fight and the approach they take is always that sort of an approach. It's confrontational! 'what do you think about this, brother? I don't agree with what you said! boom, bang, crash bang! You know, it doesn't work, does it? and the problem is that John had to learn that too!

John had to learn that he'd never, ever, ever help the ecclesia as long as he banged his way around like that! He had to learn to temper his strength of feelings with a greater wisdom in how he handled people and how he worked with other people. You see, all these men had to change, it's not good enough for John to say, 'well I'm just strong and that's the way I am; you'll just have to accept me, that's the way I'm built'. **Not good enough!** the truth is designed to change us, not to justify what our existing character is. You know, we all have strengths and weaknesses, and I think there's a very good lesson here about the truth, you see, there are some things that we're all naturally good at; you take a person who's naturally a good organizer. So they run a camp or a study weekend, and people say, 'oh isn't that good, oh, they're a diligent person for the truth; they're running around, it's a marvellous organization for the truth'. Well so it might be, but it could just be that that person has a natural talent to do that

anyway, do you know what I mean? there are some other people that you know that you'd never ask them to organize a camp! things might not be there like salt or teapots or toilet rolls, but some people have a natural skill, don't they? but you see how easy it would be to say, well, there's a fine person in the truth. Well, so it might be, but it might just be that that person has a natural ability in that regard; you see, when the day of judgment comes, do you think that person will be judged as worthy simply because they displayed their natural abilities? No, Christ is more interested in the areas that they had in their life where there was change needed, not where they already had natural abilities. What about a person who, for example, is naturally quiet? people say, oh, she's a marvellous sister, very humble person! Now she might be humble, but you know, some people are naturally quiet and self effacing, aren't they? do you know what I mean? they were like that before they came to the truth, so you see, the issue is not whether they're quiet but whether it's the truth that motivates that quietness. Do you see what I'm saying, because a person could be like that anyway, the challenge of the truth is all about how the truth has changed our bad points, not about the natural good points we already had anyway. So it's not good enough for John to say, 'well, I just feel strongly about things, and you've got to accept me; no, no, John, you've got to change, you've got to learn to **control that intensity of feeling**, so that not as in this case, you're vindictively intolerant of other people, because they have done something that you think is wrong.

Alright, there's another one still to come and it's back in the gospel of Mark again, and this time it is in Mark chapter 10, and here's a good illustration on this occasion of how a person who is too strong about things, can in the end start to upset other people, in that their work becomes detrimental to the truth in the overall sense. Now in verse 35 of Mark 10, James and John the sons of Zebedee come unto Jesus saying, 'Master, we would that Thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire'. Actually this is a very good statement when you think about it. You know how little kids come up and say, 'dad, will you promise to give me whatever I want? well, son it depends on what you're going to ask!' Now do you see what these two boys do, imagine, have you every thought about Christ's smile? I'm sure Christ smiled sometimes, He must have smiled at His disciples. Now these two boys, James and John come up and say, 'Master' yes, 'we wouldest that Thou shouldest do for us whatever we ask'; and I can just see Jesus with a smile on His face in verse 36 saying, 'well, what would you desire Me to do for you?' Can you see that? because they really wanted this, you see, can you see that intensity of feeling? John really wanted this, now what did he want?

Verse 37, not much really just a little help! They said, 'Grant unto us that we may sit the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand in thy glory'. Just a little request really, in fact, I'll tell you how the Diaglott put it because it gives you the spirit of what John was aiming at here; They said, verse 37, 'That one at right of Thee, and one at left of Thee, we may sit **in the glory** of Thee', what did they want? John says, I just want to be near you; I want to be next to you in the kingdom; do you see how he loved the Lord? Oh, he loved Christ, didn't he? he really did! you could never ever blame John for that, **he really loved Christ**. One at left of Thee, and one at right of Thee, we may sit in

the glory of Thee, but it's all about being near Christ, please, would you do what we ask? says John.

Well, verse 38 says that Jesus said unto them, 'Look, He says, you don't know what you're asking for! Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of and be baptised with the baptism that I'm baptised with? and they said, (can you hear John?) **We can!** they didn't even know what was in that cup, did they? at that time. In fact, the word 'can' here in verse 39, is the word 'dunamai' (1410), what does that mean? **we have the power to**, yes, no trouble! you want us to drink the cup, not a problem, we've got the power to do that, yep! You see, John was so strong that he wanted that! I want to be near Christ, can you drink of my cup? yep, sure can!

Verse 39 had said, 'Ye indeed shall drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized, (and by the way, that did happen, didn't it? because which disciple died first? James! in Acts 12, Herod actually killed him, so James was the first apostle to lose his life in the cause of the truth, the brother of John, so James did first drink of that cup). But I'm sure they never knew it when they said, **we can**, back here in Mark 10. But Jesus says, 'To sit on my right hand, verse 40, and to sit on my left hand, is not mine to give, but **it shall be given to those for whom it is prepared**; and when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John'. As well we might imagine that the ten would be, and you see how that John's **thoughtlessness** here, because of his own strength of feeling, had lead now to tension within the rest of the members of the disciples. The other ten said, 'wait a minute, what's going on here?' So really, Jesus has to rebuke John again on this occasion.

Now what is He rebuking John for this time? Well, He's rebuking John for **thoughtless ambition**, isn't He? thoughtless ambition! because it was an ambition at the expense of others; John says, I don't care about anyone else, but I do want to be near Christ myself! Jesus says, you can't be like that! So you see how you've got these three episodes, Mark 9, he's rebuked for **short-sighted aggressiveness**; Luke 9, he's rebuked for **vindictive intolerance**; Mark 10, he's rebuked for **thoughtless ambition**, but they were all manifestations of the same spirit, the son of regaz, far, far too **strong**. See the problem? Now John had to learn to overcome that spirit, and I think there are times in our life that we're all a bit like that; we're a bit too intense about our feelings, perhaps a bit too aggressive, a bit too strong in our dealings with other people. It's never ever the right way to be like that! It's not saying that we shouldn't have a love for the truth, of course, we should, but tempered with that needs to come an appreciation of how to deal with other people.

Well, you see the Lord knew that, didn't He? The Lord must have known that, because it's He that called him Bonaerges, now funny enough, I think the last night of the Lord's life, was the night that John learnt his lesson. Now you see, if you come to the record of John 19, you could imagine the amazement that John had that on that night, Jesus had shown so much care and thoughtfulness for other people; He shown thoughtfulness for Judas, He dealt with Peter, He had explained something to Thomas; He'd been kind to

Philip; He'd talked to Judas (the other Judas, not Iscariot); if you go through the record of John's gospel, (it's all in John's gospel, by the way) you'll find event after event after event, that night that John writes down, where he catalogues all the things that Jesus did that night to show care for other people. I think that really impressed John, and finally it extended now to an episode that involved John himself. Because in John 19 verse 25 it says, 'Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and **the disciple standing by, whom He loved**, He says unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then says He to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home'. So here's Jesus on the cross, about to expire, and here's Mary His mother and here's John: now you see, it's interesting really, doesn't that ring true; of all the disciples, who's there to witness the last moment? John! isn't that what we'd expect of John? because he's the most intense of all of them. **I want to be near Christ!** and of all the disciples, we wouldn't be surprised, would we? that the one at the cross at the time of the end, as Christ is about to expire is John. Oh, that rings true, doesn't it?

What does John see? He beholds Jesus' eyes opened and He focuses on His own mother and what does John see Him do? he sees the last recorded act of care, that Jesus shows for yet another person that night before He died, for His own mother. All through that night, John was being taught, care for others, care for others, care for others; you go through John's gospel and read that carefully and see how that spirit comes out. That was the very lesson that John himself needed to learn, and he saw it that night, he was there, he witnessed the compassion of the Lord. Remember how he said in John 13, (we made reference to that phrase 'little children', and of course, it's John finally, that takes that term up in his epistles, doesn't he? What have we often described the epistles as, by the way? the epistles of **love**! Now that interesting, isn't it? so here's a man who's rebuked for **short-sighted aggressiveness**, who's rebuked for **vindictive intolerance**, who's told off for **thoughtless ambition** at the expense of other people, and he's the man that finally writes the epistles of brotherly love. Did John learn his lesson? He must have, mustn't he? and the son of thunder had to write about how to deal gently with one another, and he takes that phrase up from John 13, and over and over again in his epistles, he says, 'my little children' you should do this, you should do that! If we read the epistles of John we've got all the tenderness, all the care, all the patience, all the wisdom of a man, who I believe, still felt strongly about the truth, and still loved the Lord with a burning flame that had never dimmed, but it had been tempered now with a wisdom and a care and a moderation, for other people, that would seek the best interests of the truth.

That's one of the things that we ought to ask ourselves, whenever we're going to do something, before you do it, when you're ready to do something (in inverted commas) I'm going to do something about this! Well, before you do that, you should always say, 'is this going to be the best for the truth, what I'm going to do or the way I'm going to do it, or the words I'm going to use? Will it be the best for the truth, if I do it this way? That's what John had to learn, wasn't it? and he did learn, and his final task was to write

finally, the epistles of brotherly love, and I think that's a lovely point that comes out, in fact, come and have a look at this in Matthew 11. We're told in Matthew 11, this is one of the prayers of Christ, verse 25, just read these words, 'O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank Thee, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. (Now listen to these words) **All** things are delivered unto Me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him'. Okay, now come and have a look at John's epistle, 1 John 2 verse 22, 'Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father'. Do you see the language, where did John get his thoughts and his language from in his first epistle? It comes straight out of the prayer of Jesus in Matthew 11, 'all things are delivered unto Me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father. Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him', the very language of John ultimately is a reflection of the language of Jesus Himself. That's why Jesus loved him, because not only was John intense in his feelings, but he was the disciple that **thought the most like Christ**.

Well, three days later, we have an indication of the consideration for others, that John we believe, learnt over that night. By the way, you might just like to take a note of this, and see if you can work out where these phrases are! Although we've got a few statements here that John said, do you know, that out of all the references to John's life, and there's quite a few of them, that John only ever opens his mouth 5 times, and the 5 statements that John makes are **really interesting** in terms of seeing the **burning spirit of this man**. Are you ready? here they are! see if you can tell me where they are!

1. 'Master, where dwellest Thou?' It's probably worth putting this all together, it's a real reflection on John if you've got these 6 references, it tells you all about his attitude. John 1 verse 38, we won't look at these references in detail, but you might just like to take a note of them. But there were two men, you see, that followed Jesus, we believe the two men were Andrew and John; they both had a brother each and they both went off to find the brother and John's writing the story, but in his modesty in John 1, he doesn't actually say it was him, but we believe that was a phrase that's coming out of John's mouth. 'Master, where dwellest Thou?' that's the first phrase.

2. 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name and we forbade him'. Where's that? that's Mark 9:38, isn't it?

3. 'Master, wilt Thou that we command fire from heaven?' that's Luke 9:54.

4. 'Master, we wouldest that Thou should do for us, whatever we ask!', that's Mark 10:35.

5. Oh, now where's this one? 'Master, who is it?' John 13:25 in the Upper Room.

6. Here's the last one! 'It's the Master', John 21:7.

Now do you see the common element? to the 6 times that John speaks? That's the one He loved, there's something real tell-tale there, isn't there? Every time John opens his mouth in the gospel records, the name of the **Master** is on his lips. Would to God, b&s and young people that we had that love for the truth and for our Lord; there's nothing wrong with that! It's just a case of learning the wisdom to temperate that in terms of our dealings with one another. So on most occasions, despite the fact that we've looked at those times when he speaks, on most occasions, in fact, John is the silent and thoughtful observer of all that He did. Here's the record of the times when John actually occurs in special circumstances in the narrative.

1. He was there at the healing of Peter's mother-in-law in Mark 1:29
2. He saw the miraculous draught of fishes in Luke 5
3. He witnessed the raising of Jairus's daughter in Luke 8
4. He was there at the transfiguration in Matthew 17
5. He heard the Olivet prophecy in Mark 13
6. He was there at the exposure of Judas at the Supper in John 13.
7. He saw the agony in the garden in Matthew 26
8. He witnessed the trial of Christ in John 18
9. He saw the crucifixion at Golgotha in John 19
10. He saw the empty tomb in John 20
11. He saw the miraculous draught of fish in John 21.

Whatever was going on in the life of Jesus, you'll see John always there, but in fact, he very rarely opens his mouth. When he does, it's always got the word, 'Master', on it. But generally he's just there watching, observing, learning, every thing that Jesus did. Now remember we said we're just going to look at how he learnt that lesson of **tolerance** to others.

Well, let's have a look at the next day, in fact, it was three days later when they come to the empty tomb. In John 20, we're told, of course, in John 20 verse 2, 'That Mary Magdalene runs and comes to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said unto them, they've taken the Lord out of the sepulchre and we know not where they've laid Him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre'. Now who was the other disciple? the other disciple was John, wasn't he? why do you think he outrun Peter? was he younger? did he have longer legs? did he know the way better? what do you think the reason was? any thoughts? because John was always a ball of intensity, wasn't he? and look, it could have been all those things, by the way, I'm not saying that it wasn't, that he was younger and had longer legs or whatever, but it just seems to me to ring true to John's

character; here are two men running to see the tomb. Now Peter was enthusiastic, you know how Peter felt about Christ, he wanted to be there too, but John had more intensity than even Peter, and off they went, whrooom! John's miles ahead! he was just that sort of bloke, no one would have beaten John that day to that tomb.

But notice what he did! It says in verse 5, although he got there first, 'he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; but went he not in'. He stood to the side and he allowed Peter, who probably was the older of the two, he allowed Peter to go in first. Now that was a thoughtful touch, wasn't it? he now has a spirit of **thoughtfulness for others**; he realized that he had overrun Peter, oh, he loved the Lord and got there first, but he gave Peter the first chance to walk in. Now just hold your finger in John 20, and come back to Luke 24, and just see the difference the two men, by the way, in Luke 24 verse 12, it says of Peter, 'then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass'. Do you think Peter's worked out what's going on here? I don't think so!

Now come back to John 20! John 20 says verse 6, 'Then comes Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and sees the linen clothes lie' (and Luke adds) 'he departed wondering in himself at what was happening'; verse 8, 'Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.' See the difference between the two men? John gets there first, he had more fire power to his legs that day, he stands aside and let's in Peter; in goes good, old, loyal, bouncing Peter, comes in sees all the grave clothes and walks out, scratches his head, and says, 'darned if I know what's going on'; walks off wondering what it is all about! Then John walks in, the quieter, the more intense, the more thoughtful of the two, he walks in and looks at what he sees, and he saw, says the record, and **he believed**. He had a deeper understanding than Peter, this man, a much deeper spiritual understanding of the Lord's work and what was going on. But he had now learnt that he had to work with other people in the truth, and to show care and thoughtfulness toward them.

Son of regaz, oh! Jesus knew exactly whom He'd chosen, and He knew that everyone of these men had something to overcome! So if there's times when you feel that you're shaking because of how strong you feel, remember John. In fact, I just might close by quoting a really good hymn and I've always liked this hymn, I've quoted it to several others before but it's really good! it's about 'Oh, Master it is good to be', just listen to this in terms of the three men who were with Jesus on the mount. See if you can work out who it is?

O, Master it is good to be
With Thee, and with thy faithful three;
Here, where the apostle's heart of rock
Is nerved against temptation's shock.

Who's that? isn't that a good allusion to Peter, Cephas the rock? Now how about this

one, now be careful now!

Here where the son of thunder learns
The thought that breathes, and words that burn.

that's actually James, 'wilt Thou that we command fire to come down? you learn the fire of the Word, that burns in the hearts of people, James! Here's the last man!

Here, where on eagle wings we move

Who's that? the man who writes the gospel of the eagle, Jesus as the Son of God, that's John, isn't it? Now listen to this!

With Him, whose last best creed is love.

Isn't that good? and that's what John had to learn! Not just love for his Lord, but a love for the truth that would reach out to embrace other people who also had been called to follow the Lord. If we can learn that principle, then we will have learnt something of value from the life of this son of thunder!