

## Earthly versus Heavenly – Re-reading the gospel of John

I want you to think with me about some of the concepts we have been learning about together in the past months and years.

- 1) Going through the book of Revelation of Jesus Christ and seeing parallels with the gospel of John.
- 2) Using the method of interpretation that looks for literal spiritual truths, rather than literal physical ones. Believing in heavenly things, not just earthly things.
- 3) Seeing the supernatural topics in the book of Daniel.
- 4) The teachings in Leviticus about space becoming more sacred as you get closer to the Holy of holies which ends up being the throne room of Jesus Christ as He sits enthroned above the Ark of the Covenant. Jesus in the Old Testament.
- 5) The Unseen Realm taught us about who Elohim are (spiritual beings from the heavenly realm) and how God judged the sons of God (Elohim) in Psalm 82.
- 6) The Unseen Realm talks about the Deuteronomy 32 worldview - the sons of God (Elohim) being assigned to the 70 nations at the Tower of Babel.
- 7) Jacob being the portion of Yahweh. Jesus, the son of God being assigned Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their descendants.
- 8) Jacob wrestling with Christ in the Old Testament.
- 9) Christ in the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord.
- 10) Christ in the Old Testament as the Glory of the Lord.
- 11) Christ in the Old Testament as the Name of the Lord.

With all of these ideas swirling around in my head, I started reading through the book of John. What I found was these ideas have helped me to be able to see things in the gospel that I had never seen before, and there are so many of these that merge together in John, that it makes the reading of it fresh and new.

Turn to John chapter one. I hope to encourage you by showing you how much this gospel pulls all of these ideas together.

In verses one through 10, Jesus is God, He is creator, and He is the true light. Picking up in Verse 11 it reads,

Joh 1:11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

Joh 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, Joh 1:13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

I've always read verse 11 as Jesus was born as a Jew and so he was part of the Jewish people. I was realizing the physical. Now consider this verse in the light of the Deuteronomy 32. When I read, "He came into his own and his own people did not receive him", I can think of the spiritual as well. Yahweh's portion did not receive him. The most high God had given him Jacob has his portion at the tower of Babel, it says in

Deu 32:8 When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God (Elohim-spiritual beings in the spiritual realm).  
Deu 32:9 But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

I see now that this isn't just an earthly Jew being rejected by his own earthly people. This is the heavenly son of God who was allotted the people of Jacob and now He's being rejected by them.

With this idea of looking for both the earthly and heavenly, now read verse 12 again. But to those who did receive him, who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God. The earthly is very important. You have to believe in His Name. But immediately, I think of the "Name" which is also Christ in the Old Testament. You have to be adopted to be saved. You have to believe in Jesus to become a son of God. You have to believe in Jesus who was not only born of a woman in the New Testament, but is the "Name" of God in the Old Testament.

On the heavenly side, God judges the sons of God (Elohim) in Psalm 82. Not only does he give the right to become a son of God to His portion Jacob, but he also takes the people who believe in His Name from the sons of Elohim and makes them become the sons of God as well. That is what most of us are if not all of us. We have been adopted by God from the nations that Jesus took from the 70 sons of Elohim. It's a relationship turned on its head as the sons of Elohim are removed and replaced by the Son of God with human sons of God.

But how do we become sons of God? In verse 13, sons of God were born not of blood, (it wasn't a physical birth that made us sons of God), nor of the will the flesh (it wasn't because our parents wanted us to be sons of God), nor the will of man (it wasn't because we made a decision to become sons of God), but of God. God and God alone made a heavenly decision to make us sons of God before we were even born.

As it says in Eph 1:4-5 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

And in...

1John 3:1 See what kind of love (Behold what manner of love) the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God;

So the answer to "how" do we become sons of God is that we are born of God. This is what we have been talking about at Men's breakfast. Being born of God is regeneration. Regeneration is the sovereign working of God the Holy Spirit divinely enabling spiritual life within the soul of one dead in trespasses and sin.

The children's catechism has a set of questions about regeneration that I find very helpful in understanding this concept.

Q. What does every sin deserve? Answer: The wrath and curse of God.

Q. Can anyone go to heaven with a sinful nature? Answer: No, our hearts must be changed before we can be fit for heaven.

Q. What is a change of heart called? Answer: Regeneration.

Q. Who can change a sinner's heart? Answer: The Holy Spirit alone.

The Holy Spirit is the one who changes our hearts to make us a child of God. As in the heavenly realm where Christ created the sons of God, so on earth the Holy Spirit has made us sons of God through the new creation. I think it is really helpful to think about the heavenly sons of God in the Old Testament in contrast to us being a son of God as a believer in the New Testament.

In John1:14, most of us are familiar with the first part of the verse where it says the word became flesh and dwelt Among Us, but I wasn't as familiar with the rest of the verse. It says and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only son from the father. Here I noticed the "glory of God". Having been taught about Christ in the Old Testament being the glory of God, this ties in with verses like

Act\_7:2 And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham.

In other words, Jesus appeared to Abraham. In the gospel they are seeing Christ on earth, just like Abraham saw Christ on earth before He became a man. This makes me rethink verses like

Rom\_3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

I've never replaced "glory of God" with "Jesus", but I think it can be good to think about it this way. We have all fallen short of the perfect sinless life of Jesus Christ. For all have sinned and fall short of Jesus. Remember that Jesus in

Heb\_1:3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. We will be reminded of this again when we get to

Rev\_21:23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Next in my reading, I noticed a connection between the name of John and verse 16.

Joh 1:16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

I love looking at the meaning of names in the Bible because they are often pregnant with intentional significance. The meaning of the name John is Yahweh is gracious, or Yahweh is a gracious gift. It seems like a word play on his name as John (Yahweh's gracious gift) says we have all received grace upon grace. The name John is also one of the parallels between John and Revelation.

Joh 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John (Yahweh is gracious). Rev 1:9 I, John(Yahweh's gracious gift), your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus,...

It makes me think of Revelation as God's gracious gift to us to help us through tribulations in this world. The second part of the verse urges us to patient endurance by in Jesus. The book of Revelation is to be an encouragement to us as we patiently endure our tribulations in this world.

Rev 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear.

We have been blessed for many weeks now, getting to hear from the book of Revelation. Jesus himself encourages us later in John concerning tribulation in

Joh 16:33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

The next passage where I noticed something different than I had seen before is in verses John 1:29-36. As I read it, see if you pick up on something you haven't seen before in this section.

Joh 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Joh 1:30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'

Joh 1:31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel."

Joh 1:32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

Joh 1:33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

Joh 1:34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

Joh 1:35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,  
Joh 1:36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

29 **The next day** he **saw Jesus** coming toward him, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!

Joh 1:31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water,

Joh 1:32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

Joh 1:33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me,

John 1:33b 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

Joh 1:35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, Joh 1:36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

Did you notice all the repeated phrases and words? This was my clue to look for what might be the main point in the middle of a chiasm. You have the same phrases in 29 and 35-36 "the next day", and "saw Jesus/looked at Jesus" and "Behold, the Lamb of God". This made me think of Revelation again. I have a commentary on the book of Revelation that used to be Mason's that was put out by the Welwyn commentary series, entitled "The Lamb is all the glory". My point is that at least one commentator has noticed "The Lamb of God is a main theme of Revelation.

John is announcing Jesus is here! Behold Him. See Him. This is the one. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Anyone that has not believed in Him, see Him here. Look to Jesus. He isn't here for just His portion of Jacob, but for the world of believers that will be born of God as sons.

Behold the Lamb in Revelation. Christ is represented by the lamb in the throne room scene, standing among the elders as though it had been slain (5:6), Christ is the Lamb that the 24 elders fell down before (5:8), Christ is the one praised with a loud voice, Worthy is the lamb (5:13), Christ is the lamb who opened one of the seven seals (6:1), men begged to be hidden from Christ's wrath, "the wrath of the Lamb" (6:16), a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes,(7:9), a loud voice crying out, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!(7:10), They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb (the blood of Christ)(7:14), Christ the lamb opened the seventh seal (8:1). And this is just the chapters of Revelation we have been through. I'll let you "Behold the Lamb" 16 more items as Doug goes through the rest of Revelation.

Now, back to the chiasm. Verses 31 and 33 repeat the phrases "I myself did not know him" and "baptize with water". Then in 32, "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven" and "remained on him" is echoed in verse 33 with "see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit". I think the literary design shows us this is the main point. Jesus is the one whom the Holy Spirit descended upon and Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit. This isn't just a physical baptism, but must also be seen as a spiritual or heavenly baptism.

This is God telling us how He will make us sons of God through regeneration by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He is repeating the doctrine of regeneration in a different way. Behold the Lamb who with the Holy Spirit can regenerate you into a child of God.

The next section I noticed something about was down in verse 51.

Joh 1:51 And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

This reminds me of Jacob's staircase in Genesis,

Gen 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder (staircase) set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God (Elohim) were ascending and descending on it!

Gen 28:13 And behold, the LORD (Yahweh) stood above it and said, "I am the LORD (Yahweh), the God (Elohim) of Abraham your father and the God (Elohim) of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring.

Gen 28:14 Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

This is the gospel. Jesus has blessed all the families of the earth by His death, burial, and resurrection. They are blessed as they are made sons of God being made alive through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

Gen 28:17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

This reminded me of revelation 3:7

Rev 3:7 The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the **key** of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.

Only Jesus is the door to heaven. He is the heavenly King who decides who gets into heaven. That reminds me of John.

Joh 10:7 So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

Joh 10:8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

Joh 10:9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

Jesus isn't a literal physical door; He is the literal spiritual door to heaven. He is the heavenly door come down to physical earth. Are you seeing how the themes in John and Revelation continue to be shared?

The next section I noticed having one of these themes was in John 2:18-22.

Joh 2:18 So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Joh 2:19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Joh 2:20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"

Joh 2:21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

Joh 2:22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Notice the response of the Jews was literally physical, how can you tear down a building that it took 46 years to build? Jesus was talking of His body, not the physical temple, of His resurrection from the dead.

A similar wrong interpretation was made by Nicodemus in John 3, but as in chapter one, it is tied into the theme of regeneration as well.

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Joh 3:4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Joh 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Joh 3:7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Joh 3:8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Jesus says you must be born of the Spirit. Then he clarifies the difference between the earthly and the heavenly. In verse 6 he says the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Just like the wind blowing where it wants to go and you can't stop it, the Spirit goes where He wants to go, to create sons of God.

I've thought to myself, should I really go over this again? We have already talked about it in Sunday school. It has been mentioned before. But then I got to John 3:12 and if the text keeps talking about this theme, I want to keep talking about this theme.

Joh 3:12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can

you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

Jesus makes the point outright, that folks are focused on the earthly things without having the proper focus or understanding of heavenly things. In fact, they can't believe these heavenly things. They don't want to believe. As I spent time witnessing to my neighbors this week, it was blatantly apparent that they were enslaved to sin, and unable to believe heavenly things. Their focus in our discussions would always go back to the physical things instead of the spiritual things. They need to have their hearts of stone turned into hearts of flesh. They need regeneration. They need translated from the kingdom of the evil one to the kingdom of his son, to become a son of God.

Joh 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Joh 3:15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

The contrast between the earthly and heavenly continues. Moses physically lifted up the physical serpent on a physical pole in the wilderness. But Jesus being lifted up though physical was much more. Sins were spiritually forgiven. Jesus went down into the spiritual bottomless pit of Sheoul. Jesus rose from the dead to heavenly places to sit at the right hand of the Father. If you believe that you can have eternal spiritual life, because one thing is for sure, you will have physical death. The physical earthly reality is that people die. I hope you will share with someone this week about the heavenly eternal life that is possible through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit to make you a child of God. Our only hope for dying men is the gospel of Christ.

What do you suppose I found next?

Joh 3:31 **He who comes from above is above all.** He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. **He who comes from heaven is above all.**

Do you see the chiasm? "He who comes from above is above all" is repeated in the verse except the word heaven is inserted for the word above. What do we find in the center? Those that belong to the earth speak in an earthly way. They can't speak of heavenly things because they are dead in their sin. This must be the saddest chiasmic center I've found yet. Most centers seem to me to be about Christ, but this one shows sinful mans drastic need for Christ. Continuing,

Joh 3:32 He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony.

Joh 3:33 Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.

This setting of the seal that God is true made me think about Revelation 7, where it says



Rev 7:2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea,

Rev 7:3 saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

Rev 7:4 And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000

2Co 1:22 says: and who has also put his **seal** on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Eph 1:13 were **sealed** with the promised Holy Spirit,

I believe the sealing of believers by the Holy Spirit is another way of talking about the doctrine of regeneration. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to seal us. The last two verses of Revelation chapter seven are related to this sealing. They parallel John 7:37-39. They both talk about thirst and about the living water:

Rev 7:16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. (why?)

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them(who? the servants who are sealed) to **springs of living water**, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Joh 7:37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Joh 7:38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow **rivers of living water.**'"

Joh 7:39 **Now this he said about the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Notice what the living water does. It is spring water, it is flowing water. It isn't stagnant or contaminated water. It is fresh, life giving, thirst quenching water. The context of where and when Jesus is making this offer to the people is wonderful to see. Look back at verse two.

Joh 7:2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand.

Remember how we learned in Leviticus about the feasts, how they all point to Christ? The feast of booths or the feast of tabernacles reminded the people of when 600,000

men plus women and children traveled through the wilderness after God's deliverance from Egypt, and stayed in tents. Jesus fed them in the wilderness with water and manna. The tie in with Christ is back in John 1:14 where the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,(which actually means tabernacled among us). But there is more, as

Joh 7:37 On the last day of the feast, the great day

This last day, this great day of the feast was when the holy convocation was held and they were to present a food offering to the LORD.

Lev 23:36 For seven days you shall present food offerings to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall hold a holy convocation and present a food offering to the LORD. It is a solemn assembly; you shall not do any ordinary work.

So Jesus, on the last day of the feast which points to him coming to the earth, stands up and cries out, offering a heavenly thirst quencher. But it is spiritual, not physical. He offers to supply a heart remedy drink to the people. He does this on the same day the people are to offer a food offering to the LORD (Yahweh). But notice what Jesus was really talking about. It says it in verse 39. "Now this He said about the Spirit", meaning the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit was going to fix the heart problem. Clean fresh water is what flows out of the heart when we are born again. Jesus told us in Mark 7:21...

Mar 7:21 For from within, out of the **heart** of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,

At the feast Jesus is offering to regenerate hearts of those who would believe in Him. He is calling the sons of God to Himself. The Son of God has come down to make sons of God. We weren't at this feast, but Yahweh is still a gracious giver, as he makes that promise to you here today.

Joh 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

With this offer of living water still on our minds, move forward to

Joh 4:7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

Joh 4:8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)

Joh 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with

Samaritans.)

Joh 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

Joh 4:11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"

Joh 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

Joh 4:13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,

Joh 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Joh 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

The woman at the well was still thinking physical water rather than eternal life, even after Jesus said the water he would give would become a spring of water welling up to eternal life. She isn't the only one though. It was the disciples as well. (I see the pun, but didn't mean the pun). Look at when they tried to get Jesus to eat...

Joh 4:31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

Joh 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

Joh 4:33 So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?"

Joh 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

They were thinking physical food, and Jesus was talking about spiritual duty. The next section I looked at reminded me of Jesus as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament.

Joh 5:3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. Waiting for the moving of the water,

Joh 5:4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred the water. Whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease he had

Joh 5:5 One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.

Joh 5:6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?"

Joh 5:7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down

before me.” (I know that verse four isn’t in all the manuscripts, but it sure makes more sense when you read about the water being stirred up here)  
Joh 5:8 Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.”  
Joh 5:9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

It is like Jesus is telling everyone that He is “THE” Angel of the Lord. He doesn’t even need to stir the water. He can speak it and people are healed. Did this sick man think back to the scriptures about Abraham meeting the Angel of the Lord? I wonder. Let’s finish up in John chapter six with some more literal spiritual sayings of Christ misunderstood as physical statements.

Joh 6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

Joh 6:41 So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”

Joh 6:42 They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”

The Jews are thinking physical earthly father. Jesus came from the heavenly realm, from His heavenly Father. And again ....

Joh 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Joh 6:52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

You can see the Jews thinking earthly cannibalism like the Numbers 13 giants. Jesus is talking about giving His body to be broken for His people to save them from sin.

I’ve included a chart from Doug’s introduction to Revelation sermon on the parallels between John and Revelation down at the bottom. I’m convinced from all the parallels that learning to look for the literal spiritual truths in Revelation is a much more profitable way of reading it than looking for answers in the physical things described. It is how the gospel of John is teaching us to understand what Jesus said and what Jesus came to do. This teaching has been here in John this whole time, and I had never picked up on this until recently. Now I see it all over the scripture. I’m going to keep on reading John for these parallels as Doug continues to go through Revelation. I hope you will also to the benefit of your souls. I hope it sustains you through this current time of tribulation. I’ll leave you with a quote from your pastor.

Quote from Doug's sermon introducing the book of Revelation:

The beginning of John (his "in the beginning") focuses on the Word and the old creation while the end of Revelation focuses on the Word and the new creation. Another fun one is how John quickly moves in the beginning of his Gospel to the Wedding in Cana whereas we have another wedding, the Wedding of the Lamb that takes us near the end of Revelation. Very interestingly, the center of John has the accusers cast out of the earthly temple (John 8) while the center of Revelation has The Accuser (Satan) cast out of the heavenly temple (Revelation 12). In this way, there is an earthly-heavenly mirror that is taking place between John and Revelation. What might this intricate relationship between the two books mean? The Gospel of John is giving us the three and a half years of Jesus' earthly ministry, climaxing in his resurrection from the dead. At the end of Daniel, we spent time thinking about the meaning of the three and a half time periods (time, times, and half a time; 1260 days=3 ½ years; 42 months= 3 ½ years; 3 ½ days) found in both Daniel and Revelation. Three and a half cuts the seventieth week of Daniel into two equal parts. I suggested that the first part refers to Jesus' earthly ministry of 3 ½ years that climaxes in his death and resurrection. This is clearly the focus of the Gospel of John. The second 3 ½ (found in Revelation) refers mystically to Christ's body—the church. Because the church is a heavenly entity, this 3 ½ is not to be understood in earthly time, but in heavenly time. This is the focus of Revelation. To put it another way, the church will mirror Jesus in its ministry on earth (through tribulation) until the King comes for his bride, hence all the parallels to the life of Christ.

John		Revelation	
Parallel	Chapter	Chapter	Parallel
The Word and the Old Creation	1	21-22	The Word and the New Creation
The Wedding in Cana	2:1-12	19	The Wedding of the Lamb
Divine Wrath Poured Out from Earthly Temple	2:13-22	15-18	Divine Wrath Poured Out from Heavenly Temple
Out of the Darkness	3	20-21	The City of Light
The Samaritan Woman	4:1-27	17	The Whore of Babylon
The Samaritan Woman	4:28-29	18, 22	The Bride of Christ
The Old Jerusalem	5	18	The Great Babylon
From Shadows	6	14	To Reality
The Accusers Cast Out of the Earthly Temple	8	12	The Accuser Cast out of the Heavenly Temple
The War of Light and Darkness on Earth	8-12	11-14	The War of Light and Darkness in Heaven
Communion on Earth	13-15	7-10	Communion in heaven
The Grace to Persevere	16	5-7	The Reward of Perseverance
The Prayer of the Savior on Earth	17	5-6	The Prayer of the Saints in Heaven
The Arrest of God	18	4	The Worship of God
Suffering Before Glory	18-19	2-3	Suffering Before Glory
Recognizing the Risen Lord	20	1-3	Recognizing the Risen Lord
Jesus Calling Out to His Disciples Across Waters	21	1-3	Jesus Calling Out to His Disciples Across Waters
The Word and the Testimony	21	1	The Word and the Testimony

List of literal spiritual versus in John being taken literally physical:

	Literal physical	Literal spiritual
John 1:13	born not of blood	Born from above
John 1:13	born not of the flesh	Born from above
John 1:13	born not of the will	Born from above
John 2:19	46 years to build the temple	In three days I will raise it up, the resurrection
John 3:7	enter a second time into my mother's womb	Born of the Spirit
John 4:10	you have nothing to draw with	he would have given you living water, eternal life
John 4:32	Has anyone brought him food?	I have food. My food is to do the will of him who sent me
John 6:41	Is this not the son of Joseph, who we know	I am the bread that came down from heaven
John 6:51	How can this man give us flesh to eat?	the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh

Lord's supper:

Joh 6:53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Joh 6:54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. Joh 6:55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Joh 6:56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. Joh 6:57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. Joh 6:58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."