



# I Thirst

## Summary and Goal

John 4 and John 7 present Jesus as living water. As Jesus hangs on the cross, we see a picture of the living water drying up—for you and for me. Will we, too, offer Jesus a drink? Those who spiritually thirst in our midst, will they see our churches as sources of the living water that is Christ?

### **Main Passages**

John 19:28-30; John 4:7-15; John 7:37-39

### **Session Outline**

1. The Thirst that Fulfilled Prophecy (John 19:28-30)
2. Thirst: An Invitation to Living Water (John 4:7-15)
3. Streams of Living Water (John 7:37-39)

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### **Theological Theme**

The salvation made available through Jesus' sacrifice quenches the eternal thirst of humanity.

### **Christ Connection**

When Jesus uttered, "I am thirsty," it highlighted the manner in which He was poured out through His sacrificial death to offer salvation to the world.

### **Missional Application**

When we as a church understand that Jesus' death on the cross was the greatest example of God's love for humanity, we can be the dispenser of hope to our thirsty world.

# Historical Context of John

## Purpose

The purpose statement in 20:30-31 indicates that John wrote with an evangelistic purpose, probably seeking to reach unbelievers through Christian readers of his Gospel. If the date of composition was after AD 70, the time of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, it is likely that John sought to present Jesus as the new temple and center of worship for God's people in replacement of the old sanctuary.

## Author

A close reading of the Gospel of John suggests that the author was an apostle (1:14; cp. 2:11; 19:35); one of the Twelve ("the disciple Jesus loved," 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:20; cp. 21:24-25); and, still more specifically, John, the son of Zebedee (note the association of "the disciple Jesus loved" with Peter in 13:23-24; 18:15-16; 20:2-9; 21; and in Lk 22:8; Ac 1:13; 3-4; 8:14-25; Gl 2:9). The church fathers, too, attested to this identification (e.g., Irenaeus). Since the apostolic office was foundational in the history of the church (Ac 2:42; Eph 2:20), the apostolic authorship of John's Gospel invests it with special authority as firsthand eyewitness (Jn 15:27; 1Jn 1:1-4).

## Setting

The most plausible date of writing is the period between AD 70 (the date of the destruction of the temple) and 100 (the end of John's lifetime), with a date in the 80s most likely. A date after 70 is suggested by the references to the Sea of Tiberias in 6:1 and 21:1 (a name widely used for the Sea of Galilee only toward the end of the first century); Thomas's confession of Jesus as "my Lord and my God" in 20:28 (possibly a statement against emperor worship in the time of Domitian); the reference to Peter's martyrdom, which occurred in 65 or 66 (21:19); the lack of reference to the Sadducees, who ceased to be a Jewish religious party after 70; and the comparative ease with which John equated Jesus with God (1:1,14,18; 10:30; 20:28).

## Special Features

The Gospel of John is different from the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—in that more than ninety percent of its material is unique. John's Gospel does not focus on the miracles, parables, and public speeches that are so prominent in the other accounts. Instead, the Gospel of John emphasizes the identity of Jesus as the Son of God and how we, as believers, should respond to his teachings.

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## Session Plan

### I Thirst

#### ? For Further Discussion

What episodes in the Bible involve God using water to demonstrate His love and provision for His people? As a group, try to come up with as many examples as you can and record them on a whiteboard or tear sheet of paper.

#### Introduction

- ? What is the most thirsty you can remember being? What took place to get you to that level of thirst?
- ? Who in your life has most consistently demonstrated dependence on Jesus? How does that person's relationship with Jesus inspire you?

Jesus' fifth saying from the cross highlighted His being poured out as a sacrificial atonement for the sins of humanity. The imagery of thirst was widely employed by biblical writers to indicate spiritual need and point to the source of that need's fulfillment. Jesus repeatedly identified Himself as the source of the living water that meets the eternal need shared by all of humanity.

#### 1. The Thirst that Fulfilled Prophecy (John 19:28-30)

At a glance, Jesus' fifth saying from the cross, "I'm thirsty," might seem like little more than a statement on His physical condition. By this point in His crucifixion, Jesus was mercilessly beaten and scourged multiple times, forced to carry His own cross to Golgotha, and tortuously left hanging in the heat of the Middle East. His dehydration from loss of blood and sweat alone would have bordered on lethal levels. Of course He was thirsty! When read in the greater context of Scripture, however, Jesus' statement of thirst was much more prophetically significant.

- ? How does it shape your understanding of God's sovereignty to know that even Jesus' "I'm thirsty" was a fulfillment of prophecy written hundreds of years earlier?
- ? Application: Who are you praying for currently who needs to know the lengths to which Jesus went to offer salvation to them? What specifically will you pray for related to your next gospel conversation with that person?

## 2. Thirst: An Invitation to Living Water (John 4:7-15)

This passage from John is part of a greater conversation Jesus had with a woman whom He met at a well in Samaria. This conversation is one of the most well-known and remarkable episodes recorded in John's Gospel due to the number of shattered social and religious norms within it. How did Jesus begin the delicate conversation with this woman? "Give me a drink."

- ❓ If you were to explain the scandal of the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman to someone, what contemporary metaphors would you use to help them understand? Why did you pick those?
- ❓ Application: Jesus began by telling the woman that if she knew who was speaking to her, she would ask for living water. This was an assessment of her not knowing the Torah. How does Bible engagement help prepare you to enter into Gospel conversations and answer the questions that come up in those conversations?

## 3. Streams of Living Water (John 7:37-39)

Jesus continued to utilize the metaphor of living water in His preaching ministry. In John 7, we read about a time when Jesus secretly attended the Festival of Shelters. As He attended the festival, the religious leaders actively searched for Him to arrest Him. Though He deliberately stayed out of sight for most of the festival, Jesus finally began teaching in the temple. Before long, the religious leaders tried to apprehend Him but were unable to do so because "His hour had not yet come." (v. 30). On the last day of the festival, Jesus taught: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." Once again, Jesus connected Himself metaphorically with living water.

- ❓ Recognizing one's spiritual thirst is a key part of coming to Christ. Who in your life helped you realize you were thirsty?
- ❓ Application: How would you explain the "streams of living water" imagery to someone else? What key thoughts would you be sure to communicate? Why is it important to think through the specifics of Gospel conversations in advance?

## Conclusion

- ❓ How do you personally fight the war of selflessness in a culture that is defined by self-absorption? What practices have you placed in your life to help you remain focused on the lost? Who can hold you accountable in this?
- ❓ How are you currently sharing the load with others to move the mission of Jesus forward in your group? What about in the church as a whole? How have you found your service impacting your spiritual fervor?

### ❓ For Further Discussion

What are some reasons a person might be considered off-limits in our community? Social norms? Political background? Geographic barriers? Financial barriers? How difficult have you found crossing those barriers to be?






## Expanded Session Content

# I Thirst

### Introduction

Everyone from fitness experts to survival enthusiasts tout the body's need for water. Even resources that coach others on the spiritual discipline of fasting are careful to point out that, while the body can go without food for a prolonged period of time, it cannot survive without water. How long a person can live without water depends on many factors like age, activity level, overall health, and average daily consumption of water. However, medical outlets typically agree that on average, a person will only make it three days.

Aside from the physical need for water, though, we have a greater need for spiritual water, as Jesus points out throughout the Gospels. For one's physical body, the absence of water quickly has physical consequences like cognitive deficiency or severe muscular cramping. On a spiritual level, however, the consequences are much more tragic. Jesus' earthly ministry took place in the arid region of Galilee, where He frequently described His ministry as being the source of water that eternally quenches thirst. This makes Jesus' cry of thirst from the cross all the more striking. As Jesus poured Himself out as a sacrifice for humanity, He, the very source of living water, became thirsty. "I thirst" was His fifth saying from the cross.

-  What is the most thirsty you can remember being? What took place to get you to that level of thirst?
-  What episodes in the Bible involve God using water to demonstrate His love and provision for His people? As a group, try to come up with as many examples as you can and record them on a whiteboard or tear sheet of paper.
-  Who in your life has most consistently demonstrated dependence on Jesus? How does that person's relationship with Jesus inspire you?

## Session Summary

Jesus' fifth saying from the cross highlighted His being poured out as a sacrificial atonement for the sins of humanity. The imagery of thirst was widely employed by biblical writers to indicate spiritual need and point to the source of that need's fulfillment. Jesus repeatedly identified Himself as the source of the living water that meets the eternal need shared by all of humanity.

### 1. The Thirst that Fulfilled Prophecy (John 19:28-30)

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When read in the greater context of Scripture, however, Jesus' statement of thirst was much more prophetically significant. In verse 28, John recorded that Jesus knew "everything was now finished that the Scripture might be fulfilled." In fact, everything had not happened; most obviously, Jesus had not yet died and been resurrected. D.A. Carson puts it this way, "Jesus' knowledge that all was now completed is the awareness that all the steps that had brought Him to this point of pain and impending death were in the design of His heavenly Father, and death itself was imminent."<sup>1</sup> So, what did John mean? John wanted readers to understand that Jesus' death fulfilled prophecy about the Messiah and God's redemptive plan. Even as He died, Jesus drew the attention to God's master plan for salvation.

While scholars disagree as to the precise Old Testament prophecy Jesus' fifth saying fulfills, due to the many possibilities, the most likely text is Psalm 69:21: "Instead, they gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Comparatively, this prophetic fulfillment may seem minor compared to passages like Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant. However, "John wants to make his readers understand that every part of Jesus' Passion was not only in the Father's plan of redemption but a consequence of the Son's direct obedience to it."<sup>2</sup>



How does it shape your understanding of God's sovereignty to know that even Jesus' "I'm thirsty" was a fulfillment of prophecy written hundreds of years earlier?

### Might Be Fulfilled

The verb for "might be fulfilled" (teleiothe) was not the usual word used to describe fulfillment. The verb John used has a clearer connotation of completion than the normal word for "fulfill." John's use of this verb tied Jesus' statement of "I'm thirsty" to His next statement, "It is finished," emphasizing the completion of God's atoning work through Christ.<sup>3</sup>



Application: Who are you praying for currently who needs to know the lengths to which Jesus went to offer salvation to them? What specifically will you pray for related to your next gospel conversation with that person?

The jar full of sour wine should not be confused with the wine mixed with myrrh that Jesus was offered as He carried His cross. The two liquids had diametrically opposite effects. The myrrh was an additive that dulled the agony of the physical torture of crucifixion. The sour wine soldiers offered Jesus on the cross actually prolonged life and, thereby, prolonged suffering. The wine was a cheap wine that the soldiers used for that purpose, and it was not considered potable in social settings. It was more like drinking straight vinegar than the wine described in other sections of the Gospels.

## 2. Thirst: An Invitation to Living Water (John 4:7-15)

This passage from John is part of a greater conversation Jesus had with a woman whom He met at a well in Samaria. This conversation is one of the most well-known and remarkable episodes recorded in John's Gospel due to the number of shattered social and religious norms within it. Not only did Jesus initiate a conversation with a woman, but she was a Samaritan. The enmity between the Jews and Samaritans was tremendously bitter, so any sort of interaction between representatives of the two groups was incredibly scandalous. How did Jesus begin the delicate conversation with this woman? "Give me a drink."

Startled and very much aware of the scandalous nature of their conversation, the Samaritan woman reminded Jesus that He was a Jew and was not supposed to talk to her. Jesus wasted no time in coming to the heart of the matter. She came to the well to get water to quench her physical thirst. What she did not know was that Jesus could offer her something much greater than temporary physical replenishment. Carson notes, "The 'gift of God' that she does not recognize is probably the eternal life that only Jesus can bestow."<sup>4</sup>

The woman came to the well in the heat of the day because she knew she would be the only one there. The typical time for getting water was early in the morning, so going in the heat of the day reflected the shame and disdain the woman experienced if she appeared with the rest of the community. Therefore, when Jesus explained that the one who drinks of His living water would never thirst again, the woman heard that no longer would she be forced to go to the well.

- ❓ If you were to explain the scandal of the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman to someone, what contemporary metaphors would you use to help them understand? Why did you pick those?
- ❓ Application: Jesus began by telling the woman that if she knew who was speaking to her, she would ask for living water. This was an assessment of her not knowing the Torah. How does Bible engagement help prepare you to enter into Gospel conversations and answer the questions that come up in those conversations?

Though the woman focused her thoughts on her physical needs, Jesus continued to explain the riches of His living water. The person who drank of it would never thirst again because the greatest need would be eternally met. Jesus promised that the water would become “a well of water springing up in him for eternal life” (v. 14). This was likely a reference to the coming indwelling of the Holy Spirit who is Jesus’ abiding presence in the lives of His followers.

### 3. Streams of Living Water (John 7:37-39)

Jesus continued to utilize the metaphor of living water in His preaching ministry. In John 7, we read about a time when Jesus secretly attended the Festival of Shelters. As He attended the festival, the religious leaders actively searched for Him to arrest Him. Though He deliberately stayed out of sight for most of the festival, Jesus finally began teaching in the temple. Before long, the religious leaders tried to apprehend Him but were unable to do so because “His hour had not yet come.” (v. 30). On the last day of the festival, Jesus taught: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.” Once again, Jesus connected Himself metaphorically with living water.

Jesus’ use of the living water metaphor at the Feast of Shelters was tied to the water pouring ritual that occurred on the final day of the festival’s celebration. The pouring of the water reminded people of God’s provision in the wilderness, which the Festival of Shelters commemorated. Carson helps readers understand this significance: “In general terms, then, Jesus’ pronouncement is clear: He is the fulfillment of all that the Feast of Tabernacles anticipated. If Isaiah could invite the thirsty to drink from the waters (Isa. 55:1), Jesus announces that He is the one who can provide the waters.”<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the greatest provision humanity was in need of was exactly what Jesus came to provide through His death, burial, and resurrection.

- ❓ Recognizing one’s spiritual thirst is a key part of coming to Christ. Who in your life helped you realize you were thirsty?





Application: How would you explain the “streams of living water” imagery to someone else? What key thoughts would you be sure to communicate? Why is it important to think through the specifics of Gospel conversations in advance?

## Water and Spirit

Read Isaiah 55:1 and Nehemiah 9, which is an account of the Feast of Tabernacles. How do these passages connect the motifs of water and Spirit?

John helped readers connect Jesus’ metaphor of living water to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Even though the Holy Spirit would not be sent to Jesus’ followers until Pentecost (Acts 2), Carson points out, “What the Evangelist means is that the Spirit of the dawning kingdom comes as the result – indeed the entailment – of the Son’s completed work, and up to that point the Holy Spirit was not given in the full, Christian sense of the term.”<sup>6</sup> Once received, however, Jesus likened the indwelling of the Holy Spirit with streams of living water that flow from deep within. The Spirit is the constant presence of Christ in Christians, guiding them into His truth, convicting them of sin, and drawing them toward a gradual conformity to the likeness of Jesus.

## Conclusion

The fifth saying of Jesus on the cross is unlike the others in that Jesus’ statement was one of need. However, even in His physically weakest moment, His missional awareness never wavered. Jesus knew the purpose for His physical ministry and how it would end. Even in the midst of His greatest torment, because of His love for humanity, Jesus carried out the redemptive plan of God to the last detail. During His time on earth, He demonstrated that love with every conversation and every encounter, constantly drawing the lost to Himself. In light of this fifth saying, here are some important points of consideration.

First, Jesus loved the lost and, therefore, so must His church. If the church understands itself correctly and biblically, it exists in the world to continue the work of Christ that He modeled during His earthly ministry. Jesus sacrificed everything so that the lost could be saved. The church today has the incredible opportunity to demonstrate a similar fervor for seeking and inviting the lost. Several texts in the New Testament refer to what Jesus could have done in order to take a short cut to redemption. That was actually at the heart of the temptations Satan lobbed at Him during His time in the wilderness. During His trials, Jesus reminded His accusers that He could call down legions of angels to deliver Him if He desired. However, He never gave in to any of those temptations because He came to seek and save sinners. The church, then, must continually strive to be a conduit of His hope and grace.

Second, Jesus' gospel message is for everyone. The Samaritan woman was off-limits to everyone; that is why she was at the well alone. But she was not off-limits to Jesus. He engaged her with His gospel and even revealed to her that He is the Messiah. If the church of Jesus is going to be like Jesus, that means no one is off-limits to the love of Jesus we share.

Third, coming to Christ is a life-changing, lifelong experience. When Jesus described the streams of living water flowing from deep within the Christian, the picture is of a constantly active and moving current. The water never stops or runs out. It is self-sustaining and self-renewing. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian is not limited to an awareness of Christ, but also unites the Christian with the ongoing work of Christ in the world. The presence of the Spirit in the life of the disciple both rejuvenates the disciple's spiritual fervor and directs him or her on where to follow Jesus next. In doing so, the living water inside the believer fuels us to take the gospel to the lost, just as Jesus modeled.

- ❓ How do you personally fight the war of selflessness in a culture that is defined by self-absorption? What practices have you placed in your life to help you remain focused on the lost? Who can hold you accountable in this?
- ❓ What are some reasons a person might be considered off-limits in our community? Social norms? Political background? Geographic barriers? Financial barriers? How difficult have you found crossing those barriers to be?
- ❓ How are you currently sharing the load with others to move the mission of Jesus forward in your group? What about in the church as a whole? How have you found your service impacting your spiritual fervor?

## Prayer of Response

*Close in prayer, thanking God that our eternal thirst is satisfied in Christ.*

## Additional Resources

- *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in John* by Matt Carter and John Wredberg
- *Be Alive* by Warren Wiersbe
- *The Gospel According to John* by D.A. Carson

## For Next Week

### Session Title

- Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit

### Main Passages

- Luke 23:46; Psalm 31

### Session Outline

1. God is Trustworthy and Faithful (Luke 23:46; Ps. 31:5)
2. God is Present in Hardship (Ps. 31:7-8)
3. God Gives Courage to Those Who Trust Him (Ps. 31:23-24)

### Memorize

*After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now finished that the Scripture might be fulfilled, he said, "I'm thirsty."*

- John 19:28

### Daily Readings

- Monday - 1 John 5:14-15
- Tuesday - Romans 8:26
- Wednesday - John 14:12-14
- Thursday - Philippians 4:6
- Friday - 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- Saturday - Matthew 6:5-8

## Extended Commentary

### John 19:28-30

19:28-29. The phrase knowing that all was now completed has given scholars pause for centuries. Since Jesus had not yet died, the atonement was not completed and beyond that lay the resurrection and ascension.

Carson observes that “Jesus’ knowledge that all was now completed is the awareness that all the steps that brought him to this point of pain and impending death were in the design of his heavenly Father, and death itself was imminent” (Carson, D. A. *The Gospel According to John*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991). The cry I am thirsty probably refers to Psalm 69:21, a psalm that has already been cited twice in this Gospel (2:17; 15:25).

Westcott has this observation: “The incident loses its full significance unless it be regarded as one element in the foreshadowed course of the Passion. Nor is there any difficulty in the phrase ‘are not finished’ as preceding it. The ‘thirst’ was already felt and the feeling included the confession of it. The fulfillment of the Scripture (it need scarcely be added) was not the object which the Lord had in view in uttering the word, but there was a necessary correspondence between His acts and the divine foreshadowing of them” (Westcott, B. E. *The Gospel According to John*. London: James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 1958).

Wine vinegar would contract the throat muscles and keep the victim from shrieking in pain. This liquid is not to be confused with the “wine mixed with myrrh” of Mark 15:23. We should not read any compassion into this act, since the bitterness would prolong pain by extending the life of the victim.

19:30. Of greatest consequence in John’s narrative is this phrase, It is finished, an idea which occurs for the second time in three verses. Surely this refers to the suffering and earthly life of Jesus, but also the task of bringing salvation to the human race. We should remember the prayer John uttered earlier, “I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do” (17:4). The words it is finished translate *tetelestai* that appears in the perfect tense. Even the grammar of the text signifies the full completion of Jesus’ work.

Tenney observes, “The expression may be interpreted in various ways: as a cry of relief, because suffering is ending; as a cry of anguish, because

his ministry has ended in failure; or as a shout of victory, because the purpose of God has triumphed in his death. The last of these seems to be the author's intent. He makes it the final report of Jesus to the Father, who will now exalt him to glory" (Tenney, Merrill C. *The Gospel of John*. Expositor's Bible Commentary. Vol. 9. Ed. by Frank E. Gaebelin. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981).

As John has told us repeatedly, and as we have emphasized in the pages of this commentary, the significance of Christ's death on the cross centers in substitutionary atonement—his death on our behalf. God's holiness and justice made the cross an absolute necessity. James Denney has written a masterful work titled *The Death of Christ*. A few sentences are helpful here.

The Son of Man must be lifted up if He is to save those who believe. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die if it is not to abide alone. Not much, indeed, is said to explain this. The various ends secured by Christ's death—the advantage of the flock for which as the Good Shepherd He lays down His life (x.11), the eternal life of those who believe in Him (iii.14f.), the rallying 'round Him as a centre of the scattered children of God, so that He becomes the head of a new humanity (xi.52): these, no doubt, are all dependent upon it somehow; but how, the evangelist is at no pains to tell. But we do no violence to his thought when we put this and that in the Gospel together in order to discern what he does not explicitly say. Everything, we have seen, comes from the love of God; the death of Christ is to be construed in harmony with this, not in any antagonism to it... Nor are we left without sufficiently clear hints as to the necessity which determine the gift. In the passage just referred to (iii. 16), we see that apart from it men are lost; they perish, instead of having eternal life (Denney, James. *The Death of Christ*. New York: Eaton & Mains, n.d.).<sup>7</sup>

## References

1. Carson, D.A. *The Gospel According to John*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Gangel, Kenneth O. *John*. Edited by Max E. Anders. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2000.

## Author Bio

### **D.A. Carson (The Gospel of John)**

D. A. Carson (PhD, University of Cambridge) is research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and is the author or editor of more than fifty books, including *The God Who Is There* and *How Long, O Lord?* He is one of the founders of The Gospel Coalition and an active guest lecturer in academic and church settings around the world.

### **Kenneth Gangel (John)**

Dr. Kenneth O. Gangel (1935-2009): A prolific author and an experienced leader has been influential in the field of Christian education for over forty years. He's written numerous articles and over 50 books, while pastoring, teaching, raising a family and leading schools. His impact reaches around the world through students, co-authored books, and working with leaders of churches and schools.

### **Max Anders (John)**

Dr. Max Anders is the author of over 25 books, including the bestselling *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*, and is the creator and general editor of the 32-volume *Holman Bible Commentary* series. He has taught on the college and seminary level and is a veteran pastor. Max provides resources and discipleship strategies at [www.maxanders.com](http://www.maxanders.com) to help people grow spiritually.

### **Matt Carter (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in John)**

Matt Carter serves as the Pastor of Preaching and Vision at the Austin Stone Community Church in Austin, Texas, which has grown from a core team of 15 to over 8,000 attending each Sunday since he planted it in 2002. Matt has co-authored multiple books including a commentary on the Gospel of John in *The Christ Centered Exposition Commentary* series. Matt also co-authored a novel of historical fiction, *Steal Away Home* which tells the real life story of famed pastor Charles Spurgeon's unlikely friendship with former slave-turned-missionary, Thomas Johnson. Matt holds an M.Div. from Southwestern Seminary and a Doctorate in Expository Preaching from Southeastern Seminary. He and his wife Jennifer have been married for over 20 years, and they have three children, John Daniel, Annie, and Samuel.

### **John Wredberg (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in John)**

Josh Wredberg has served on the pastoral staff of churches in Michigan, Illinois, and North Carolina, and as teaching pastor at Redeemer Community Church in Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina. He is a graduate of Maranatha Baptist University and Shepherds Theological Seminary. Josh has also earned a doctorate in preaching from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Cari, have three boys, Jack, Max, and Caed.

### **Warren Wiersbe (Be Alive)**

Warren W. Wiersbe, former pastor of the Moody Church and general director of *Back to the Bible*, has traveled widely as a Bible teacher and conference speaker. Because of his encouragement to those in ministry, Dr. Wiersbe is often referred to as "the pastor's pastor." He has ministered in churches and conferences throughout the United States as well as in Canada, Central and South America, and Europe. Dr. Wiersbe has written over 150 books, including the popular BE series of commentaries on every book of the Bible, which has sold more than four million copies. At the 2002 Christian Booksellers Convention, he was awarded the Gold Medallion Lifetime Achievement Award by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association. Dr. Wiersbe and his wife, Betty, live in Lincoln, Nebraska.