

The Son's Authority

John 5: A Catholic Journey Through the Gospel of John

Part 1: Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim: Participants discover that one sabbath healing detonates the Gospel's central controversy: Jesus claims to do what God alone does, his enemies understand him perfectly, and the first plot to kill him begins. They then watch Jesus conduct a formal trial in his own defense, summoning four witnesses, and they test the most quoted verse in the sola scriptura debate inside its actual context.

Catholic Touchstone: The divinity of Christ, claimed in his own words and understood by his first hearers. This is what is at stake in every honor paid to Jesus in the liturgy: that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father (5:23). And in the fourfold witness, the Catholic instinct that God testifies through a communion of witnesses, never through a text left to fend for itself.

What You Need to Know

The scene opens at the pool called Bethesda, by the Sheep Gate, which John describes as having five porticoes (5:2). For centuries skeptics counted this detail against John, since no five-sided pool was known, until excavations north of the temple mount uncovered exactly what he described: twin pools with four surrounding colonnades and a fifth across the dividing barrier between them. The detail fits an author familiar with pre-70 Jerusalem. Share this with the group; it is a small, honest brick in the wall of confidence that this Gospel rests on eyewitness memory (19:35, 21:24).

One man in the crowd of invalids has been ill for thirty eight years, and John's numbers have earned our attention by now. Deuteronomy 2:14 records that Israel's wandering from Kadesh-barnea, where the faithless generation refused to enter the land, until the crossing of the brook Zered, lasted exactly thirty eight years: the years of the paralyzed generation, dying by inches within sight of promise. John never cites Deuteronomy, so hold this as a resonance the Gospel invites rather than a connection John states; read that way, the man at Bethesda images that Israel: immobilized for thirty eight years beside water that had not healed him, waiting for a stirring that never comes for him. Let the group find Deuteronomy themselves; the click is worth it. A textual note you should have ready: verse 4, about an angel troubling the water, is missing from the earliest manuscripts and is footnoted or bracketed in the RSV2CE; it appears to be an early gloss explaining the superstition of verse 7. Nothing hangs on it, and Jesus conspicuously bypasses the pool altogether: he heals with a bare word, no water, no touch, no stirring.

Do you want to be healed? sounds like the least necessary question in the Gospels, and it is one of the most penetrating. Listen to the man's answer: he does not say yes. He gives the well-worn explanation, sir, I have no man to put me into the pool, an excuse polished by thirty eight years of use. Illness can become an identity; a wound can become a way of life. John never tells us why Jesus asks, so offer this as pastoral reflection rather than exegesis: the question addresses a will, and grace ordinarily calls for a free response rather than overriding one. Keep the honest tension in view as well; the man never actually says yes, and Jesus heals him anyway. Here grace goes first and asks afterward. Handle this

pastorally, not accusingly; everyone in your group is somewhere in year eleven or twenty three beside some pool of their own.

The healed man carries his pallet, and the authorities see only a sabbath violation: it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet. Thirty eight years have ended and their entire attention is on a mat. When they trace the healing to Jesus, his defense detonates everything: my Father is working still, and I am working (5:17). To feel the force, know the background: Jewish teachers came to articulate, in traditions later codified, that God Himself does not stop working on the sabbath, since the universe does not fly apart on Saturdays; He sustains creation, gives life, and judges the dying, works permitted to God alone. Jesus' sentence claims exactly that exemption: as my Father works through the sabbath, so do I. John 5:18 records that his hearers understood him instantly and precisely: he called God his own Father, making himself equal with God, and this was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him. Underline this for your group's apologetics toolkit: the claim of divinity is not a later invention read back into Jesus; his first and most hostile hearers heard it on the spot, and the death plot that ends at the cross begins here, at a mat, on a sabbath.

The discourse that follows (5:19-29) is the Gospel's deepest early teaching on the Father and the Son, and it must be read with both hands. One hand: the Son can do nothing of his own accord, he does only what he sees the Father doing, everything is received. The other hand: whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise, the Son gives life to whom he will, all judgment is given to the Son, and all must honor the Son even as they honor the Father. No creature could survive that second list. The resolution is the Church's Trinitarian faith: the Son is eternally from the Father, and his from-ness is not inferiority but relation; he receives everything, and what he receives is everything, the whole divine life and work. Teach it calmly; this chapter is where Nicaea learned its grammar. Note also the two hours of the discourse: the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God (5:25, the spiritually dead, now), and the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice (5:28, the bodily dead, at the end). Eternal life in John is not only a future possession; whoever hears and believes has passed from death to life, present tense (5:24). And the general resurrection is of all, some to the resurrection of life, some to the resurrection of judgment (5:29; CCC 998).

The chapter closes as a courtroom (5:30-47). Jewish law required two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15), and Jesus, declining to testify alone, calls four: the Baptist, the burning and shining lamp; the works the Father has given him; the Father Himself; and the Scriptures, with Moses as the accusing counsel: if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me (5:46). Inside this courtroom sits the verse your steelman is built on: you search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (5:39-40). Prepare it carefully and charitably; it is one of the most quoted verses in the Catholic-Protestant conversation, and tonight the group reads it where it lives.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

- **Deuteronomy 2:14.** Thirty eight years from Kadesh-barnea to the brook Zered, until the faithless generation had perished. The number the group will hear under the man at Bethesda. Central live discovery.
- **Genesis 2:2-3.** God rested on the seventh day, and yet the world is sustained through every sabbath. The background of my Father is working still. Leader background.
- **Deuteronomy 19:15.** On the evidence of two or three witnesses. The legal frame of the fourfold witness. Quick verbal reference or lookup.

- **Deuteronomy 18:15-19.** The prophet like Moses, to whom you shall listen. One concrete answer to where Moses wrote of me, alongside everything the group has already discovered.
- **Ezekiel 47:1-9.** The river of healing water flowing from the temple. Dig Deeper: the pool that could not heal versus the living water from the true temple.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), Doctor of the Church, Tractates on the Gospel of John, Tractate 17

Augustine puzzles lovingly over the number thirty eight. Forty, he observes, is Scripture's number of completeness in the law, and thirty eight falls short of it by exactly two. What two things did the man lack? The twofold command on which everything hangs: love of God and love of neighbor. The law without charity leaves a man two short of forty, paralyzed beside the law's own pool, unable to reach what he can see. Only when Love himself walks up and speaks does the man finally stand.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376-444), Doctor of the Church, Commentary on the Gospel of John, on chapter 5

Cyril, the great defender of Christ's full divinity, presses on 5:23: that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. Equal honor, he argues, is intelligible only between equals in nature; God, who says through Isaiah that He gives His glory to no other, could not command for a creature the very honor owed to Himself. Either the Son shares the Father's nature, or heaven has commanded idolatry. The verse leaves no third room, and the Church's worship of Jesus has stood on it ever since.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Doctor of the Church, Commentary on the Gospel of John, on chapter 5

Aquinas holds the discourse's two hands together. That the Son does nothing of himself does not diminish him, Aquinas explains, for the Son receives from the Father the very same nature, power, and operation, whole and undivided; his receiving is his eternal begottenness, not a creature's dependence. Whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise: one power, one work, two persons. Everything is gift, and the gift is everything.

Catechism Connection

- **CCC 589.** Jesus gave scandal above all by identifying his own conduct with God's; his hearers saw in his claims a man making himself God, and either he spoke truly or he blasphemed. The middle ground was never offered.
- **CCC 679.** Christ is Lord of eternal life, and the Father has given all judgment to the Son, citing this chapter directly.
- **CCC 998.** All the dead will rise, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment, quoting John 5:29.
- **CCC 2173.** Jesus and the sabbath: he never fails to respect its holiness while giving its authentic interpretation, for the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.

Thread Watch

THREAD WATCH

The seven signs tally. Sign 3 by the traditional count: the healing at Bethesda. This is the first sign the group logs without John numbering it for them; make a small ceremony of the pen passing. Expect and welcome debate about whether it counts; the arguing is the learning.

The death plot (NEW). They sought all the more to kill him (5:18). Open a tension line on the board. The plot will strain against a strange restraint in the coming chapters, and the group will eventually discover what the restraint is called. Say nothing beyond logging it.

The Hour. Two more entries tonight: 5:25, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and 5:28, the hour is coming when all in the tombs will hear it. The board now holds the Hour of the wedding, of worship, and of the dead. Offer no synthesis; the accumulation is the point.

Sign-faith versus real faith. A strange data point: the healed man never expresses faith, does not know who healed him, and reports Jesus to the authorities. Not every touched life turns to belief. Let the group sit with the ambiguity.

Moses wrote of me. Meta-thread moment: the group has already found Genesis 1, Genesis 28, and Numbers 21 with their own hands, and the Passover calendar is quietly running in the background. When 5:46 lands, invite them to name what Moses has shown them so far. The sealed guesses gain interest again; say nothing.

Session Goals

1. Participants discover Deuteronomy 2:14 and can articulate what thirty eight years by unavailing water signifies.
2. Participants wrestle personally with do you want to be healed and can name the anatomy of a polished excuse.
3. Participants can explain why my Father is working still is a divine claim, and that Jesus' hostile hearers understood it immediately (5:18).
4. Participants can hold both hands of the discourse: the Son receives everything, and what he receives is everything, equal honor included.
5. Participants hear the strongest sola scriptura case from 5:39 and weigh it inside the verse's own courtroom.

Time Note (90 minutes)

Opening prayer and Win, 15 minutes. Build, 55 minutes. Send, Live It This Week, and closing prayer, 20 minutes. If running long, the pre-chosen cuts are, in order: the Dig Deeper on Ezekiel 47, the archaeology note in Build question 1 (compress to one sentence), and Build question 7 on the two hours (log the Hour entries on the board without full discussion). Do not cut the Deuteronomy 2:14 discovery, the 5:17-18 exchange, or the steelman chain. Next week is the Bread of Life; end on time and tell them to come rested.

Part 2: Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader prays aloud: Lord Jesus, you walked into a crowd of the sick and asked one man the question you ask everyone: do you want to be healed? Ask us tonight, and do not accept our polished excuses. You are working still, with the Father, even now, even here. Speak the word, and we shall be healed. Amen.

Win (open the conversation)

1. What is the longest you have ever waited for something? Did the waiting change you, and how?
2. Do you want to be healed? sounds like a pointless question. When, honestly, is it not?

Transition: Tonight one healing on one sabbath starts the argument that runs to the end of this Gospel, and the first plot against Jesus' life. Watch how much detonates from one man picking up a mat.

Build (inductive discovery)

Have someone read John 5:1-9 aloud. Then ask:

Question 1. Inventory the scene: where is this pool, what surrounds it, who fills it, and how long has our man been there? One outside note worth having: for centuries skeptics doubted John's five porticoes, until archaeologists uncovered the twin pools north of the temple mount with exactly that colonnade structure. What does the pile of detail suggest about the writer?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Bethesda, by the Sheep Gate, five porticoes, a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed, and one man thirty eight years ill. The excavated pools matching John's description are a quiet confidence-builder: this Gospel keeps checking out on the ground, because it claims to rest on a man who was there (19:35). And note the grim scenery John paints without comment: a crowd of the desperate, gathered around water they believe in, and in the whole scene John never once shows that water healing anyone. Keep that image; the chapter is going to replace it.

Question 2 (live discovery). Thirty eight years. By now this Gospel has taught us to check its numbers. Send the group to Deuteronomy 2:14 and read it. Who else spent exactly thirty eight years stuck, and why? What does that make the man at the pool?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Israel: thirty eight years from Kadesh-barnea, where the faithless generation refused to enter the land, to the crossing of the brook Zered, until that entire generation of men of war had perished, dying by inches within sight of promise. Read that way, the man images paralyzed Israel in one body: immobilized for a generation's span beside water that cannot actually save, waiting for a stirring that never comes for him. Everything about the scene preaches the condition Jesus has come to end: a pool of waiting, real hope, no power yet. And into it walks the one the water was always pointing to.

Question 3. Jesus asks: do you want to be healed? Read the man's answer in verse 7 with complete honesty. Is it a yes? What is it? And then watch verses 8 and 9: what does the healing require, and what does it conspicuously not involve?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

It is not a yes. It is an explanation, thirty eight years polished: sir, I have no man to put me into the pool; while I am going another steps down before me. The excuse has become the identity; he has a system, a grievance, and a spot in the shade. John does not say why Jesus asks, but the question is worth sitting with: it is put to a will, and after thirty eight years a man can prefer the familiar pool to the terrifying possibility of standing. Notice too that the man never gives the yes, and Jesus heals him regardless; the question searches him, it does not gate the mercy. The healing itself bypasses the whole apparatus: no water, no stirring, no helper, just the word: rise, take up your pallet, and walk. The pool was never the point. Be gentle here, because every person in the room, the leader included, has a pool, a spot, and a speech.

Question 4. Read 5:10-16. A man who could not move for thirty eight years is walking, and what do the authorities notice? What do they ask him, and what do they never ask him? What has gone wrong with their seeing?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

They see a mat being carried on the sabbath. It is not lawful for you to carry your pallet: the entire miracle is invisible to them; the infraction fills the screen. They ask who told you to carry it, and never, who healed you, how do you feel, blessed be God. In these men, on this day, concern for the rule has crowded out any room for wonder. John gives us their one question and their telling silence, and lets us draw the inference; the point is what these particular officials did with this particular miracle, not a verdict on keeping God's law. And the healed man himself is an uncomfortable mirror: he does not know who healed him, expresses no gratitude we are shown, and when he finds out, reports Jesus to the authorities. Log it on the sign-faith line: not every touched life turns to faith. The chapter refuses to sentimentalize. A word for the leader before this lands: the target here is these particular officials and what they did with this particular miracle, never Jewish observance as such. The sabbath, the law, and the Scriptures are God's own gifts, Jesus keeps them, and the Church honors them; what John indicts is a use of them that could look straight at a healed man and see only a mat.

Question 5. Read 5:17-18 slowly; this is the hinge of the chapter and one of the hinges of the Gospel. Jesus' defense is one sentence: my Father is working still, and I am working. Background you need: Jewish teachers came to articulate, in traditions later written down, that God Himself works through every sabbath, since the world does not fall apart on Saturdays; He sustains creation, gives life, and judges the dying, works belonging to God alone. The developed formulations we can read are later than this scene, but the underlying instinct is clearly in the air here, because Jesus' hearers react to his sentence instantly and correctly. Given that, what is Jesus claiming? And look hard at verse 18: what do his enemies hear, and how do we know they heard correctly?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

He is claiming God's own sabbath exemption: the works that continue on the seventh day are the

works no creature may claim, and I am doing them, with my Father. Verse 18 records the instant, accurate decoding: he called God his own Father, making himself equal with God, and for this they sought all the more to kill him. Notice what John does not say: he does not say they misunderstood. Everywhere else the misunderstanding pattern runs, John corrects it; here the hostile reading stands, because it is the right reading. File this in your apologetics kit: the claim of divinity is not something councils invented centuries later; the first hostile audience heard it on a sabbath afternoon, and the plot that ends at Calvary began that hour. Open the death plot line on the board.

Question 6. Read 5:19-23. Hold the discourse with both hands. Hand one: the Son can do nothing of his own accord. Hand two: whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise... the Son gives life to whom he will... all judgment is given to the Son... that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. Could any creature say the second list? And what does the first list mean, if not inferiority?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

No creature can do whatever the Father does, no creature gives life to whom he will, and no creature may receive the honor due to the Father; God says through Isaiah that He gives His glory to no other. So hand two rules out any reading of hand one as inferiority. The resolution is the faith of Nicaea, and this chapter is where it learned to talk: the Son is eternally from the Father, and his from-ness is relation, not rank. He receives everything, and what he receives is everything, the whole divine nature, power, and work. Everything is gift, and the gift is entire. When your group bows at the name of Jesus or genuflects before the tabernacle, verse 23 is the charter: honoring the Son as the Father is not idolatry; refusing to would be disobedience.

Question 7. Read 5:24-29. Two announcements about hours. What has already happened, present tense, to the one who hears and believes (v. 24-25)? And what is still coming, for absolutely everyone (v. 28-29)? Log both on the Hour line.

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Present tense: whoever hears and believes has eternal life, has passed from death to life, already; the hour now is when the spiritually dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live. Eternal life in John is not a ticket for later; it is a life that begins at faith and Baptism and is meant to be lived now. Still coming: the hour when all who are in the tombs, all, hear his voice and come out, some to the resurrection of life, some to the resurrection of judgment (CCC 998). The board now carries the Hour of the wedding, the Hour of worship, and the Hour of the dead. Do not synthesize; just let the group notice the word gathering weight.

Steelman: You Search the Scriptures

BUILD THE STEELMAN FIRST: present this at full strength

Read 5:39-40 first, then build the case with real respect, because it is a serious one. Here, the Protestant reader says, is Jesus' own doctrine of authority. He is in a dispute with the religious hierarchy of his day, and where does he direct the argument? To the Scriptures: it is they that bear witness to me. He does not appeal to the traditions of the elders; elsewhere he attacks those traditions for voiding the word of God. He treats the written word as the standing, sufficient, public

witness, available to anyone who will search it, if need be over the heads of the official teachers, whose real but fallible ministry the classic Reformers themselves affirmed. Moses will accuse them, not the magisterium of their day, which got it wrong while the text got it right. The Bereans of Acts 17 were called noble for exactly this searching. So, the argument concludes, the final court of appeal is Scripture itself, and every human teaching office, Catholic ones included, stands under it and can err beneath it. State it at full strength; much of it a Catholic can and should simply grant.

Question 8 (press from the text). Begin by granting what is true: Scripture's witness is real, public, and authoritative, and Jesus wields it against the official teachers of his day. Now look at the verse in its own courtroom. First: is 5:39 a commendation or a rebuke, and what is the actual outcome of these men's tireless searching? Second: count the witnesses Jesus calls in this chapter. Does he summon Scripture alone? Third: the most Scripture-saturated men in Israel stood in front of the one the text pointed to and missed him. What does that tell us about what the text, by itself, can and cannot do?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

First: the verse reads as a rebuke (indicative or imperative, scholars debate the grammar; verse 40 settles the charge: you refuse to come to me). You search the Scriptures, diligently, professionally, because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness to me, yet you refuse to come to me. Their searching was tireless and their conclusion was fatal; the searching, by itself, saved no one in the room. Second: Jesus calls a communion of witnesses, four of them, the Baptist, the works, the Father, and the Scriptures with Moses as counsel, in careful compliance with Deuteronomy's two-or-three rule. He does not isolate the text as a lone and self-sufficient arbiter even while honoring it as true; the witness of Scripture stands inside a chorus. Third, and gently: the lesson of the Pharisees is not that Scripture fails, for it is they that bear witness to me is Jesus' own verdict on its perfect reliability. The lesson is that the text does not interpret itself into a heart; it must be read toward the person it points to, and read within the living witness God has provided. The Ethiopian official said it for all of us: how can I, unless some one guides me? (Acts 8:31), and God's answer was not a better concordance but Philip, the Church's ordained evangelist, sent by God's angel and Spirit. Catholics do not set the Church over the Scriptures; we receive the Scriptures inside the same living communion of witnesses through which God gave them, so that the searching ends where verse 40 says it must: not in mastery of the text, but in coming to him.

Question 9. Read 5:45-47. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. Put the group on the spot, in the best way: in five sessions, where have we already caught Moses writing of him, with our own hands on the pages?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Let them build the list themselves: Genesis 1, in the beginning, creation by the Word; Genesis 28, the ladder at Bethel that Jesus claimed to be; Numbers 21, the serpent lifted on the pole, his own blueprint for the cross; and Deuteronomy 18, the prophet like Moses to whom Israel must listen, if the group recalls it from the Baptist's interrogation. Add tonight: Deuteronomy 2:14 and the thirty eight years. Moses has been testifying all study, and the group has been the ones discovering it, which is exactly the design. One more of Moses' books has been humming in the background since a certain feast was named in chapter 2. Say nothing further; the seal holds.

DIG DEEPER

The water that actually heals. If the group has energy, read Ezekiel 47:1-9: the river flowing from the temple, deepening from ankles to knees to an uncrossable flood, and everything shall live where the river goes. Bethesda was a pool that, in John's telling, healed no one we meet; Ezekiel promised water from the temple that heals everything it touches. The group already knows where the true temple is (2:21). One day in this Gospel, something will flow from it. Leave the sentence exactly there.

Synthesis question. This whole chapter is a trial. Who is officially on trial, who ends up actually on trial, and what verdict question does the chapter leave sitting in front of every reader?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Officially, Jesus is on trial for sabbath-breaking and blasphemy. By the end, the court has been quietly reversed: the accusers stand accused by Moses, their own counsel, and the reader is left holding the only question that matters. Jesus claimed God's own works, God's own honor, and his enemies understood him perfectly; the middle ground, a nice teacher who claimed nothing much, was never on offer (CCC 589). Either he blasphemed, or every knee should bow. The chapter does not let us adjourn.

Send

1. I have no man is the sound of an excuse that has become an identity. Where in your life has the explanation gotten more polished than the desire to be healed?
2. Thirty eight years beside water that cannot heal. What pool are you camped beside, the thing you keep waiting on that has never once stirred for you, and what would rise, take up your pallet, and walk mean this week?

Live It This Week

- **Answer the question.** In prayer this week, let Jesus ask you directly, about one specific area you name: do you want to be healed? Answer him honestly, yes, no, or not yet, and tell him why. He can work with honesty; he waits out excuses.
- **Keep an hour of sabbath.** The Lord of the sabbath healed on it because the sabbath was made for restoration. Claim one deliberate hour this Sunday, no screens, no errands, for rest and worship, and let the Father who is working still do the working.
- **Search with the Church.** Take one of tonight's Catechism paragraphs (589, 679, 998, or 2173), look it up, and read it next to the verses it cites. Ten minutes of Scripture read inside the Church's living witness: the searching that ends in coming to him.

Closing Prayer

Leader prays aloud: Lord Jesus, Son of the Father, you do whatever the Father does, and the Father is working still. Work on us. We confess the pools we camp beside and the excuses we have polished smooth; ask us your question until we answer it. Let Moses and all the Scriptures do in us what they

were written to do: bring us to you, that we may have life. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

MEMORIZE THIS WEEK: John 5:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (RSV2CE)

Part 3: Leader Reference Card

Every passage used or referenced in Session 6, in order of appearance. Flag these in your Bible before the session.

- **John 5:1-9** · opening reading, Bethesda, five porticoes, thirty eight years, rise and walk; note the verse 4 textual footnote in the RSV2CE
- **Deuteronomy 2:14** · live discovery, the thirty eight years of the faithless generation
- **John 5:10-16** · the mat, the authorities' blindness, the healed man's report
- **John 5:17-18** · my Father is working still; equal with God; the death plot begins
- **Genesis 2:2-3** · leader background, the sabbath rest and the sustaining God
- **John 5:19-23** · the two hands of the discourse; equal honor (v. 23)
- **John 5:24-29** · passed from death to life; the two hours; the general resurrection
- **John 5:30-38** · the witnesses: the Baptist, the works, the Father
- **Deuteronomy 19:15** · quick reference, two or three witnesses
- **John 5:39-40** · steelman text, you search the Scriptures, yet you refuse to come to me
- **Acts 8:31 and Acts 17:11** · press references, the eunuch's question and the Bereans; cite verbally
- **John 5:45-47** · Moses wrote of me; the group builds the list they have already discovered
- **Deuteronomy 18:15-19** · the prophet like Moses, one concrete answer to 5:46
- **Ezekiel 47:1-9** · Dig Deeper, the healing river from the temple
- **CCC 589, 679, 998, 2173** · Catechism connections