



A delightfull readable yet profound survey of the way stories inform our faith and values, and are essential to our Christian witness. Ralph Milton at his best.

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## **The Gospel of John** from the NRSV recast as a liturgical drama by Ralph Milton

*This “liturgical drama” was written as an assignment while studying in the Gospel of John and Biblical Archaeology in Israel. It has since been used several times in a worship service as the “sermon.” It removes most of the “preaching” from John’s gospel and concentrates on the evocative story it tells. This piece is much longer than the others. It takes about 20 minute.*

*The language in John is sometimes convoluted and difficult to understand, which makes it imperative that the readers rehearse this carefully to make sure their voices communicate the meaning to the listener.*

W1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of human will, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem.

M2&3 Who are you?"

M4 I am not the Messiah.

M2&3 What then? Are you Elijah?

M4 I am not.

M2&3 Are you the prophet?

M4 No.

M3 Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?

M4 I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord,"

M2&3 Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?

M4 I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.

W1 This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him.

M4 Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.

I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

W1 The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples. He watched Jesus walk by.

M4 Look, here is the Lamb of God!

W1 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following.

M1 What are you looking for?

M2&3 Rabbi, where are you staying?

M1 Come and see.

W1 They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon.

M3 We have found the Messiah!

W1 Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.

M1 You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas.

W1 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael.

M2 We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.

M4 Can anything good come out of Nazareth?

M2 Come and see.

W1 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him.

M1 Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!

M4 Where did you get to know me?

M1 I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.

M4 Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!

M1 Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these. Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

W1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus spoke to him.

W2 They have no wine.

M1 Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.

W2 Servants! Do whatever he tells you.

W1 Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.

M1 Fill the jars with water. (PAUSE) Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.

W1 When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom.

W2 Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.

W1 After this Jesus went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.  
(PAUSE) The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.

M1 Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!

M3&4 What sign can you show us for doing this?

M1 Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

M2&4 This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?

W1 There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night.

M2 Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.

M1 Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.

M2 How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?

M1 Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

M2 How can these things be?

M1 Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

W1 After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized. John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.

Now a discussion about purification arose between John's disciples and a Jew. They came to John.

M2 Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him.

M4 No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. For this reason my joy has been fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.

W1 When Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John" --although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized-- he left Judea and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria.

So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water. His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.

M1 Give me a drink.

W3 How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?

M1 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.

W3 Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks, drank from it?

M1 Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.

W3 Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.

M1 Go, call your husband, and come back.  
W3 I have no husband.  
M1 You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!  
W3 Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.  
M1 Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.  
W3 I know that Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.  
M1 I am he, the one who is speaking to you.  
W1 Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her? Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city.  
W3 Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?  
W1 The people of Samaria left the city and were on their way to Jesus. Meanwhile the disciples were urging Jesus.  
M2 Rabbi, eat something.  
M1 I have food to eat that you do not know about.  
M2 Surely no one has brought him something to eat?  
M1 My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.  
W1 Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony.  
W3 He told me everything I have ever done.  
W1 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word.  
W2 It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.  
W1 When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee. When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival.  
Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. When

he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

M1 Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.

M3 Sir, come down before my little boy dies.

M1 Go; your son will live.

W1 The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. So he asked them the hour when he began to recover.

M2 Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him.

W1 The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole household.

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids--blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there he knew that he had been there a long time.

M1 Do you want to be made well?

M3 Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.

M1 Stand up, take your mat and walk.

W1 At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

M2 It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.

M3 The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'

M2 Who is the man who said to you, 'Take it up and walk'?

W1 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. Later Jesus found him in the temple.

M1 See, you have been made well! Do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.

W1 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the Sabbath.

M1 My Father is still working, and I also am working.

W1 For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the Sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

W1 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples.

Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. He looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him.

M1 Philip, where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?

M2 Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.

M3 There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?

M1 Make the people sit down.

W1 There was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.

M1 Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.

W1 So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets.

W2&3, M4 This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.

W1 When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified.

M1 It is I; do not be afraid.

W1 Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there. They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. They found him on the other side of the sea.

W3 Rabbi, when did you come here?

M1 Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.

W3 What must we do to perform the works of God?

M1 This is the work of God that you believe in him whom he has sent.

W3 What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

M1 Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

W3 Sir, give us this bread always.

M1 I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

- M3&4 Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?
- M1 Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. I am the bread of life. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.
- M3 How can this man give us his flesh to eat?
- M1 Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.
- M2 This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?
- M1 Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.
- W1 Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.
- M1 Do you also wish to go away?
- M2 Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.
- (SLIGHT PAUSE)
- W1 After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish to go about in Judea because the Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him.  
Now the Jewish festival of Booths was near. His brothers spoke to him.
- M3 Leave here and go to Judea so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing; for no one who wants to be widely known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world.
- M1 Go to the festival yourselves. I am not going to this festival, for my time has not yet fully come.
- W1 After saying this, Jesus remained in Galilee. But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were in secret. The Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, "Where is he?" And there was considerable complaining about him among the crowds. While some were saying, "He is a good man," others were saying, "No, he is deceiving the crowd." Yet no one would speak openly about him for fear of the Jews.  
About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. The Jews were astonished at it.
- M3&4 How does this man have such learning, when he has never been taught?
- M1 My teaching is not mine but his who sent me. Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own.



M2 & W3 Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill? And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah? Yet we know where this man is from; but when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.

M1 You know me, and you know where I am from. I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.

W1 Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come. Yet many in the crowd believed in him.

M2 & W3 When the Messiah comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?

W1 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering such things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent temple police to arrest him.

M1 I will be with you a little while longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. You will search for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come.

M3 Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him?

M2 Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?

M4 What does he mean by saying, 'You will search for me and you will not find me' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?

W1 It was the last day of the festival--the great day.

M1 Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'

W2 This is really the prophet.

M2 This is the Messiah.

M3 Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he?

W3 Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?

W1 So there was a division in the crowd because of him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees.

M4 Why did you not arrest him?

M3 Never has anyone spoken like this!

M4 Surely you have not been deceived too, have you?

M3 Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, which does not know the law--they are accursed.

W1 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them.

M2 Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?

M3 Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee.

W1 Then each of them went home, while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

W1 Early in the morning Jesus came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them.

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and made her stand before all of them.

- M4 Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?
- W1 Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. They kept on questioning him.
- M1 Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.
- W1 And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.
- M1 Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?
- M3 No one, sir.
- M1 Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.
- W1 Again Jesus spoke to the people.
- M1 I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.
- M4 You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid.
- M1 Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me testifies on my behalf.
- M4 Where is your Father?
- M1 You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.
- W1 Jesus spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple, but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.
- M1 I am going away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.
- M4 Is he going to kill himself?
- M3 Is that what he means by saying, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?
- W1 You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he.
- M4 Who are you?
- M1 Why do I speak to you at all?
- W1 Then Jesus spoke to the Jews who had believed in him.
- M1 If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.
- M2 We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?
- M1 Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.
- W1 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth.

M2 Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?  
M1 Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him.  
W1 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes.  
M1 Go, wash in the pool of Siloam  
W1 Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to talk.  
M2 Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?  
W2 It is he.  
W3 No, but it is someone like him.  
M3 I am the man!  
M4 Then how were your eyes opened?  
M3 The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight.  
M4 Where is he?  
M3 I do not know.  
W1 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight.  
M3 He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.  
M4 This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.  
M2 How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?  
M4 What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.  
M3 He is a prophet.  
W1 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight.  
M4 Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?  
W2 We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.  
M4 Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.  
M3 I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.  
M4 What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?  
M3 I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?  
M4 You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.  
M3 Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.  
M4 You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?  
W1 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and sought him out.  
M1 Do you believe in the Son of Man?  
M3 And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.

M1 You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.  
M3 Lord, I believe.  
M1 I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.  
W1 At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him.  
M2&3 How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.  
M1 I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.  
W1 Jesus went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there. Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus.  
W2&3 Lord, he whom you love is ill.  
M1 This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.  
W1 Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Only then did he speak to the disciples.  
M1 Let us go to Judea again. Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.  
M3 Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.  
M1 Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.  
W1 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.  
W3 Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.  
M1 Your brother will rise again.  
W3 I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.  
M1 I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?  
W3 Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.  
W1 When Martha had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary.  
W3 The Teacher is here and is calling for you.  
When Mary heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The

Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet.

- W2 Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.
- W1 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.
- M1 Where have you laid him?
- W2&3 Lord, come and see.
- W1 Jesus began to weep.
- M2 See how he loved him!
- M3 Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?
- W1 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.
- M1 Take away the stone.
- W3 Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.
- M1 Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?
- W1 So they took away the stone.
- M1 Father, I thank you for having heard me. Lazarus, come out!
- W1 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth.
- M1 Unbind him, and let him go.
- W1 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done.
- So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council.
- M4 What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation.
- M3 You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.
- W1 So from that day on they planned to put him to death. Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.
- Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus.
- M4 What do you think?
- M3 Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?
- W1 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus was should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him.

Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

M2 Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?

M1 Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.

W1 When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him.

W2&3, M2&3 Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord--the King of Israel!

W1 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: "Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.

M4 You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!

W1 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee.

M2 & W2 Sir, we wish to see Jesus.

W1 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

M1 The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say--'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.

W1 Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder.

M2&3, W2&3 (SOFTLY) An angel has spoken to him.

W1 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. During supper Jesus, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter.

M2 Lord, are you going to wash my feet?

M1 You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

M2 You will never wash my feet.

M1 Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.  
M2 Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!  
M1 One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.  
W1 After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and returned to the table.  
M1 Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord--and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.  
Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.  
(SLIGHT PAUSE) Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.  
W1 The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples--the one whom Jesus loved--was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.  
M3 Lord, who is it?  
M1 It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.  
W1 So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him.  
M1 Do quickly what you are going to do.  
W1 Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.  
M1 Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.  
M2 Lord, where are you going?  
M1 Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward.  
M2 Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.  
M1 Will you lay down your life for me, Peter? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And you know the way to the place where I am going.  
M3 Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?  
M1 I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.  
M2 Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.  
M1 Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the

Father'? This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. (SLIGHT PAUSE) Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you.

W1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

M1 Whom are you looking for?

M4 Jesus of Nazareth.

M1 I am he.

W1 Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground.

M1 Whom are you looking for?

M4 Jesus of Nazareth.

M1 I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.

W1 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus.

M1 Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?

W1 So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.

W3 You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?

M2 I am not.

W1 Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.



M1 I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.

W1 When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face.

M4 Is that how you answer the high priest?

M1 If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?

W1 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.  
Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.

W3 You are not also one of his disciples, are you?

M2 I am not.

W3 Did I not see you in the garden with him?

W1 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.  
Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them.

M3 What accusation do you bring against this man?

M4 If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.

M3 Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.

M4 We are not permitted to put anyone to death.

W1 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again and summoned Jesus.

M3 Are you the King of the Jews?

M1 Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?

M3 I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?

M1 My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.

M3 So you are a king?

M1 You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.

M3 What is truth?

W1 After Pilate had said this, he went out to the Jews again.

M3 I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?

M2&4 Not this man, but Barabbas!

W1 Now Barabbas was a bandit. Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.

M2&4 Hail, King of the Jews!

M3 Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.

W1 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.

M3 Here is the man!  
M2&4, W2&3 Crucify him! Crucify him!  
M3 Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.  
M4 We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.  
W1 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and spoke to Jesus.  
M3 Where are you from? (PAUSE) Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?  
M1 You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.  
W1 From then on Pilate tried to release him.  
M2&4 If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.  
W1 When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon.  
M3 Here is your King!  
M2&4, W2&3 Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!  
M3 Shall I crucify your King?  
M2&4, W2&3 We have no king but the emperor.  
W1 Then Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.  
So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross.  
M3 Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.  
W1 Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.  
M4 Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'  
M3 What I have written I have written.  
W1 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.  
M2 Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.  
W1 Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.  
Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her.  
M1 Woman, here is your son.  
W1 Then to the disciple:  
M1 Here is your mother.  
W1 And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.  
After this, Jesus knew that all was now finished.  
M1 I am thirsty.

W1 A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

M1 It is finished.

W1 Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

(PAUSE)

W1 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, especially because that Sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed.

Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved.

W2 They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

W1 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet.

M2&3 Woman, why are you weeping?

W2 They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.  
W1 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.  
M1 Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?  
W1 Mary supposed him to be the gardener.  
W2 Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.  
M1 Mary!  
W2 Rabbouni!  
M1 Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'  
W1 Mary Magdalene went to the disciples.  
W2 I have seen the Lord.  
W1 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them.  
M1 Peace be with you.  
W1 After he said this, Jesus showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.  
M1 Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.  
W1 Then he breathed on them.  
M1 Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.  
W1 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him:  
M2&W3 We have seen the Lord.  
M4 Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.  
W1 A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them.  
M1 Peace be with you. Thomas, put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.  
M4 My Lord and my God!  
M1 Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.  
W1 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.  
After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter spoke:  
M2 I am going fishing.

M3&4 We will go with you.  
W1 They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.  
M1 Children, you have no fish, have you?  
M2,3&4 No.  
M1 Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.  
W1 So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.  
M3 It is the Lord!  
W1 When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread.  
M1 Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.  
W1 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn.  
M1 Come and have breakfast.  
W1 Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord.  
Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.  
M1 Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?  
M2 Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.  
M1 Feed my lambs. (PAUSE) Simon son of John, do you love me?  
M2 Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.  
M1 Tend my sheep. (PAUSE) Simon son of John, do you love me?  
M2 Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.  
M1 Feed my sheep.

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