Dear Bible Students,

I pray that you are well as we close out the first month of 2024.

We are still dipping our toes into the new waters of the Gospel according to John, which provides a very different picture of Jesus than what we may have become used to in the Synoptics, i.e., the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

In this so-called “spiritual” Gospel or the “symbolic” Gospel, we will have to digest a noticeably different set of narratives with a different chronology that depict a Jesus who speaks differently and speaks about different things. We will encounter:

* stories not in the Synoptics (e.g., wedding at Cana, Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, Lazarus)
* a timeline the Synoptics do not share (e.g., “cleansing” of the temple at the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry)
* style of Jesus’ speech (e.g., lengthy discourses as opposed to short parables—there are no parables in John at all; “I am the gate.”)
* topics covered in Jesus’ teachings (e.g., “. . . unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.”)

Remember to review **John 1, esp. vv. 1–14** and also review chs. 2–4. And as always, please bring your observations and questions, so that we may mutually benefit from each other’s interests, perspectives, and insights.

Please take notes on the similarities and differences you see between John and the other canonical gospels, the Synoptics (= Matthew, Mark, Luke). What faith lessons might we learn from knowing the gospels in such comparative detail?

What do you think about the lesson(s) John intends? How about John’s Jesus?

(How) are they applicable in actual life lived at Ann’s Choice or elsewhere?

Looking forward to seeing you and hearing all your observations and questions,

