A Stroll + (!) with Jesus in John's Gospel [the '+' sign is for Chapter 14's abiding love]

Advent is coming. In Darkening November & Darkest December: Light shines

Jesus, in John's Gospel, keeps on breaking in on our darkness. John's vocabulary is much simpler than Matthew Mark and Luke (especially Luke!) and his sentences can go on - '*and'& 'then'* for ex. – but the drama ('It was night'!) and the characters (Nicodemus, the woman at the well, Pilate) and those majestic words that –as Luke would say- burn in our hearts: *Love*. *Truth*. *Life*. *Light*.

[First, we'll have a lively stroll through the Gospel. Look (Behold!) how Jesus is often waylaid, sidetracked, and interrupted as He journeys to the Cross. He's the light of the World— John's prologue tells us what to expect 1:9-13.

1:35ff Jesus 'strolling' by is called out as the 'Lamb of God' by John. Two of John's disciples catch up to Jesus, and we hear "Come and See." [Interesting that Nathaniel's intro is also sideways: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth? I mean c'mon no Messiah no way from Nazareth."]2:1-12 Wedding at Cana. It's the Jesus ministry's first sign and it's all because the wine runs out. 3: Jesus turning tables and then the night visitor: We get 'God so Loved"4: Jesus asks for a drink of water and Water flows. 5: The 'whiner' by the pool ….6: Jesus sits down and prepares for the sermon on the mount. Instead…& Crowd 7: Crowds in Jerusalem. The drama —Rivers of Living Water. 8: Jesus sits down and prepares to teach when… (caught in the act) Jesus writes and convicts and heals. We'll talk 9: Whose fault was this–blame game—leads to only the blind can see10: Time out for the Beautiful Shepherd: LIFE ABUNDANT ABOUNDING 11: Death of Lazarus; Jesus-interrupted! - breaks into tears and breaks death… 12: Mary (!) anoints Jesus and finally Greeks want to 'see' –another interruption13: Jesus washes the feet and then Supper but Judas & Peter! 14: Don't be Troubled The great promises but questions: Show us! 'Have I been with you so long, Philip?' & the other Judas "Why no show?" Time to Go: Wait!15 & 16: Uninterrupted, finally! "I am the Vine. Abide in me! I'm saying these things to keep you from stumbling. A little while…" OH WAIT 16:18ff… [29 Disciples are glad Jesus is plain speaking!]17: The prayer: God loves us as much as God loves Jesus…18: Time in the garden. The arrest. Sword! Peter! What is this arrest? Ragged (rigged?) trial stops and starts—(PILATE!) we'll stop for breath. Words from the Cross. Finally, It's accomplished (this IS accomplished!) 20: The risen Jesus does the interrupting with Mary then the disciples-Pentecost comes early! then Thomas. & then 21: Surprise return: Jesus' breakfast on the beach with love.]

Thanksgiving & John 14!

We'll read, as Roland Bainton advised, '*as slowly as (we) can*.' [Reading slowly is one of the pleasures of reading the NT in Greek.] Perhaps we shall become like J.M. Barrie's mother who read the 14th chapter daily until she could no longer read -then, according to Barrie, companions read it to her until she could no longer hear. So, in her last year, Mrs. Barrie would kiss the page of the 14th chapter. Set aside all your memories of funerals past. Be prepared for something coming your (Jesus!) way…