

9.11

Misunderstanding in the Gospel of John

When Jesus says “destroy this temple,” people think that he is talking about the temple in Jerusalem, not the temple of his body (2:19–22).

Nicodemus wonders how a person can reenter the womb in order to be born anew (3:3–5).

Jesus speaks of “living water,” and a Samaritan woman thinks that there must be a running stream nearby (4:10–15).

Jesus says that his food is to do the will of God, and his disciples wonder who has been bringing him provisions (4:31–34).

Jesus speaks of himself as the bread from heaven, and people think that he is talking about the manna that Moses offered people in the wilderness (6:32–35).

Jesus speaks of people eating his flesh, and they think that he is advocating some bizarre form of cannibalism (6:51–52).

Jesus speaks of the time when he will go where no one can find him (i.e., to heaven), and people think that he is planning to hide out in the Diaspora (7:33–36).

Jesus says that he is going where no one can follow him, and people think that he is planning to commit suicide (8:21–22).

Jesus says, “The truth will set you free,” and people think that he is talking about emancipation from literal slavery (8:31–33).

Jesus says that those who keep his word will never see death, and people think that he means that they will never physically die (8:51–53).

Jesus says that his friend Lazarus has fallen asleep (i.e., died), and his disciples think that Lazarus is getting some healthy rest (11:12).