



### Questions:

1. What stood out for you from John 1:1-8 and 19-28? What relationship is implied between John and Jesus?
2. Is it challenging to consider that the Gospel of John might not be literal? Why or why not?
3. If the “I am” statements are reflections on the Jesus experience from the first century Jewish community, what images or metaphors might make sense today?
4. What do you think it means to have abundant life? Who is it meant for?
5. How might Jesus’ willingness to give his life away in the gospel help you form decisions about your own life?

### EPISODE TITLE: “John”

Wait Training, Episode 3

### Featured Guest: Bishop John Shelby Spong

John Shelby Spong, whose books have sold more than a million copies, was bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark for 24 years before his retirement in 2001. His admirers acclaim him as a teaching bishop who makes contemporary theology accessible to the ordinary layperson — he’s considered the champion of an inclusive faith by many, both inside and outside the Christian church. In one of his recent books, *The Sins of Scripture: Exposing the Bible’s Texts of Hate to Discover the God of Love* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2005), this visionary thinker seeks to introduce readers to a proper way to engage the holy book of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: John 1:6-8, 19-28

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

19 This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ <sup>20</sup>He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, ‘I am not the Messiah.’ <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, ‘What then? Are you Elijah?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ ‘Are you the prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, ‘Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?’ <sup>23</sup>He said, ‘I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of the Lord” ’; as the prophet Isaiah said.

24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, ‘Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?’ <sup>26</sup>John answered them, ‘I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.’ <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The New Revised Standard Version (Anglicized Edition), copyright 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.