

GOSPEL OF JOHN¹⁻¹¹

Life Group Study Guide



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How to Use this Study Guide

This guide was written as a companion to our Life Group study in John 1-11 this winter, beginning in December and continuing through February. We'll continue with our study in John's Gospel in the spring, so that our total times spent in the Fourth Gospel will be six months. We've prepared this guide in hopes that it will encourage you in your daily walk and prepare you to engage well as you study with others in your Life Group.

Each week's lesson contains a brief overview of the week's passage, and then five days worth of study. Each day, you will find a short introduction, three questions to get you thinking about the text, and then challenges to apply the text and pray for God to use it in your life. A careful reading of the day's passage and answering the questions should take most people about 15-20 minutes a day.

However you use this guide, our prayer is that it would continually drive you to make the study of God's Word a regular habit. May the Lord richly bless and sustain you as you meditate on His Word.

The Study Guide Team

Editor's Note



You might notice that our Life Group study in John's Gospel begins in John 1:15, rather than John 1:1, which would be the normal place to begin. We're doing it this way because Pastor Mike is preaching through John 1:1-14 this December in his Christmas sermon series, the Light of Christmas.

The first 14 verses of John's Gospel are essential to the rest of the book, so make sure you listen to the sermons as we begin to walk through John's Gospel. They will provide you with a solid foundation for our study.

I am praying for you as you engage with the Scriptures and encourage others in Life Group!

Pastor Jason

John 1



As the Apostle John, the author of this Gospel, declares that Jesus is the Word, John the Baptist bears witness to the Word as a voice in the wilderness. John the Baptist fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3 as he introduces Jesus to Israel as the Son of God, full of grace and truth. For those who were in bondage to the law, for those who thought that God was distant and unapproachable, for those who worshipped many gods, and for those who expected a political messiah, John's testimony would rock their world. Jesus is God!

The focus of our study this week is bearing witness. God's plan A for world evangelization is faithful followers of Christ building His kingdom by introducing others to Jesus, sharing the gospel, and making disciples. There is no plan B. Following the pattern of John the Baptist, the first disciples, and even Jesus Himself, you are invited to come and see, and then you are exhorted to go and tell.

Prepared by Mike Greene

Day 1: **John 1:15-18**

John the Baptist was used by God to introduce Jesus to Israel as the Son of God in the flesh. This news should have shattered any misconceptions that the Israelites had about God. Israel was in a unique position to recognize the promised Messiah, yet "...His own people did not receive Him." Even today, religious traditions and godless worldviews can blind people to the truth of who Jesus is.

For context, read John 1:1-14 and make a list of the words and phrases that the Apostle John uses to describe Jesus.

Look up 1 Kings 8:27. How does the testimony of John 1:15-18 answer Solomon's seemingly rhetorical question?

Read Col. 1:15-20, Heb. 1:1-13 and Phil. 2:5-11. How do these passages compare with the testimony here in John 1? What do they affirm about who Jesus is?

Apply: Prayerfully consider how the witness of these verses impacts your view of who Jesus is. Christ's incarnation shatters the preconceived ideas of those bound in legalism, those who worship multiple gods, and those who view God as a far-off being who cannot be known. How does this impact your worldview and your everyday life?

Pray: Father, I pray that the deity of Christ will be fully known in the church today. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the "grace upon grace" that you revealed to your creation.

Day 2: **John 1:19-28**

The Apostle John begins his gospel with the public ministries of Jesus and John the Baptist. For more background on John the Baptist, see Luke 1-3. As John the Baptist continued to bear witness about Jesus, it should be no surprise that the religious leaders would be curious. John's message was radical and many people were going out to hear him. Also, baptizing Jews was unheard of at that time. Baptism had only been for converts to Judaism. Notice how John's answers were short and to the point, keeping the focus on Jesus.

The priests and Levites were very specific in their questions about John's identity. The Jews were looking for the Messiah, and during those days, there were some who claimed to be him. But why did they ask if He was Elijah or the Prophet? See Mal. 4:5 and Deut. 18:15. In Matt. 17:10-13, how did Jesus explain this to His disciples?

What answer does John give for his identity? See also Isa. 40:3. Why do you think the religious leaders changed the subject from "who are you" to "why are you doing this?"

How does John respond to the question of why he is baptizing? How does his response reflect who Jesus is?

Apply: John clearly did not toot his own horn; he bore witness about the One who sent him. Consider how your own personal testimony can reflect the deity and honor of Christ.

Pray: Lord, please help me have the boldness, clarity and sense of purpose that John the Baptist had. Help me to have a defense for the hope that I have when the world questions me (1 Pet. 3:15).

Day 3: **John 1:29-34**

John the Baptist's testimony takes a new twist when Jesus shows up. John boldly points Him out as Jesus approaches and testifies to His purpose in coming. The concept of "[taking] away the sin of the world was a radical one, and it still is today. John testifies to the affirming sign of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Finally, John's mention of baptism "with the Holy Spirit" foreshadows the initiation of the church and the indwelling of the Spirit in those who worship the Lord Jesus. John concludes: "...I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

How does John's description of Jesus relate to Isaac's question in Gen. 22:7? Is Abraham's response in Gen. 22:8 literal in the moment or prophetic?

Why does John describe Jesus as the Lamb of God? What are the implications? See Isa. 53:7, 12 and Ex. 12:1-13.

What does John's testimony tell us about Jesus' purpose in coming? What things does the text say that Jesus will accomplish?

Apply: John the Baptist was convinced that "this is the Son of God." Read 1 John 5:11-12 and consider how this truth impacts each of us.

Pray: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" (Rev. 12:5).

Day 4: **John 1:35-42**

The Apostle Paul would later write that “...we are ambassadors for Christ...” (2 Cor. 5:20). The purpose is to bring others to Christ so that they can be reconciled to God, but we must first surrender our own lives to Him. Two of John the Baptist’s disciples responded to his witness by following Jesus. They would be among Jesus’ first disciples who would in turn invite others. Notice the pattern as we study today’s passage.

Two disciples of John the Baptist, Andrew and most likely John, follow Jesus. What prompted them to do that? Do you think this means something more than literally walking behind Him, why or why not?

How does Jesus respond to Andrew and John? These are the first words of Jesus recorded in the book of John. Does His response surprise you? Does it challenge you?

What does Andrew do next? We see Andrew again in John 6:8-9 and John 12:20-22. What was he doing in these texts?

Apply: Jesus still invites us to “come and see.” Prayerfully consider following Him, and if you have done that, who will you bring to Jesus today? While we have no record of Andrew preaching a sermon, we see him bringing people to Jesus. We can do the same.

Pray: Father, I pray for the boldness and faith of these first disciples so that I might follow you and invite someone else today to do the same.

Day 5: **John 1:43-51**

On His way to Galilee, Jesus called Philip to follow Him. Philip follows the example of Jesus and uses His words to invite Nathanael to “come and see.” Do you see the pattern once again? Nathanael had questions because what he heard didn’t match his understanding, but Jesus gracefully acknowledged him as being sincere and asking an honest question. What Jesus would call a small miracle would convince Nathanael to believe that Jesus is the One who was foretold.

What was the first thing that Philip did after he followed Jesus? What was the basis for Philip’s testimony? John 14:9 indicates that Philip did not fully understand, but he acted on what he did know.

What was Nathanael’s response to Philip? Philip could have argued, but what did he say? This is a good example of how we can respond to objections.

What was Nathanael’s response to Jesus? How does his response connect with Philip’s witness to him?

Apply: Like John the Baptist, these early disciples believed that Jesus was the One foretold by the prophets, even though they did not yet grasp the full reality of the incarnation. Having the resurrection as further proof, we can confidently invite others to come and see that Jesus is indeed the Son of God; He is God in flesh. Psalm 34:8 challenges us: “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!”

Pray: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for inviting me to come and see. I pray for opportunities and boldness to invite others, not just for their sakes, but for your glory. Worthy is the Lamb!

John 2



John has announced in the preceding chapter that Jesus is God, the Son of God, and the Lamb of God. Chapter 2 will display what John announced in chapter 1. John does this by arranging his material using a literary arrangement called an inclusio. Think of an inclusio like a “sandwich” such that chapters 2 and 4 are the bread. These chapters open and close in the same way. John’s first recorded sign (water to wine) and second sign (healing of official’s son), both in Cana, frame the narratives between the signs like pieces of bread. It’s a great way to say something and then say it again. John’s main point is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Here in chapter 2, we see the first of seven signs — changing water into wine. All of these signs authenticate Jesus as God’s true representative revealing God’s glory. John will clearly demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament picture of the Messiah. But the Pharisees aren’t having any of it. As we end chapter 2, the clearing of the temple will decisively set Jesus on a path towards the cross, a path He resolutely embraces.

Prepared by Claudine Snyder

Day 1: **John 2:1–5**

Weddings are important events in the Bible. After all, the Bible begins (Gen. 2:18–25) and ends (Rev. 19:1–9) with a wedding. The events of John 1:19–2:12 describe Jesus’ first week of ministry in which there is yet another important wedding. Here in Cana, we meet a cast of characters with unique roles offering us a nuanced view of the first of Jesus’ signs. This first sign leaves the master of the feast surprised, the servants amazed, and the disciples believing. While weddings are usually festive occasions, this wedding is on the brink of catastrophe.

What are the consequences of running out of wine? Why might Mary be involved in this matter?

What do you think Mary was expecting from Jesus when she told Him, “They have no wine”? Do you think she knew what He would do?

Jesus’ response to His mother in verse 4 literally reads, “What to me and you, woman?” Jesus is bluntly but politely asking, “Why is this my problem?” Yet, that doesn’t deter Mary nor preclude Jesus from responding. What do Mary’s instructions to the servants in verse 5 suggest to you about Mary’s faith in Jesus and about Jesus’ character?

Apply: Although Jesus cared about the urgent needs of those around Him, He remained steadfast in His mission to do the Father’s will in the Father’s timing. He never lost sight of His “hour” and the Father’s ultimate say in any situation. Do you have this perspective as well? Reflect on how you might see the needs of those around you, even in the ordinary days of your life, while remembering you are on mission for Jesus.

Pray: Father, help me to have both perspectives: kingdom and earthly. Grant me eyes to see the needs of others while being mindful that I am your light to a dark world. Cultivate a heart in me that cares about the sufferings of others and purposefully involves myself in the lives of those around me for your glory.

Day 2: **John 2:6–12**

The servants and disciples have front-row seats to Jesus' first sign. They will see firsthand Jesus has dominion over the elements of this world (Jn. 1:14: "all things were made through him") because although Jesus took on human flesh in His incarnation, He remained who He was in eternity—God. This first sign is also reminiscent of God's similar activity in the Old Testament (Ex. 7:19). For Jesus, lack of wine isn't a problem to solve but rather an opportunity to "manifest His glory," to grow the seeds of faith in those around Him, and to accomplish His Father's purposes.

What was the original purpose of the six stone jars (verse 6)? What might they symbolize in this sign?

Read these descriptions of the Lord's Supper from the other gospels: Luke 22:20; Mark 14:22-25; Matt. 26: 26-29. What does Jesus say the cup (of wine) represents? Could the wine Jesus created in His first sign be intended to point us to His blood that will be poured out (John 6:53-57)?

Read Amos 9:11-15. The abundance pictured here is in relation to God raising up and restoring David's lineage, bringing about the arrival of the Messiah. All nations will be invited into God's kingdom (verse 12). Notice the abundant provision of wine. What does Amos 9:11-15 have to do with John 2:1-12?

Apply: Jesus' first sign produces wine that is par excellence and super abundant. In the same way, Jesus offers us abundant goodness, grace, and mercy—unmatched by anything else we could ever experience. Jesus came to pour out new wine (His blood) for our sins (John 6:54) and offer us life—eternal life. Have you received His offer of eternal life?

Pray: Father, I believe Jesus is your Son and offers me His life as payment for my sins. I recognize there is nothing I can do to earn my own salvation, and I gratefully accept the gift of eternal life in Christ. Let me be ever mindful of my spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3-10).

Day 3: **Luke 5:33–39**

Jesus is not merely fixing a supply chain issue in Cana. Jesus is ushering in something new and better. He is repurposing purification jars while employing the symbolism of wine to identify Himself as Messiah. Unquestionably, a transition from old age to new age is here, a theme that is further expounded on in Luke 5. However, the Pharisees are unflinching in their fidelity to the old ways and works of Judaism—despite its inadequacy.

Luke 5 speaks of contrasts between old and new. What do the old wineskins represent? Is that compatible with the (new) gospel?

Look at Luke 5:39. Why do some say the old wine is “good” or superior?

In John 2, Jesus’ wine (blood) fills something old (purification jars). Why is Jesus’ new message and ministry better than the old ways and works of Judaism?

Apply: Even today many are deceived by works-based righteousness because spiritual activities, disciplines, and rules become the focus of our standing before God. Is this true of you? Consider your motivations before God and examine whether your focus is to pursue a self-made righteousness or to respond to what God has already accomplished in Christ. What makes you right before God?

Pray: Father, give me sight to see if I have any self-righteous motivations. Help me uncover the reasons behind all my worship activities. Show me my hidden desires while helping me recognize more clearly the beauty of the cross.

Day 4: **John 2:13–17**

The temple was the most sacred place on earth for the Jews. The temple during Passover was especially significant. Passover brought thousands of people from outlying provinces into Jerusalem to worship and offer sacrifices. The scam artists were ready and waiting. The money exchangers victimized people with deceitful exchange rates, animal vendors gouged those needing to buy livestock, and animal inspectors rejected perfectly good livestock thereby forcing people to buy unneeded and overpriced animals. Passover was ripe for rip-offs.

Look at Gen. 12:1-3; Isa. 56:1-8; 1 Kings 8:41-43. What do these tell you about whom God welcomed and wanted in His house for worship?

The practice of buying and selling animals was necessary and even customary. However, in the past, these transactions probably took place across the Kidron Valley on the Mount of Olives. By Jesus' time, they are in the court of Gentiles. Specifically, who is this court for? What might be the consequence of using this location for commerce?

Jesus calls the temple "My Father's house" in verse 16. Then in verse 17, John cites Ps. 69:9 speaking of David's zeal for the temple. John is connecting zeal for the temple to Jesus. What is Jesus really zealous for — the building itself, or something the building represents?

Apply: Moral obedience to God's Word was ignored presumably because the Jews lost sight of God's presence and holiness (Isa. 29:13; Jer. 7:9-11). Is this true of you? What constitutes acceptable worship?

Pray: Gracious Lord, forgive me my sins known and unknown. Help me mortify my sins and resist the pride of life and lust of the flesh and eyes. Purify my heart no matter the cost so that I am clean before you and my worship is acceptable in your eyes.

Day 5: **John 2:18–25**

Because the temple was the most sacred point on earth to the Jews, Jesus must negotiate who He is and what He is doing very intentionally. This means the careful presentation of Himself against a backdrop of intense Messianic anticipation and amidst a population of Jewish leaders who have thoroughly corrupted worship of God. These few verses foreshadow judgment on the Jewish leaders and the warped system of worship they created. Jesus flexes His authority by virtue of His identity while catching the attention of the Pharisees—and not in a good way.

This won't be the only time the Jews ask for a sign. See Matt. 12:38; Luke 23:8; 1 Cor. 1:22. Does Jesus ever comply with requests for signs? Do you think even if they saw a sign, they would believe?

How does the temple foreshadow Jesus? How do Jesus' words in verse 19 foreshadow His death and resurrection?

Regarding verses 24-25, can someone believe in God and still not possess saving faith? See James 2:19. What exactly does it mean to believe in Jesus such that the result is saving faith?

Apply: John uses “believe” (Greek, *pisteuo*) 98 times in the Gospel of John. John's purpose statement (John 20:31) reveals why. John's theological focus is to prove Jesus is the Son of God. Belief in John's Gospel is more than merely agreeing with a fact. Paul Tripp writes, “Truth that does not form your lifestyle is probably not truth that is believed...” John wants to emphasize a belief in Christ that is active, continuous, and vital. Does this describe your belief in Christ? Has the truth of the gospel transformed who you are and how you live?

Pray: Merciful Father, “I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24). I confess I am often lukewarm, and my actions do not reflect an “active, continuous and vital trust” in you. I fear I am more worldly than godly. Only by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit will I ever grow in my faith and fully rely on Christ for salvation and every moment thereafter. Help me, Lord.

John 3



Have you heard the saying, “perspective changes everything”? In the passage we are studying this week, we are going to hear from two men who have very different perspectives on who Jesus is. If we could rewrite the quote to match this specific chapter, it would be more accurate to say, “belief changes everything.” Jesus’ message was consistent wherever He went. He was always telling the truth (John 3:3,5,11), yet often the most highly educated people could not understand Him. This week, we will meet Nicodemus, one of those highly educated people, and watch him struggle to understand what seems to us a simple message. In contrast, we will also see John the Baptist’s joy and humble response to the truth of Jesus.

Finally, in the middle of the chapter, we encounter the most popular verse of the entire Bible – John 3:16. This absolutely beautiful and concise statement of God’s demonstrated love is still mind-blowing when we really think deeply on it. Oh, to be Nicodemus and hear those powerful words come from the lips of the living Word for the first time! Can you hear the angels rejoicing in heaven as this amazing message of salvation is delivered to broken humanity? These words of the gospel are so familiar to us and heard so often at church that we may not recognize how they would have sounded to Nicodemus, who was basing his whole life on his works.

Prepared by Faith Cross

Day 1: **John 3:1-15**

Nicodemus, a “teacher of Israel” (verse 10), had questions for Jesus after seeing him perform many miracles in Jerusalem (Jn. 2:23). It is likely, based on Jesus’ response, that Nicodemus was representing a group of religious leaders - not just asking these questions for himself. There is an earnestness to his questioning, a real desire to understand what he is witnessing.

Look at the first two “Truly, truly, I say to you...” statements. What is Nicodemus not seeing and not getting to participate in? Why can’t he?

What does Jesus relate the working of the Spirit to in verse 8? Read Ezek. 37:1-14. This would have been a familiar story to Nicodemus.

Look at the last “Truly, truly, I say to you...” statement (verse 11). Notice the shift in pronouns. Who is the “we” Jesus is referring to? What is the “testimony” they are giving?

Read Num. 21:4-9. What did the Israelites need to do to be healed from the venom in their bodies? How does this relate to what Jesus is saying in verses 14-15?

Apply: All of the book knowledge in the world does not bring the understanding we need for eternal life. Facts do not equal faith. Nicodemus could physically see but was spiritually blind. We all are before the powerful working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Have you heard Jesus’ truth? Are your spiritual eyes open?

Pray: Eph. 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Lord, I thank you for the faith you have gifted to me, which gives me sight in a dark world.

Day 2: **John 3:16-21**

Now we come to the most well-known passage in all the Bible. Jesus had just reminded Nicodemus of the Old Testament story of the Israelites being bitten by snakes. The image draws our minds back to the garden where a serpent infiltrated—man is bitten, sin spreads like venom, and there is only death...then Jesus shares His message of hope.

Read Luke 3:22, Acts 2:23, John 10:18. How do these verses enhance our understanding of John 3:16?

Read Rev. 7:9-10. Who is this message for? Would this have been surprising for Nicodemus? Why?

What words are used in this passage to describe those who believe versus those who do not believe?

Apply: Eternal life, no condemnation, and living in the light...belief in Jesus does so much more than give us quantity of days, it gives us quality of days. Belief in God's great love and Jesus' willing sacrifice transforms us. We had been poisoned and were dead. Now we can experience life as it should have been experienced, before the serpent, fellowshiping with God and displaying His glory.

Pray: "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life: whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 Jn. 5:11-12). Lord, help me to always remember that you gave me the most important gift, the gift of life. And remind me to share this with others.

Day 3: **John 3:22-29**

We transition now to a conversation between one of Jesus' followers, John the Baptist, and a few of his disciples in the countryside. Both Jesus (see Jn. 4:2) and John were baptizing as people repented of their sins. John was an important leader in his followers' eyes, and they were zealous to defend him, but was their zeal misplaced? Carefully read John's responses.

Look at verses 25-26. What concern did John's disciples have? Was their concern for the spiritual condition of those baptized, or for the success of their ministry?

In verses 27-28, where did John say all ministry and abilities come from? What did he remind them of that he had already told them in the past?

What completed John's joy in verse 29? What is his response to this complete joy in verse 30? How does this response mirror Jesus' words about John in John 5:33-36?

Apply: John understood his role in relation to Jesus. He was a lamp in the darkness; Jesus was the light that would overcome the darkness. As the light dawned more brightly, the need for the lamp diminished, and John rejoiced in this! Do we rejoice as Jesus grows brighter in the lives of others? The desire to be needed can be a powerful temptation. We must always check our hearts as we point others to Jesus.

Pray: Lord, "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. For the Lord God is a sun and shield..." (Ps. 84:10). Let me always point to you as I serve because you are the true light of this world.

Day 4: **John 3:31-36**

John has reminded his followers of his previous statements that he is “not the Christ” but one who was sent as a forerunner to Him. John rejoices in his position and desires to be less visible as Jesus becomes more visible. Now we hear John echo much of the conversation Jesus just had with Nicodemus. Read carefully for repeated themes and words from verses 3-13.

In verses 31-32, what is being contrasted? Who is “He who comes from above”? Compare these verses to verses 6 and 12-13.

Compare verses 11 and 32-33. What word is repeated? What is John affirming that Jesus also said?

Compare verses 17-18 with 35-36. What words and themes are echoed in both passages?

Apply: John’s words to his followers reflect much of what Jesus said to Nicodemus. This repetition highlights the major themes of the passage: testimony, belief in Jesus, eternal life/light versus condemnation/darkness. A choice had to be made by the hearers then as it must be made by hearers today. “Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Isa. 53:1).

Pray: Lord, continue to deepen my roots of faith and belief as I think of your amazing love for me. You have revealed yourself; help me to keep my eyes on you and off the distractions of the world.

Day 5: **John 3:1-36**

We have just read about two men who encountered Jesus. Let's take a few moments to compare a few additional details in these parallel passages.

What type of background and knowledge does Nicodemus have? How about John the Baptist?

What had prompted Nicodemus to come to Jesus in the first place (Hint: see Jn. 2:23 and 3:2)? How about John? Why is he a follower of Jesus?

Read John 19:38-42. What can we learn about Nicodemus from this passage? What about John's final days (see Mark 6:14-27)?

Apply: The message of Jesus is constant and true, an unwavering beam of light in a dark world. Are you questioning, skirting the edges of truth, unsure? Or are you stepping out boldly in faith, trusting His light for whatever path you are on, rejoicing as you go?

Pray: "And Jesus cried out and said, 'Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness'" (Jn. 12:44-46). Lord, let me walk boldly, confidently and faithfully in your light for all the days you have given me.

John 4



As chapter 3 concludes with a conflict about baptism and a discourse by John the Baptist, chapter 4 opens with Jesus leaving Judea to go to Galilee by way of Samaria. In this chapter, Jesus will confront the woman at the well about her sin, talk to the disciples about sowing and reaping the seeds of the gospel, and heal an official's son.

The Apostle John continues to give evidence to show that Jesus is the Messiah. Having just recorded John the Baptist's testimony about Jesus' divinity, John further reveals the deity of Jesus through His knowledge of the Samaritan woman and His ability to heal an official's son from afar. Though He is constantly misunderstood by those around Him, Jesus never wavers from His mission of drawing people to Himself for salvation. His work results in a Samaritan revival and a whole household coming to faith after a child is healed. He also continues to draw the disciples into their mission of pointing others to Him as He fulfills His role as Savior of the world—the role He just verbalized in John 3:16.

Prepared by Candi Powers

Day 1: **John 4:1-15**

Jesus takes an intentional detour through Samaria to meet a woman at a well. Though at the beginning of the encounter they seem to be speaking different languages, Jesus is patient and gracious in His interaction with this woman who is so in need of His grace.

What does the text say about Jesus in verse 6? What does that show us about Him?

What does Jesus ask of the woman, and what is her response in verses 7-9? Why did she respond that way?

In verse 10, what did Jesus mean by His response? Write this in your own words.

Apply: Though Jesus was tired and weary from traveling, He takes time with this woman to be patient and kind. We often use bad circumstances and physical needs as an excuse for being unkind, irritable, and impatient. Who are you most tempted to be unkind to? How can you choose to be patient and loving even in bad circumstances?

Pray: Lord, thank you for humbling yourself to be fully human and walk the earth with us. Thank you for setting a perfect example of kindness and patience, even when you were tired and weary. Forgive me when I excuse my irritability and impatience instead of confessing it as sin. Fill me with your Spirit so that I can walk in love toward those around me.

Day 2: **John 4:1-15**

Here the misunderstanding between Jesus and the woman continues as He speaks of the spiritual realm while she is caught up in her physical needs.

In verses 11-12, what is the woman's response to Jesus? How is she misunderstanding what Jesus is saying?

In verses 13-14, what "water" is Jesus referring to? See John 7:37-39 to help with your answer.

What does the woman's response in verse 15 say about her attitude or state of mind?

Apply: This woman was so focused on her physical surroundings and needs that she missed how Jesus was beginning to confront her spiritual needs. Are you so focused on your physical needs and comforts that you are missing out on what Jesus wants you to see in the spiritual realm?

Pray: Father, take my eyes off my physical surroundings and desires. Turn my eyes to consider more often the spiritual realities around me. Open my eyes to see the lost so that I can share the gospel with them. Help me see opportunities to love and serve those around me. Show me more of my sin and need for you. Give me faith to trust your provision for me even when I can't see what you're doing, and walk with me closely so I don't miss what you're telling me through your Word.

Day 3: **John 4:16-30**

As Jesus and the woman continue their conversation, He reveals to her how to have true worship and who the object of her worship should be.

In verse 16, what did Jesus ask the woman to do? Why does he ask her to do this?

What is the woman concerned with regarding worship? How does Jesus describe true worship?

How did the woman respond when Jesus said He was the Messiah? Why do you think she responded that way?

Apply: We often get wrong ideas about what's important in worship, like our clothes, the atmosphere, or who we are around. Here Jesus points us to what we should be focused on. We need to know who we worship and worship Him in spirit and truth, coming to God through His Son and the power of the Spirit. What today is distracting you from true worship?

Pray: Jesus, thank you that you are worthy of all worship. You are forgiving, patient, perfect, and holy. You are above all things in the universe and deserve our worship and praise. Please expose the things in my life that distract me from true worship. Empower me to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Day 4: **John 4:31-44**

When the woman leaves the well to go back to town to tell everyone what happened with Jesus, He redeems the time by having a conversation with His disciples. As the woman returns with the townspeople, many come to salvation because of her witness.

Describe and summarize in your own words what Jesus is saying in verses 34-38.

Why do you think John pauses this story to record Jesus' discourse with His disciples? How does what He says tie into what's going on with the Samaritan woman?

What was the response of the town because of the woman's testimony? See verses 39-42.

Apply: We often get distracted from our true mission of pointing people to Jesus for salvation. Here Jesus was living out the principle of sowing and reaping with the Samaritans, while at the same time leading His disciples to understand that this was their mission, too. Who are you sharing the truth of salvation with this week? Who can you encourage to make evangelism a priority?

Pray: Savior, lift up my eyes to see that the fields are white for harvest — that there are many lost around me that need your salvation. Help me to do your will. Accomplish your work in my life. Let me labor well for your kingdom, rejoicing in the harvest of souls being saved, no matter what my role is in that. Keep me focused on eternity as I encounter those around me.

Day 5: **John 4:46-54**

Again Jesus travels and meets a man in need, and once again, He fulfills His mission of bringing people to salvation by healing a sick child.

Summarize this story in a few sentences below.

Describe the man's faith. How did he show his faith in words and actions? What does the man's question in verse 52 reveal about him?

How did Jesus bless and multiply the man's belief (verse 53)?

Apply: The official had incredible faith. When Jesus said his son would live, he believed Him so much that he left Jesus to return home. What area in your life are you so worried about that you struggle to trust Jesus with it? What words of God do you need to believe so that you can rest in His peace?

Pray: Father, you perfectly keep every promise you've ever made. You can only speak truth. Thank you for the examples of people with great faith that you've given us in your Word. Take away my worry and doubt and increase my faith so that I don't have to see your work to believe that it's happening. Strengthen my faith in you and my trust in your words.

John 5



In chapter 5, we find Jesus again in Jerusalem and again at a feast of the Jews. For chapters 5-10, you can expect to find Him again and again at the Jewish feasts, and as His interactions with the Jewish leaders increase, so will the tension and their animosity toward Him. God originally instituted these feasts as a central part of the life rhythms of the Jewish community to help them remember all that He had accomplished for them when He rescued them from Egypt, provided for them in the wilderness, and brought them safely to Canaan. Yet the ultimate fulfillment of these feasts is the person and work of Christ — His spiritual redemption, provision, and restoration of mankind. So these feasts are an appropriate backdrop for all that Jesus will teach about Himself.

Here in chapter 5, the particular point of contention between Jesus and the Jews is Jesus' healing on the Sabbath. The Jews expect that anyone claiming to be from God will follow the Jewish Sabbath laws, including the additional rules set forth by the Jewish legal authorities. But the Father would have Jesus show mercy and provide rest for weak and weary sinners on His holy day. Jesus chooses the Father's will and joins the Father in His work of salvation and restoration. When the Jews confront Him, Jesus' teaching reveals astonishing truths about His relationship with the Father and His authority over the Sabbath and over all creation.

Prepared by Robin Hall

Day 1: **John 5:1-9**

At the beginning of chapter 5, we find Jesus walking among a multitude of invalids at the Pool of Bethesda (which means “house of mercy”). Although verse 4 is not found in the oldest manuscripts (and thus is not considered Scripture), it does perhaps explain the rumors believed by the desperate invalids regarding the waters found there. However, the miracle that will take place on this day will come not from miraculous waters, but from a merciful Messiah.

Note the setting below. Where is Jesus (city and specific location)? What is taking place in the city?

After noticing one specific invalid and perceiving his situation, what does Jesus ask him? Do you find this question unusual, given the man’s situation?

What obstacle does the man see to his healing? How does Jesus respond?

Apply: The miracles included in the book of John are meant to call our attention to our spiritual condition and Jesus’ ability to save us from that condition. When we see this man who has been an invalid for 38 years, a man unable to help himself to the rumored waters of healing, it should remind us of our own helplessness in saving ourselves (Rev. 3:17-20). We too must decide, “Do [we] want to be healed” by this merciful Messiah?

Pray: Father of mercies, we thank you for seeing our affliction and for sending your Son to bear our iniquities so that we might be healed from the curse of sin. We pray that our church would be a “house of mercy” for the sin-sick and broken, and that we would show mercy to one another as you have shown mercy to us.

Day 2: **John 5:10-18**

“Now that day was the Sabbath” (vs. 9). Rather than rejoicing in God’s provision of rest for the invalid on this special Sabbath, the Jewish leaders chose to “tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear” for him to carry (Matt. 23:4). Their burdens were not physical, but spiritual: man-made rules that made the Sabbath a day of spiritual work rather than a day of rest, as intended by God. But Jesus would take this opportunity to assert His authority over the Sabbath.

Why did the Jewish leaders confront the invalid? And why were they persecuting Jesus?

Where did Jesus next find the invalid? Why is that significant?

Look closely at verses 17 and 18. What do these verses teach about Jesus, the Son, and His Father—including their nature and their work? How do these truths justify Jesus’ actions on the Sabbath?

Apply: The Sabbath was to be a day of rest and worship for the Jews, not a day of work or burden-bearing. The Jewish leaders wanted the invalid to achieve this rest through works-based righteousness. But Jesus offered, and still offers, Himself as the source of true rest through His healing power, His authority, and His work of salvation.

Pray: Father, we were weary and burdened from chasing after right standing with you with our own good works. But you sent Jesus to take our burden of sin and to provide rest for our souls. Help us to rest in you, not only for salvation but in each trial and for our daily growth in righteousness.

Day 3: **John 5:19-24**

Jesus last said, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.” No doubt this statement raised many questions and concerns for His listeners. In today’s passage and the rest of the chapter, Jesus will give more information about this Father-Son relationship as well as the work that each of them is doing. Read carefully, as there is much here to learn about the nature and work of God.

In what way is the Son (Jesus) limited in His works (verse 19)?

In what way is the Son unlimited in His works and relationship with the Father (verses 19-20)?

What specific works do we see in verses 21-23 that the Father and Son share?
What specific work has the Father given to the Son, and why?

Apply: In verses 23-24, we have strong evidence against universalism, the belief that all faiths lead to God. Eternal life is only for those who honor the Son (Jesus), hear His words, and believe the Father who sent Him and speaks through Him. Without faith in the work and person of the Son, there is no salvation.

Pray: Father, we do marvel at the work that has been accomplished through the Son on our behalf! He accomplished everything that you gave Him to do, including humbling Himself to take the form of a servant and dying in our place on the cross, taking the full penalty of our sin. He was raised from the grave and gives us new life. Therefore, we exalt the name of Jesus above all names, to the glory of God the Father.

Day 4: **John 5:25-30**

Jesus' discourse regarding His work and authority continues in today's reading. Here He will further explicate His works of resurrection and judgment. But He speaks these words not to provide fodder for intellectual debate. Rather, they reveal His real power over life and death and foretell His soon division of all people into either an eternity of joy or an eternity of destruction.

What two titles does Jesus use for Himself in these verses? How do these titles speak to His authority (see also Dan. 7:13-14)?

What has the Father granted/given the Son and how do these relate to His role in resurrection and judgment (verses 25-27)?

Notice the scope of the resurrection and judgment mentioned in verses 28-29 (see also Matt. 25:31-46). Who will Jesus raise and judge, and how will He judge them?

Apply: In verse 24, entrance into eternal life appears to be dependent on faith, but here in verse 29, it seems to be attached to good deeds. Which is it? Check out Ephesians 2:8-10 and Titus 3:4-8 to see the relationship between faith and works. Which comes first, and why does that matter?

Pray: "For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our king; he will save us" (Is. 33:22). O God, you alone are our Sovereign, the ruler and judge of all the earth. You are just and righteous in all your works. Yet you are also the one who rescues those who trust in you, so we thank you that you are also kind and merciful in all your ways.

Day 5: **John 5:31-47**

Jesus has unloaded some pretty hefty claims about His identity and authority. Therefore, it is fitting that the final words of His discourse address the trustworthiness of His testimony. Other than His own words, what other witnesses speak to His credibility? Jesus will provide the witnesses, but will the people believe?

Look closely at verses 32-39. List below the several witnesses that Jesus gives that testify to His identity. See also John 1:6-7, 29-34 and Matthew 3:16-17 for more background.

Why does Jesus say these things to them (verse 34)? What is the people's response to Jesus (and to the Father) according to verses 37-44?

What is ironic about the fact that the writings of Moses will accuse and condemn the unbelieving Jews (verses 45-47)?

Apply: Jesus draws a straight line from the writings of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy) to His own ministry and words. Moses specifically speaks of the prophet to come in Deuteronomy 18:15 and warns the people to listen to Him. But there are many other events and truths in these writings that point to Jesus. Can you think of any? Do you ever fall into the trap of setting your attention and hope on the writings of Scripture themselves, yet missing the point of it all?

Pray: Father, as we come to your Word, please give us spiritual eyes to see your truth and your purpose for that truth. Lift the veil so that we may behold the glory of Christ in these holy words and be transformed into His image (2 Cor. 3:14-18).

John 6



If you were brought up going to church, several of the Bible stories you may remember from your younger days are found in John 6. Perhaps you encountered a flannel graph of Jesus feeding the five thousand (Jn. 6:1-15) in Sunday School or learned about Jesus walking on water (Jn. 6:16-21) from VeggieTales. Rather than seeing these as mere children's stories, know there are great truths about the Lord and His character to be mined from these passages. For our study guide focus this week, however, we are going to unpack what Jesus had to say about Himself in the first of seven "I am" statements found in the book of John. By using "I am" in reference to Himself, Jesus is proclaiming His deity. God used these same words to name Himself in Exodus 3:14. To the unbelieving Jews listening to Jesus, His use of God's name coupled with a metaphor to describe Himself was offensive and heretical. But for those in the audience who loved Jesus and believed His teachings, these "I am" statements were further glimpses into the character and purpose of the One sent from heaven to save them. May we be found in this latter group as we study this week.

Prepared by Christy Crowder

Day 1: **John 6:22-34**

After experiencing Jesus' miraculous feeding of five thousand people from just five barley loaves and two fish (vs. 1-14), the crowds following Jesus were eager to see more. Jesus withdrew to be alone but was eventually found. He used His conversation with the crowd to challenge them on their motives and understanding. The crowd's worldly viewpoint and knowledge of Old Testament Scripture served as catalysts for Jesus' explanations about Himself. The prophet the Lord had promised in Deuteronomy 18:15 was here and even greater than Moses (Heb. 3:1-6)!

What was the crowd's motive for seeking Jesus in these verses?

What is standing in the way of the crowd doing the "work of God" that Jesus describes in verse 29?

Read Exodus 16:4, 15. How is Jesus like the bread described in these verses?

Apply: A conversation with Jesus has begun to shift a crowd's understanding of who Jesus is, what He offers, and what He requires. For those who listen and believe what He says, life will never be the same. Are we seeking Jesus, or are we content to fill up on the "loaves" of this world?

Pray: Heavenly Father, give me a hunger for you, for your Word, and for time with your people. Help me to recognize the difference between earthly bread and the true bread from heaven. Forgive me when I insist on settling for less when you have given me everything in Jesus. It is in His name that I come to you.

Day 2: **John 6:35-40**

A prophet like Moses, and yet even greater? Jesus claiming to be the bread from heaven? The crowd listening to Jesus speak was no doubt flabbergasted. But who else has the power to satisfy and save? Who else has been sent from heaven by the Father to raise up those who believe? Only Jesus!

By using “I am” to describe Himself in verse 35, Jesus is claiming the same name God uses for Himself. Read Isaiah 41:4; 43:10, 25. What parallels do you see between God in Isaiah and Jesus in John?

What is the implication for the believer seen in verse 37?

What do verses 39 and 40 say is God’s will for Jesus and those who believe in Him?

Apply: We continually need to fill our stomachs with food. Our next meal is often at the forefront of our minds. Our spiritual “stomachs” need to be filled as well. Are there other sources of “food” that you are seeking to give you eternal life and satisfaction besides Jesus?

Pray: Dear Lord, you are all I need. Not only have you provided for my physical needs, but you have given me yourself—the bread of life. Forgive me when I seek other sources of “food” to give me eternal life and satisfaction. Only Jesus can quench my deepest hunger. It is in His name that I pray.

Day 3: **John 6:41-51**

The crowd was beginning to grumble. This man, who they thought they knew, was making some truly shocking claims. The Jews knew Jesus was born in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph. How, then, could He claim to have come down from heaven? They thought they knew Jesus, but do they really know Him at all?

The Jews in the crowd sound much like the ones in Matthew 13:55-58. What was the outcome of the questioning in that passage?

Read Ephesians 1:3-6. How does what Paul writes align with what Jesus says in verse 44?

While they were in the wilderness, the Lord provided for the Israelites' needs with quail and manna, as referenced by Jesus in verse 49. According to Exodus 16:8 what was the reaction of the Israelites to the Lord's provision for them? How is that similar to today's story?

Apply: Like this crowd, we often equate knowing about Jesus with truly knowing Him. We romanticize the Bible stories and forget that what we have been given in Christ is so much more satisfying. Like eating the manna that falls from the sky, the path to destruction and death is easy (Matt. 7:13). Following Jesus comes with a cost (Luke 9:23-24), but it leads to eternal life. What choice are you making today?

Pray: Heavenly Father, I do not deserve the salvation you offer through your Son. The bread He gave for my life is His flesh, and I often treat it flippantly. Thank you for your patience and grace that allow me to approach you today. Help me to value the sacrifice made on my behalf and to share the good news it makes possible with all those I encounter.

Day 4: **John 6:52-59**

Jesus continued to speak in terms of physical items while teaching about spiritual realities. The crowd of Jews listening to Jesus in the synagogue were shocked by His words. The picture Jesus was painting was appalling to them when taken at face value because the crowd failed to see beyond the temporal to the eternal.

There is a parallel theme to what Jesus is saying as He speaks of eating His flesh and drinking His blood which we celebrate when we partake of the Lord's Supper. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-32, and look for similarities in the two passages.

Jesus, as the Bread of Life, is a new kind of bread for the Jewish listeners. What does 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 say about the old bread and the new bread?

Jesus uses the word “abide” in verse 56 to describe a believer's relationship with Him. Read 1 John 3:24. How does one abide with God?

Apply: Jesus takes the ordinary idea of bread and transforms it into the extraordinary truth of the Bread of Life—that from His very flesh and blood, He saves sinners like us. However, like food left on a plate, we can't be nourished until we partake of what Christ offers. We must believe for ourselves that Jesus died on our behalf, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will return for His people. That is the food that truly nourishes and satisfies forever.

Pray: Dear Lord, help me to fully partake of the extraordinary gift you offer. Your broken body and spilled blood were the only possible sacrifice to pay for my sins. Forgive me when I fail to seek my nourishment from you and therefore have lukewarm faith or no faith at all. May I be found full and satisfied by your love and grace.

Day 5: **John 6:60-71**

The Jews were at their wits' end. They had completely misunderstood Jesus' metaphors of eating His flesh and drinking His blood and were offended by the very idea. None of this, of course, took Jesus by surprise. He knew the heart of every person in attendance before He ever began speaking. By the end of today's passage, we will see who truly believed.

In verse 63, Jesus explains the role of the Spirit in our lives. Read Romans 7:14-25 and note the similarities between what Paul wrote and what Jesus said.

According to 1 Corinthians 2:12-14, what did those who failed to understand Jesus' words lack?

Compare Peter's words in verse 69 with John's similar words in 1 John 4:16. What aspect of God does John add to this concept?

Apply: Peter's words in verse 68 are a great reminder: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." The disciples who turned away and left when the physical benefits of following Jesus were lacking turned away from the Savior of the world and eternal life. Are you turning away from Christ when it doesn't immediately benefit you, or are you continuing to remain steadfast in your faith?

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for your provision. I praise you for all the tangible ways you bless me. I confess it's easier to follow you when things are going well. Please help my faith to remain strong when blessings don't seem so bountiful. I don't want to be like the disciples who stopped following you when it didn't seem to benefit them anymore. I want to be faithful, like you. I thank you for your Word and all the reminders of your faithfulness found in it. Give me the desire to study it diligently that I may grow in my trust of you.

John 7



Coming off the amazing, miracle-filled chapter 6, Jesus' claim to be the Christ and Son of God seems to have been clearly demonstrated. However, even though so much truth is on display, there is still so much unbelief in the hearts of the people, even in those closest to Jesus. Chapter 7 is loaded with questions and accusations meant to expose Jesus as a fraud. Each of these provides a chance for Jesus to fulfill the will of God, bring further clarity to His purpose, and give ample opportunity to those who would truly believe.

Chapter 7 is a dividing line. While this chapter reminds us that Jesus' time "had not yet come" (vs. 5-8), it portrays a growing understanding of what it means to believe in Jesus. John continues to explore the stark contrast presented in chapter 6 between Peter's confession and Judas's eventual betrayal. In chapter 7, belief in Jesus is not mere mental assent to the facts but public identification with Him. The reader is left to choose. Do you believe in Jesus, and what will you do about it?

Prepared by Jase Brown

Day 1: **John 7:1-13**

The suggestion given here by Jesus' family is almost accusatory. It rings similar to statements made by others throughout John's Gospel who seek proof of Jesus' status by demanding a sign. However, making some grand spectacle is not on the Lord's agenda. The Father is always working out His perfect plan, and Jesus sees through the folly of His brothers. Their faithless attempts aim to force their own desired outcomes.

While John does not include the temptation of Jesus in his narrative, how does today's story relate to Matthew 4:5-7?

What does "time" mean in this passage — time for what? What does this tell you about the sovereignty of God and the purpose of Jesus?

In verses 11-13, there are many mixed opinions and desired outcomes concerning Jesus. Why would John include these details? What decision is he pushing you, the reader, to make?

Apply: In our hearts, we can often be fickle and forgetful. We claim to know God, His sovereign control, and His gracious care. Yet we run ahead of Him and attempt to fulfill what we think is best. Instead, we should believe in the goodness of God and trust His plan in all things.

Pray: Father, we pray that our hearts would be open and ready to walk in faith alongside you regardless of whether we know the next steps or not. May we be a living sacrifice for your glory.

Day 2: **John 7:14-24**

Those in the temple marveled at Jesus' teaching since it came with such wisdom. To the unbelieving crowd, Jesus says that those who seek the will of God will know that Jesus' testimony is true. Jesus then defends His Sabbath miracle using an argument from lesser to greater (vs. 22-23), namely that His ministry points to the complete salvation of the whole person.

According to verse 17, which comes first: knowledge of God or submission to God? What are the implications for us as we seek to know God more?

What is Jesus' point in verse 18? Why not just say "I know so much because I'm literally God"?

How does Jesus compare His ministry to the law of Moses? How do you think the original audience understood this comparison?

Apply: Jesus is very clear about the connection between our knowledge of God and our submission to Him. The path to knowing God is to first align your will with His will. Then we will learn what it means to "judge with right judgment."

Pray: Father, your ways are right and true. We ask you to continue to reveal yourself to us and help us obey your will. May our hearts always be in tune with yours.

Day 3: **John 7:25-31**

This section hinges on the crowd's response to Jesus. Thus far, in chapters 6 and 7, John has been focused on Jesus' identity; but from here on, the emphasis is on the main two responses people have to this revelation. The majority of the crowd is angry since Jesus just straight up tells them, "You don't know God," and they seek to arrest Him. The other reaction is to simply believe.

How much of the statement in verses 25-27 is true? How does this illustrate the point from yesterday in verse 17?

John reiterates, "His hour had not yet come." Why bring this concept back up at this point? What is John highlighting?

The book of John never uses the word "miracle." Instead, he uses "sign" (verse 31). What is the difference between a miracle and a sign? How does that fit with John 20:30-31?

Apply: Every day, we have the same choice before us that this crowd did. Will we turn away from Jesus in our own pride and autonomy, or will we humbly believe His Word and seek His will? John brings us to a decision point. Dedicate your way to the Lord, and don't look back.

Pray: Jesus, we believe that your testimony is true and that you hold all things in your hand. I pray as I recommit myself to you, that you would strengthen me through the power of the Spirit and continue to shape me to be more like yourself.

Day 4: **John 7:32-39**

Again we see that the people don't understand because they don't believe. But the focus in this section is the call for anyone to come and drink. Jesus' statement isn't a one-to-one quote of an Old Testament Scripture, but rather a summation of many references to living water and the coming of the Spirit (Ex. 17:1-7; Isa. 55:1; Prov. 4:23; Zech. 14:15-16, the last of which was read on the first day of this festival).

What is ironic about the Pharisees' misunderstanding of where Jesus was going? (Cross-reference this with John 12:20).

What words in verses 37-39 tell us that Jesus' invitation is for all?

Do you remember what it was like for you the first time you believed the gospel? Would you describe it as filling a lifelong thirst? How does this help you understand the task of evangelism?

Apply: Jesus is the only oasis in a parched wilderness of spiritual death. John is consistently showing us our need for life in the Son. Likewise, John continues to champion the availability of Jesus' overflowing grace of eternal life for any who would believe. We are to carry this free gift as His witnesses to those around us so that they too may experience "rivers of living water."

Pray: Lord, I pray that you would refresh me with your living water. May my service to you be an overflow of the joy of my salvation.

Day 5: **John 7:40-53**

The final bit of confusion is aired, and at this point, it seems like for those who want to believe, ample evidence is available, but for those who don't want to believe, any excuse will do. Nicodemus, however, is willing to go against the rest of the Pharisees and put himself at risk to stick up for Jesus.

It appears that some of the crowd simply lacked factual knowledge about Jesus in order to believe (verse 42). Similar to yesterday, what does this tell you about the task of evangelism?

Yet for the Pharisees it seems like no fact will sway their opinion. What do the Scriptures expect from us in regard to someone this hard-hearted?

What is Nicodemus at risk of losing in order to stick up for Jesus? How is this reaction different than all others in this chapter?

Apply: Our task of glorifying God to the watching world will take many different forms. And each of us has a different “crowd” to which we have been sent to proclaim the gospel. Our job, then, is just as much to listen as it is to proclaim. Each lost friend or family member is struggling with some barrier to belief. While the message doesn't change, our approach will shift based on where the lack of belief lies.

Pray: Lord, I pray first that you help me see and love people the way you do. Please give me spiritual insight and wisdom as to how I can approach each person with the gospel based on their individual barriers to belief. In all things, may I bring glory to you through my witness and trust you to work in each heart according to your will.

John 8



The Feast of Tabernacles had ended but Jesus continued to teach in the temple. During the feast, word spread quickly that Jesus was openly teaching in the temple (Luke 21:37-38). He was teaching in the treasury in the temple court, but “no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come” (Jn. 8:20). The scribes and Pharisees knew where He would be, so they hatched their scheme.

Jesus found Himself again in conflict with the Jewish religious leaders, but this time they set a trap for Him, hoping to get enough evidence to arrest Him and get Him out of the way. But their plot failed and controversy followed. In John 8, we see a series of contrasts that reveal the grace of God and the wickedness of man.

Prepared by Jamie O'Brien

Day 1: **John 8:1-11**

In today's passage, we see that the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery and set her in the center of the court (verse 3). They said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" (verse 4-5). Continue reading and watch their trap backfire.

Read Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22. Were the scribes and Pharisees correct about the Law of Moses? What did the Law of Moses require? What did the Pharisees leave out?

Instead of passing judgment on the woman, who did Jesus pass judgment on? Who left first after Jesus said, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (verse 7)?

Why didn't Jesus chastise the woman for her sin (verses 10-11)? Did Jesus address the woman's adultery?

Apply: The woman was morally and legally guilty of sin, but Jesus is morally and legally perfect. God deals with guilty sinners on the basis of the grace and truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. This story beautifully illustrates John 1:17, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." The scribes and Pharisees judged this woman according to the Law, which clearly condemned her. Jesus showed her both grace and truth.

Pray: Dear Father, like this adulterous woman, I, too, have sinned and am deserving of death. Please forgive me, Lord, for you are faithful and just to do so. Thank you for the grace, mercy, and love you have bestowed upon me. I am so grateful that I am forgiven by my Savior, Jesus Christ.

Day 2: **John 8:12-30**

We saw yesterday the story of the woman caught in adultery who was brought before Jesus in the treasury of the temple. It was in this setting that Jesus made this astounding claim: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (verse 12). The Lord’s statement corresponded to the Feast of Tabernacles, during which the large candelabra was lit in the temple to remind the people of the pillar of fire that had guided Israel in their wilderness journey. As we walk through today’s passage, how does Jesus demonstrate that He is indeed the light of the world?

What does Jesus’ claim to be the light of the world reveal about God, and what does it reveal about us (see also 1 John 1:5)?

In verse 13, the Pharisees said to Jesus, “You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true.” In the following verses (verses 14-30), what testimony did Jesus offer, and what was their response?

Read Isaiah 60:19-20 and Revelation 21:23-24. How might these verses relate to Jesus’ statement: “I am the light of the world?”

Apply: Jesus’ claim to be the light of the world demands that you respond by following Him. To follow Jesus means to trust Him as Savior and Lord. When we follow Jesus as the light, we have the promise of His presence, His protection, and His guidance.

Pray: Dear Jesus, you are the light of the world, and in you, there is no darkness at all. Help me to walk in the light as you are in the light. Lord, I thank you that in you we have fellowship with one another and that your blood has cleansed us from all sin.

Day 3: **John 8:31-36**

As chapter 8 progresses, we see Jesus give the stubborn Jews both a warning and an invitation. After saying they are slaves to sin (verse 34), He gives them a warning: “The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever” (verse 35). He’s telling them that, as descendants of Abraham, they think they are sons, but they are actually still enslaved to sin. Slaves don’t enjoy the full privileges of sons. In today’s passage, how does Jesus explain the contrast between freedom and slavery?

According to verses 31-32, what are the results of abiding in Christ’s word and knowing the truth?

Describe the spiritual bondage that Jesus speaks of in verses 34-35.

What good news does Jesus give us in verse 36?

Apply: True freedom comes from knowing Christ through genuine faith, which means abiding in His word. The mark of true faith is to continue (or “abide”) in Jesus’ word. This is not the condition for getting saved; rather, it’s evidence that you are truly saved and that your faith in Christ is genuine.

Pray: Dear Father God, thank you for sending your Son to be my Savior. Thank you, Lord, that in Christ Jesus I have been set free from the slavery of sin and death. By faith in Christ, I have truly been made free to become the person you created me to be to your glory.

Day 4: **John 8:37-47**

In today's passage, we see the Jewish leaders who claimed to belong to Abraham but were very unlike Abraham. For one thing, they wanted to kill Jesus. But Abraham was the "friend of God" and followed with Him in love (Isa. 41:8). Abraham listened to God's truth and obeyed Him, while these religious leaders rejected the truth. So they rejected Jesus.

Why did the Jews say, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father— even God" (Jn. 8:41)? What are they denying?

There's a debate going on here over the word "father." How does Jesus identify Himself in this passage (verse 38)? How do the Jewish leaders identify themselves?

How does Jesus identify the unbelieving Jews (verse 44)? Why does Jesus make this claim?

Apply: The Jewish leaders trusted in their religion (Abraham's lineage and their laws). They thought they knew God, but what they lacked was a true knowledge of and relationship with God. True children of God love Jesus and obey His Word because they have been born of God.

Pray: Dear Father, thank you that I am a child of God. I pray that you would keep me from the sin of pride and unbelief. Help me to walk in Jesus moment by moment and to be ready to give an answer for the hope within me.

Day 5: **John 8:48-59**

Only Jesus Christ could speak words like this. There was not a person that could convict Jesus of a single sin. There was no defect in His character; He was perfect in all His ways. He spoke only words of truth, yet they refused to believe Him. So what did they do? They attacked His character (verse 48). They dishonored Him, but Jesus honored the Father. Christ had made it abundantly clear that it was impossible to honor the Father without honoring the Son (Jn. 5:23). They were seeking their own glory, but Christ was seeking to glorify the Father.

As you read through this passage, reflect on how it refers to all the revelation God granted to Abraham concerning the coming Messiah and His death on the cross (Gen. 12:1-3; 14:18; 17:16-17; 22:1-18; Heb. 11:17-19).

How did Jesus respond to the personal insults and accusations of the Jewish leaders (verses 48-51)? How did they respond to Jesus' warning and invitation (verse 52)?

How did Jesus respond to their claims that no one could be greater than their father Abraham, who, along with the prophets, had died (verses 54-56)?

How does Jesus clearly proclaim His deity (verse 58; see also Ex. 3:14)? How did the Jewish religious leaders respond (verse 59)?

Apply: Just as Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus' coming day, so we can rejoice to see the day of His second coming. How can we cultivate that hope? What difference should it make in our lives?

Pray: Dear Jesus, I believe that you are the great "I am," the Son of God, who came and died for my sins and set me free from the shackles of sin and death. Abraham rejoiced to see your day. I rejoice to see the day when you return in power and glory. Come, Lord Jesus, come, Amen!

John 9



Controversy continues around the identity of Jesus. Yet He is gracious to repeatedly reveal Himself. Jesus first gives physical sight to a man born blind. This miracle is the sixth sign recorded in John, proving that Jesus is Christ. He literally is “the light of the world” (Jn. 8:12). Jesus uses physical sight to point onlookers to their need to receive spiritual vision.

There are two possible responses to this miracle and to who Jesus is—belief or disbelief. We first witness the belief of the man born blind, the result of an amazing transformation. He refers to Jesus as “the man called Jesus,” then as a “prophet” and a “man...from God,” and finally as “Lord” (Jn. 9:11, 17, 33, 38). He believes and worships. In contrast, the Pharisees deny that the miracle reveals Jesus as Messiah. They exemplify the heart of people who reject evidence before their eyes, refuse to be exposed by the light, and revel in sinful darkness (Jn. 1:9-11, 3:19-21).

God’s power is evident in physical and spiritual restoration. We should look in awe of God’s grace as He gifts spiritual understanding and salvation.

Prepared by Jake and Julia Siegwart

Day 1: **John 9:1-7**

Effects of sin have been evidenced in our bodies since Genesis 3. At times Scripture applies a direct connection between personal sin and suffering. Other times, what we go through is just a consequence of living in a fallen world. Jesus was sent by the Father to bring light and life to a world ravaged by sin. By healing the blind man, Jesus was not only able to bring new life to the man but also shine a light on who He truly is to those around them. The miracle serves as a physical example for a spiritual lesson to come later in the chapter.

What do the disciples assume about the man or his parents, and how does Jesus respond?

From verses 4-7, what “works” is Jesus doing? What does He use?

Scripture gives us “the why” behind Jesus’ work. According to verses 3-5, what is the purpose for the blindness and healing?

Apply: An ultimate purpose in our suffering, sickness, or sorrow is the glory of God. His works will be illuminated in our trial. We must trust that God will be faithful to both use our difficulties to shine His light to an unbelieving world, and to make us more like Jesus through His transforming presence.

Pray: Father, many times I don’t understand the details of “why.” You are kind and patient to continually teach me about you. Please help me look beyond my circumstances and trust that your purposes are good and for my good. Though my flesh and my heart may fail, God, you are my strength, and I am content in you forever (Ps. 73:26).

Day 2: **John 9:8-13**

Shortly after the man born blind receives his sight, his neighbors offer only questioning confusion and an escorted walk to the Pharisees. The miracle has now turned the once-blind man into a living testimony to his community, illuminating the identity of Jesus. The words “received my sight” remind observers and readers alike that this restoration was an unearned free gift, imagery that Jesus will elaborate on.

Imagine you were the man born blind. If this miracle happened to you, what response would you expect from those who know you? Is that reaction recorded in today’s verses?

What is the initial response by some of the neighbors according to verse 9?

Did the man born blind need to pay or repay Jesus for his sight?

Apply: God places His marvelous works right before our eyes, and we often miss or even dismiss them. They are gifts to grow our faith. May we be sensitive to God’s work in the lives of people and acknowledge how we daily receive His grace.

Pray: Father, every good and perfect gift is received from you (Jas. 1:17). May I not overlook or minimize your goodness. I pause and acknowledge that you are my provider. I am grateful and dependent upon your care.

Day 3: **John 9:13-23**

The Pharisees verbally try the man and his parents. They are focused on keeping man-made rules about the Sabbath. Any mixing of a powder and liquid (in this case making mud) was prohibited work according to the Pharisees. They miss the point of the miracle in front of them and of the Sabbath, both of which were intended to turn their hearts toward God. As prophesied in Isaiah 6, Acts 28:26-27 reminds us, "...you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull...and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes... and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them."

Review the context by rereading John 5:15-18. From John 5 and 9, what are the Pharisees' accusations against Jesus? And what is the tone surrounding these situations?

List the words that people use to describe Jesus in John 9:16-17.

Look at the parents' response to the Jewish leaders (vs. 20-23). What emotions and concerns led them to make this response?

Apply: As Christians, we have much to praise God for. He cares deeply and tangibly for His people and opens our eyes to understand, so we may believe and confess that Jesus is Lord. What circumstances in your life make it challenging to confess Christ publicly? How can you overcome them?

Pray: Father, thank you for revealing yourself to me in your Word. I'm grateful that I need not fear the future. There is security in you. Great are you, Lord, and worthy of praise! You are God over creation (Ps. 96:4-5). You made us, you made our eyes, you made the mud, and you have the power to make us see. May I daily look for and rejoice in your mighty works.

Day 4: **John 9:24-34**

Here we witness the Jewish leaders' second verbal trial of the man born blind. Following the first series of questions, the leaders assume the man is guilty of lying since they have judged Jesus as a sinner. They use Old Testament language (Josh. 7:19 and Jer. 13:15-16) to call on the blind man to confess and repent of his sin, asking him to deny Jesus. The Pharisees are dissatisfied with the evidence before them. They refuse to believe and give God glory; they still fail to understand that "if you believed Moses, you would believe me [Jesus]; for he wrote of me" (John 5:46).

Note the repetition of the word "know." What does the blind man know? What knowledge do the leaders boast in?

What evidence and conclusion are offered by the man in verses 25 and 30-33?

Reread verse 34. What do the leaders forget about their own identity and past? What does their attitude reveal about their hearts?

Apply: This miracle is a statement about who Jesus is—sinless God. Likewise, the whole Bible is truth about who God is and what He does. We have a choice to take God at His Word or elevate our own idolatrous thinking instead. God desires us to intimately know Him and worship Him in truth.

Pray: Father, may I be quick to hear you in your Word and believe you. And may I, with humble gratitude, acknowledge that all the knowledge I have is a gift from you. You have "shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

Day 5: **John 9:35-41**

Physical sight is used as a metaphor for spiritual sight or blindness, spiritual belief or unbelief. Jesus shines His light on the sinful hearts of His hearers. The Pharisees have Old Testament prophecy pointing to Jesus as the Christ, and Jesus is revealing Himself before them. With all their knowledge, these leaders claim to be able to see; however, it's impossible in their prideful blindness for them to truly see. Their responses to the foretold Son of Man reveal their hearts. For "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (Jn. 3:18).

Read Matthew 15:8-9, 14. Though the Pharisees claim to spiritually lead the people, what does Jesus declare about them?

According to John 9:39, why did Jesus come and what will be the two responses to Him?

Contrast the response of the man born blind with the response of the Pharisees.

Apply: Sin blinds those who have not yet accepted God's free gift of salvation. Sinful hearts lie and say, "I can do it on my own." The Holy Spirit is kind to use Scripture to give spiritual understanding and to bring conviction of sin. A Christian's response is to humbly repent, believe, and worship the Son of Man.

Pray: Thank you for opening my eyes, for being my light and my salvation (Ps. 27:1). I pray for those around me who do not yet know you. Help them realize that they can't earn their way to a relationship with you. Use me to shine the light and grace of your gospel in our conversations.

John 10



Jesus has been using various Jewish festivals to demonstrate to the world who He is. With Passover approaching (The Feast of Unleavened Bread), Jesus miraculously feeds the crowd and gives the first of His “I am” statements. While they celebrate the remembrance of God’s abrupt deliverance out of Egypt, Jesus shows them that He, in fact, is the Bread of Life that has come to deliver them from their bondage to sin (Jn. 6:35). During the Feast of Booths, a celebration marked by its use of water and light, Jesus shouts to those who would hear to come to Him for eternal refreshment of thirst through the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39) and gives his next “I am” statement that He is the light of the world (Jn. 8:12). Jesus then heals a blind man that is subsequently cast out of the temple by the Pharisees like a sheep left to wander. We will see Jesus revealing to us more about who He is with the “I am” statements continuing in chapter 10. Jesus tells us “I am” the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:11) who lays His life down for His sheep and takes it back up again.

Prepared by Daniel Brooker

Day 1: **John 10:1-6**

In today's passage, we see Jesus interacting with the same group that had cast out the blind man from the temple in last week's study. The Pharisees are confronted with their own spiritual blindness as Jesus continues to reveal eternal truths about Himself which He illustrates with a metaphor. The very same Pharisees that readily say with their lips that God is the Shepherd of Israel are the ones with their hearts far from the Good Shepherd standing right in front of them.

Take a moment to write down the characters of this “figure of speech” that Jesus is using to teach us about Himself. What are the defining actions of the characters, and what does this teach us about God, others, and ourselves?

How should the sheep react when “strangers” try to lead them? What implications might this have for stranger, sheep, and shepherd?

Why is it so important that the sheep know the Shepherd's voice?

Apply: Every day we are thrust into a world full of spiritual thieves, robbers, and strangers. They're on the radio, television, social media, in our schools and workplaces calling out to us with false messages. To ensure we follow the right voice calling out, there's no substitute for knowing the Shepherd's voice. Those who belong to God should regularly train themselves to hear His voice through His Word. How are you training your ears to hear and your mind to discern His voice today?

Pray: Jesus, I thank you for being able to walk through the door of the gatekeeper to call us out. Without your sacrifice and Spirit, I would not be able to hear you or follow you. Help me today to listen carefully to your calling. Not just that I would hear you, but that I would listen and obey you as well.

Day 2: **John 10:7-21**

Today, Jesus will reveal more of Himself to us through the shepherd metaphor by turning the sacrificial nature of the sheep and shepherd on its head. Sheep were repeatedly used to sacrifice for the sins of the common day shepherds during the Old Testament sacrificial system. However, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in order to usher us into His wonderful grace, will be the sacrifice which is laid down for the sheep to bring everlasting peace between sinful man and a Holy God.

Jesus' next "I am" statement is "I am the door." What spiritual truths is Jesus teaching us here in relation to salvation and entering God's kingdom?

Many will claim that to follow God, you must put away fun and pursue a life of deprivation. How does verse 10 combat this view? What other verses in the Bible also help us contest this falsehood?

How can a dead shepherd take care of his sheep? According to these verses, do believers ever have to worry that Jesus would leave them to fend for themselves? How would this comfort a once blind man who received his sight and was then cast out from the temple?

Apply: We all yearn to belong to something. Our need to belong comes from how God created us to belong to Him. Have you entered through the door and become a member of His flock? If you have entered through the door, take this time to praise God for all He has done for you! If not, lay down the distractions and come to God, through Christ, so you too can belong to Him.

Pray: Father I pray that you reveal to me the motives of my longings. Show me that I can never fill these God-shaped holes with things of this world. Thank you for your Son and His perfect life. Thank you for never leaving me.

Day 3: **Psalm 23:1-4**

Today we will compare what we've learned about Jesus, our Good Shepherd, with one of David's well-known Psalms. This hymn is regularly used to comfort those who have been impacted with the loss of a loved one. While it does stand to bring us comfort in those times, it's also a wonderful reminder to us that God is our constant Shepherd in everyday life.

Connect what you've learned in John 10 so far with David's use of the personal words "my," "I," and "me." What implications does this reveal to you?

As a sheep, how are you able to lie down in green pastures? How does Jesus provide this according to John 10?

What is the purpose for Jesus being your Shepherd who leads, guides, and restores? How (and why) does God intend to display the glory of His grace through those He saves?

Apply: So often our ability to find rest and be restored is rooted in the wrong things. Entire industries of sleep aids, self-help books, and vacation properties exist to attempt to give people temporary breaks that never seem to satisfy. David felt the benefits of the Shepherd because that's where his focus was. What are you focusing on to find rest and restoration? What focus changes do you need to put in place to find true rest?

Pray: Jesus, when you grab a hold of my heart and change it, I find that I lack nothing. You created me to need rest daily so that I would depend on you and cling closely to you. Restore me. Go before me today and remind me continually with your Spirit that you have a perfect will all sorted out for my life so that I may find peace during my tasks and responsibilities. Praise you for being so good to me!

Day 4: **John 10:22-30**

Fast-forward a couple months, and we find today's verses taking place during the Feast of Dedication, an eight-day festival that is now called Hanukkah. This celebration remembers the time in between the Old and New Testaments when the Jewish people recaptured and cleansed the temple after it had been occupied and desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes. The "snatching away" of the temple would represent the removal of God's presence from His people. Amid these celebrations, God will proclaim to the world a new temple (Jesus) will be ushered into history to replace the temple they are celebrating. Forgiveness for sins will not be available through a building but through the Messiah.

While the gathered crowds were asking Jesus to "tell them plainly" that he is the anointed one from God, Jesus indicates that He had already told them (Jn. 5:17-18). What does this reveal about the motive(s) behind their questioning?

What do you learn about God's judgment from the fact that Jesus condemns them not based on their deeds but instead based on their unbelief?

Jesus (speaking of unity and not identity) answers plainly in verse 30. Judging by the reaction in verse 31, what does Jesus mean by saying He and the Father are one?

Apply: At times when you are surrounded by unbelievers, you may fear hostility toward your belief. Let the example and words of Jesus show us that we can be bold in our proclamation of the truth. Jesus knows who His sheep are and commands us to be His ambassadors imploring the world to be reconciled to God. Who will God put before you today to share Christ with?

Pray: God, thank you for being so bold in your declaration to a hostile world that forgiveness of sin is available to all through belief in your Son. Help me today to see who I should share this message with and give me boldness to face hostility like Jesus did.

Day 5: **John 10:31-42**

It's a common situation, as old as man himself. When an argument can't be won, the wrong party often resorts to tearing down the person they have no answer for. As we close this week in John 10, we will see mixed reactions. Some will resort to reaching for stones. Others will hear and believe. As Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

When Jesus is confronted with danger, He doesn't run but instead lets Scripture do the talking. Read Psalm 82 which Jesus is quoting in today's verses. What do you learn about God vs. gods and how does it apply to Jesus' interaction with those who want to stone Him?

Jesus reveals the great truth that the Scriptures cannot be broken. Why is this such a foundational pillar of the Christian faith?

Once again, Jesus emphasizes that He has been set apart and sent into the world. What Bible verses tell us about the purposes for which Jesus came? Take time to find them, write them here, and meditate on all Jesus came to do for you (Hint: Jn. 10:10-11 is a good place to start).

Apply: To quote George H. Morrison, "We are so apt to think that special service is only given to very special people, that great tasks are not for common folk but for men of wonder-working gifts. And the beautiful lesson of our text is this, that though you may have no power to do a miracle, for you, too, there is a special service — something that only you can do; something that won't be done unless you do it; something the world needs, which you and you only can supply." God has given each of us a special assignment. John the Baptist completed his and many believed (verses 41-42). What about you?

Pray: Father, thank you for showing me all Jesus is to me this week in your Word. Like John the Baptist, help me proclaim to many the truth about your Son. I trust you to do the work of salvation that only you can do.

John 11



“Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’”

Many of us at some point in our lives have prayed earnestly that the Lord might spare a loved one from suffering or death. I would prefer that my loved ones remain with me forever, but that is not God’s plan. As we look at the meaning of “death” in the Bible, we learn that death is essentially a separation of some form. The Bible speaks primarily of two types of separation: of the soul from the body, and of man from God. The first is inevitable; we all die. But Jesus Christ paid for our sins by His death that in Him we might live forever. For those who trust in Jesus, there is no second death. He is the source of life! As we study this chapter, put yourself in the place and time of Martha and Mary. They both had a relationship with Jesus and believed in Him as the prophesied Messiah as far as their faith and minds would allow. Their understanding of their Lord would grow, but at this point, Martha had hoped that Jesus would come before Lazarus died so that He might heal him. She was looking for a one-time miracle, but Jesus had a greater answer. Can you imagine Jesus lovingly looking into Martha’s eyes and saying, “But Martha, I am the resurrection and the life?” He is the One by whom all who believe may live forever.

Prepared by Chuck Bounds

Day 1: **John 11:1-16**

Today we read the introduction to a fascinating story about Jesus, His disciples, and His personal friends. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were some of Jesus' closest friends. Lazarus became critically ill and his sisters sent word to Jesus that he was at death's door. When we get news like this about someone very close to us, we know it means, "Come quickly." Jesus' reaction to the news was not what everyone expected. At first glance, one might think He was indifferent or cold-hearted, but He always followed His Father's plan with complete obedience. This would turn out to be the ultimate teachable moment!

Read verses 1-3 and 5. List some words or phrases that you feel describe the relationships between Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and Jesus.

Read verse 4 several times. Try to put yourself in the place of one of Jesus' disciples. How do you suppose you would have interpreted His reaction to the news of Lazarus' illness?

Read verses 6-16. The disciples reasoned that it was too dangerous for Jesus (and themselves) to go to Judea where Lazarus lived because of death threats from the Jews. Look again at verse 4 and 15. What are the two reasons Jesus gave His disciples for delaying His visit to Bethany?

Apply: The disciples had the privilege of being personally taught by Jesus. We are so very privileged to have God's Word which tells us all about our Savior, His love for us, and His power to save us. He is worthy of our trust and devotion. And He is worthy of our praise.

Pray: Lord Jesus, thank you that you are always in control and that you have a plan for my life. Help me to know your Word so that I may follow you faithfully. I love you; thank you for loving me!

Day 2: **John 11:17-27**

In our study today we are looking into a conversation between two close friends, Martha and Jesus. Martha was the hard-working, practical, and responsible sister. Martha was first to greet Jesus as He was approaching their home. She said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." She had witnessed Jesus healing the sick. She called Him "Lord." Her words showed great faith, but Martha had more to learn about her Lord.

Read verse 17. John tells us that by the time Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days. Why is this fact important to the narrative?

Read verses 18-22. What do you think Martha expected from Jesus? Did she have any thought that Jesus might raise Lazarus from the dead?

In verses 23-27 Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" What was Martha's answer? Do you agree with Martha? Do you believe this?

Apply: Martha believed that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus' death. Jesus challenged her to trust Him for eternal life. Trusting Jesus for eternal life begins at the moment we believe and lasts forever. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

Pray: Dear Jesus, thank you for saving me! Lead me by your Holy Spirit to live daily with an eternal perspective, knowing that I am forever a child of God.

Day 3: **John 11:28-37**

From the Scriptures, we clearly see that Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, both God and man. (see Luke 1:30-33; Matt. 1:18-23; 1 John 4:2) While looking at His miraculous life, we may tend to see Him as more God than man. In today's passage, John takes us into the personal life of Jesus, showing us His humanity, while at the same time amazing us with His God-ness. What an amazing Savior who identifies with us completely and has the power to forgive us and give us eternal life.

Read verses 28-32. When Martha told Mary that Jesus had come, how did Mary respond?

Compare verse 21 with verse 32. Martha and Mary said the same thing to Jesus when they approached Him. Describe the differences between these two initial encounters with Jesus.

Read verses 32-37. Jesus reacted differently to Mary than He did to Martha. Verse 5 tells us that He loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Describe Jesus' emotions and briefly reflect on why you think Jesus reacted as He did.

Apply: Jesus was always genuine, never pretentious, with everyone. Here we see His emotions, His passion, His empathy for His friends. Martha seemed to suppress her feelings while Mary was emotional and expressive. Jesus knew that Lazarus would die, and He knew that He would raise Lazarus to life, yet He grieved and wept with them. Jesus was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3). Praise be to God, He loved us enough to conquer death for us!

Pray: We praise you, Lord Jesus, for knowing us so well. Thank you for feeling our pain and for taking our sin upon yourself. Thank you for being our Savior so that, through you, we may have eternal life.

Day 4: **John 11:39-44**

In today's passage, we come to the climax of the amazing story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. From verse 1 to this point, no one seemed to understand what Jesus had been telling them about this event that would bring glory to God and to Himself as the Son of God. Just a short few minutes earlier, Martha had confessed that she believed in the resurrection, but she clearly wasn't expecting a resurrection on this day.

Read verses 38-39. What do you suppose Martha thought when Jesus told them to take the stone away from the tomb? Did she have any hope that her brother would live again?

Read verses 40-42. From this example of Jesus' prayer, write a couple of things that we may learn about prayer and about Jesus.

Read verses 43-46. "Seeing is believing." There were many who had seen Jesus do other miraculous things, but they had not seen Him bring someone back to life. After this event, many more believed that He was God's Son, but others were still skeptical about who He was and what had happened. What are some reasons people give today for refusing to believe in Jesus?

Apply: Imagine the few seconds between when Jesus said, "Lazarus, come out" and when he actually appeared wrapped in grave cloth. Did anyone expect Lazarus to come out? In this passage, we see that God the Father heard Jesus' prayer. Jesus clearly prayed aloud to teach His disciples that He truly was the Son of God. When Lazarus came out, God the Father and Jesus, God's Son, were glorified. How should this impact what we believe about Jesus and how we pray?

Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the privilege of prayer. That you, the King of kings and Lord of lords, would love me and call me your own is the most wonderful thought. Teach me to trust as I pray and help me to expect that you will do great things.

Day 5: **John 11:45-57**

Today's passage returns to the corruption of the Jewish religious establishment. It is quite a switch from disciples of Jesus who love and trust in Him. Jesus showed everyone the glory of God by raising Lazarus from the dead. He demonstrated that He is the Son of God. The Pharisees, however, were blind to the truth of Jesus the Messiah. Their hard hearts moved them to envy and plan to murder Jesus. As you finish this week's study, look for parallels between the Pharisees' hatred of Jesus and the animosity toward Christianity today.

Read verses 45-48. What was driving the anger and animosity of the Jewish leaders?

Read verses 49-52. In verses 50-52, Caiaphas prophesied about Jesus dying for the people. Do you think Caiaphas was aware of the implications of this prophecy?

Read verses 53-57. God's plan of salvation was set in motion. Prophecy was being fulfilled. Read Isaiah 53:1-12. Comparing these two passages, write down which verses in Isaiah's prophecy match today's passage.

Apply: Jesus is the Messiah of prophecy, and He is the Son of God who became our Savior. This eternal truth of Scripture was in the mind of God long before Caiaphas and long before Isaiah (2 Tim. 1:9-10). And it is the pillar of our hope and the foundation of our lives.

Pray: Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for your obedience to the Father's plan. Thank you for paying for my sin so that I may have eternal life. Lead me to show others the truth of your Word, that they may find this same steadfast faith and hope in you.