

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



**COME
AND SEE**



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Introduction

The Gospel of John is more than a record of events—it's an inspired invitation. From its opening lines, John calls us to behold Jesus, the eternal Word made flesh, and to believe in Him for eternal life.

John organizes his account around seven miraculous signs from Jesus:

1. Water into wine at Cana (2:1-11)
2. Cleansing the temple (John 2:13-22)
3. Healing the royal official's son (4:46-54)
4. Healing the man at Bethesda (5:1-15)
5. Feeding the five thousand (6:1-15)
6. Healing the man born blind (9:1-41)
7. Raising Lazarus (11:1-44)

Together, the signs form a spiritual roadmap, guiding us step by step to behold Jesus in His fullness, culminating in the ultimate signpost: Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead.

Will you stand on the sidelines of life, wandering according to your own compass, or will you respond to the signposts John provides, and come and see for yourself who Jesus is, what He's accomplished, and how to enjoy Him forever?

Helpful Details

Author: The Apostle John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 21:20, 24). He was part of Jesus’ inner circle along with Peter and James.

Date Written: Between A.D. 80 - 95.

Purpose: As he clearly states in John 20:31: *“That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”*

Distinctiveness: Roughly 90% of John’s material is unique compared to Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It emphasizes *theology over chronology*, focusing on meaning rather than merely recording events.

The Seven “I Am” Statements: Jesus reveals His divine identity through metaphors like “I am the Bread of Life” and “I am the Resurrection and the Life.”

Key Themes: Jesus as the eternal Son of God. Light vs. darkness. New birth and eternal life. Belief and unbelief. God’s sovereignty in salvation.

Recommended Reading

[Free Commentary \(TGC\)](#)

[Articles on John \(Ligonier\)](#)

[Sermons + Studies \(Monergism\)](#)

Beginner Commentary: [Let's Study John](#) by Mark Johnston

Advanced Commentary: [The Gospel According to John](#) by D.A. Carson

John 9

MAIN POINT

The healing of physical blindness becomes a signpost pointing to a deeper reality: the healing of humanity's spiritual blindness. To restore our spiritual sight and put the glory of God on display, Jesus must directly intervene in human history and in each of our lives.

GROUP INTRO

What's a characteristic of God that you didn't "see" before becoming a Christian, but now love since meeting the Lord?

TEXT

1. Read verses 1-5. How does Jesus reframe the disciples' perspective on suffering and God's purposes, and what does this reframing reveal about Him?

Leader help: Jesus rejects the assumption that suffering is always a result of personal sin. He reveals that the man's blindness exists so that "the works of God might be displayed," thus emphasizing that, with God, even suffering can be used for eternal good.

Leader help continued on the next page.



Leader help:

Essentially, Jesus uses this situation to identify Himself again as the One sent by God to do God's works, which are healing, redemptive, and illuminating (He's the "light of the world" who cuts through the darkness of unbelief, sin, and evil to reveal God's goodness). In other words, Jesus is God's "sent one" with a unique, redemptive mission that brings good things to sinners.

2. Despite knowing the prophetic predictions about the Messiah healing the blind¹, and having ample evidence that Jesus has done this very thing, the religious leaders reject Jesus. Read verses 6-17. What reason do the religious leaders give for rejecting Jesus? Is their accusation biblically legitimate?

Leader help: The leaders claim Jesus has violated the Sabbath by making mud on the Sabbath and healing. "Kneading" of any kind was on a known list of 39 forbidden Sabbath activities, but this list arose from the Pharisees' rules, which were added onto biblical Law, not given in the Law itself. Being the Law-Giver in the flesh, Jesus saw someone in need, desired to glorify God, and decided to heal. One of the core missteps of the Pharisees was their full-fledged allegiance to their own rules and the elevation of those rules above God's Word. Jesus' actions here confronted the leaders with the reality that God gave the Sabbath for the good of humanity; if Jesus does good on the Sabbath, He's fulfilling God's intention for the Sabbath.

¹ See Isaiah 35:1-5; 42:5-9.

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3. Read verses 38-41. What does Jesus reveal about true sight, judgment, and saving faith in these verses?

Leader help: Jesus seeks out the healed man and reveals Himself as the Son of Man. This is what the Lord does: seeks sinners out, reveals Himself, and calls to repentance and faith. Jesus then says that His ministry brings judgment: those who know they are blind (i.e., those who know they need Christ) receive sight; those who claim to see (i.e., those who think they are good with God based on their own merit) are exposed as blind.

Jesus is both Savior and Judge. The gospel humbles us before it heals us by calling us to admit our neediness. Here, the neediness is pictured as blindness.

APPLICATION

1. Is there suffering in your life that you've viewed as only punishment or discipline from the Lord? If so, how might this passage challenge you to adopt a new perspective on your pain?
2. What are some ways we can help one another keep a posture of humility and simple trust in Jesus instead of religious arrogance and harshness?
3. How did Jesus move you from spiritual blindness to sight, and how does your testimony point others to Christ?



PRAYER

Praise Jesus for pursuing you, revealing Himself, and giving you spiritual sight.

Passage to guide your prayers: Luke 19:10

Ask God to help you continually know and see your own need for His grace and to help you live in humility.

Passage to guide your prayers: 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

Ask God for boldness and opportunities to speak about Him and His works, and ask God to give sight to the spiritually blind in your life.

Passage to guide your prayers: Acts 4:19-20

John 10:1-21

MAIN POINT

Jesus is the one and only way to salvation, and He is the authoritative, sovereign, good shepherd who will see to it that all of His sheep are preserved and protected forever.

GROUP INTRO

If you're willing, tell us about a period of your life when you spiritually wandered or tried to lead yourself, and Jesus gently brought you back.

TEXT

1. Originally, John 9-10 were connected and meant to be read as one long discourse. With this in mind, read John 9:35-41, then read John 10:1-6. Who's present as Jesus says these things?

Leader help: It's the same audience as the end of John 9, consisting of the healed blind man and Pharisees. This is important to notice because Jesus is about to condemn the Pharisees (who were the spiritual leaders of the time) as thieves, robbers, and hired hands. His disciples and others may have also been present (see John 9:2, 8).

Leader help continued on the next page.

Another helpful note is to notice the **inclusio**² present in John 9 - 10. See the next page for the inclusio.

John 9 - 10 inclusio. Notice the similar themes and words that John uses to show that this entire section belongs together.

John 9:15-17

15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

[Text of John 9:18-41 - 10:1-18]

John 10:19-21

19 There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. 20 Many of them said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?" 21 Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

Notice that the accusations against Jesus worsen as the blind man's trust in Jesus grows; Jesus is labeled as a sinner, then a man possessed by a demon.

² An inclusio is a literary device that repeats a keyword, phrase, similar groups of words, or themes at the beginning and end of a section of the Bible, which, when used, acts like a set of brackets or bookends showing that the entire section is meant to be understood together.



2. Several key ideas in John 10 have important Old Testament roots. Read Ezekiel 34:1-10, then read John 10:1-6. With the Old Testament context in mind, identify the following characters in Jesus' figure of speech:

- A. The thief and robber
- B. The shepherd
- C. The sheep
- D. The stranger

Leader help:

A & D = The spiritual leaders who oppose Jesus; in this context, it's the Pharisees, since they make up the audience currently listening to Jesus. In the OT context, the failed shepherds of Israel, aka the kings, failed God's people, prompting God to promise that He Himself would step in and rescue His people, something He does through His Son, Jesus.

B = Jesus, who is exactly unlike the self-serving shepherds and leaders of both Ezekiel's time and His own time. Jesus goes on to foreshadow His atoning death for His sheep, which is the ultimate act of sacrificial love for His people.

C = God's people. They are those who hear "the voice of the shepherd" (i.e., hear/respond in faith to the Word of God, which is the voice of the shepherd) and are called and led by Jesus (i.e., called out of spiritual death by the preaching of the gospel and then led and loved by God and joined to His people, the church).

3. Read John 10:7-18. How does Jesus present Himself in these verses?

Leader help: Jesus compares and contrasts Himself with the spiritually-blind leaders of His time, and the faithless kings of Israel's past, claiming that He's the legitimate, good shepherd that they failed to be. He identifies Himself as the door of the sheep, i.e., the very way to salvation and flourishing (His language is a nod to Numbers 27:15-18). Jesus also emphasizes His personal³, intimate, attentive, pursuing, ongoing love for His people, who will not only stay near and protect His sheep in the presence of danger, but will ultimately die for their sins, rescuing them from the much worse wrath of God. Jesus also makes it clear that the cross wasn't forced upon Him, but something He willingly did for those whom He loves, and for the glory of the Father, in perfect fulfillment of His mission (i.e., the "charge" He received from the Father was to die for sinners, something He willingly did).

4. Explain why knowing Jesus as both the door and the good shepherd is crucial for a thriving faith in our fallen world.

Leader help: Knowing and trusting that Jesus is the only way to salvation and flourishing is a necessary first step in our faith, but it can also help us rest assured that Jesus is sufficient for both. We don't need to add any other spiritualities or religious works to be good with God. Knowing Jesus as our good shepherd anchors us in pain and chaos, reminding us He's with us and leading us.

³ Remember that in Scripture, the word "know" has various connotations; here, it means something like an "intimate relationship that involves deep feelings of love" (William Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, page 383).

APPLICATION

1. Jesus makes it clear that your eternal relationship with God was initiated and secured by Him, not by you, and He did this willingly, without your permission. How can this fact secure us when we're anxious, strengthen us when we're weak, and motivate us when we're apathetic?
2. Crucially, Jesus mentions that the result of His mission will be "one flock," aka, the church. If someone examined how you use your time, money, and home, would they conclude that you prioritize the flock of Christ? Why or why not?
3. Throughout the Bible, the word "hear" often means both receiving God's Word and obeying it (see Deuteronomy 6:1-5). Review how you're doing with *hearing* the following words of Jesus. Remember that, in Christ, there is no condemnation for you, and this is an opportunity to follow your Shepherd more closely:
 - A. Matthew 6:19-24
 - B. Romans 6:11
 - C. John 6:29
 - D. Colossians 4:5-6

PRAYER

Thank Jesus for specific ways He's lovingly shepherded you.

Passage to guide your prayers: Psalm 23

Pray for those who have yet to become a part of Jesus' fold, asking Him to pursue and save them this week.

Passage to guide your prayers: Ephesians 2:11-13

Ask Jesus to protect His sheep from thieves, robbers, and strangers who use social media, political platforms, and podcasts to harm God's people and distort God's Word.

Passage to guide your prayers: 1 John 4:1

John 10:22-42

MAIN POINT

Jesus again reveals Himself as the divine Messiah and Shepherd-King who gives eternal life to His sheep.

GROUP INTRO

What does life look like for someone who knows they *belong* to Jesus versus someone who's *performing* for Him?

TEXT

1. Read verses 22-26. How does the crowd's demand ("tell us plainly") reveal the core spiritual problem for all people, and what does Jesus say is the reason this problem exists?

Leader help: The gospel isn't just information about Jesus; it's transforming grace, which we all need, because our core problem is that we naturally exist in a state of sin, spiritual blindness, and unbelief. Those asking Jesus to tell them plainly who He is have clearly witnessed things and received enough information to submit to Him as God's chosen one, but they have rejected Him anyway.

The reason we don't trust Jesus in and of ourselves isn't that we don't have enough information, but because we aren't born His sheep. God must cause us to be born again.



2. Read verses 25-30. What does Jesus teach about salvation, assurance of salvation, and the perseverance or preservation of all who trust in Him? Why does this matter for Christians today?

Leader help: Jesus teaches that salvation is His initiative (i.e., He comes to us/pursues us first); He has a specific group of people who belong to Him (His sheep); He draws His people to Himself and gives them the ability to respond to this drawing (His sheep hear His voice); He promises that not one of His sheep can be snatched from Him, meaning that He will preserve His people through all of their trials, doubts, sin, and suffering.

This matters because it reveals the ongoing care, attention, and giving of Christ for sinners like us. It's not about how strong our faith is or how committed we are, but about how committed Jesus is to us for the glory of God.

3. Read verses 29-39. Why does Jesus respond to the charge of blasphemy by appealing both to Scripture (Psalm 82) and to His own miraculous works?

Leader help: Jesus is revealing the authority of God's Word and how He is the fulfillment of God's Word, and He's also showing that biblical faith isn't superstitious or a "leap" without information and facts; biblical faith is based upon the Word and Jesus' real acts in real history, wherein He really accomplished redemption. Christianity isn't about speculation, a leap of faith, or tradition; it's founded upon and founded by the Word of God and the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

1. In this passage, Jesus provides us with clear promises that should secure us and help us navigate difficulties, challenges, and changes. But think back over your last three weeks. What, other than Christ, have you been clinging to, and why?
2. Because so many voices today (social media, news, influencers, entertainment, etc.) shape what we believe and fear, what are some practical ways we can learn to recognize and prioritize the “voice” of Christ this week, and what habits make it harder to hear Him?
3. Describe the beauty and personal implications of Jesus’ promises in verses 27-30 as if you’re talking to someone who has never read the Bible.

PRAYER

Thank Jesus for being an amazing Shepherd.

Passage to guide your prayers: Ezekiel 34:11–16

Confess the fears you carry and act upon despite Jesus’ promises to you.

Passage to guide your prayers: Mark 9:24



Pray for those struggling to trust Jesus, asking Him to gently and graciously strengthen their faith.

Passage to guide your prayers: Jude 1:24-25

John 11:1-44

MAIN POINT

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead in a climactic moment (and the seventh “sign” of John’s Gospel [see Page 3 of the Guide]) that reveals God’s glory. Death, the final and undefeatable enemy of man, is confronted by the Resurrection and the Life.

GROUP INTRO

In this passage, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. If you could ask Lazarus one question after this experience, what would it be?

TEXT

1. Read verses 1-6 and verses 14-15. Why does Jesus delay going to Lazarus?

Leader help: John tells us plainly that Jesus loved both Lazarus and Martha and Mary (v. 5), indicating that Jesus’ actions here reflect or demonstrate His love. How is it loving for Jesus to wait and let Lazarus die, despite having the power to heal him and prevent his death? Because Jesus’ waiting ensures that Marth, Mary, Lazarus, and us today will receive an even greater revelation of Jesus, thus deepening understanding of who He is. This final sign in John’s Gospel clearly reveals Jesus as the One who can decisively defeat our greatest enemy, death. It is by trusting in Jesus that we, too, can be assured that death has lost its sting and will, one day, be finally destroyed (see also 1 Corinthians 15:53-57).



2. Read verses 17-27. What's the difference between believing in a general resurrection and believing that Jesus Himself is the resurrection and the life?

Leader help: To believe in the resurrection is healthy doctrine and good theological understanding. But trusting that Jesus Himself is the resurrection and the life is true, saving faith. A person can know and believe true things without knowing and trusting in Jesus.

Here, Jesus moves Martha from abstract theology to a personal relationship. In the person of Jesus, the "already/not yet" reality of eternal life is present. We can be assured that eternal life is a reality because Jesus has come in the flesh in history, actually living perfectly, dying on the cross, and resurrecting from the dead. This episode shows that Jesus doesn't just give good things to His people; He gives Himself, the ultimate gift. There is no heaven or eternal life apart from Jesus because He is eternal life.

3. Read verses 28-40. John emphasizes Jesus' emotions before He performs this last miraculous sign. What does this tell us about Jesus?

Leader help: John's use of emotional language about Jesus (see vv. 33, 35, 38) tells us several things:

- 1. Jesus is truly human and truly felt. Therefore, He really is God in the flesh and a human.*
- 2. Since Jesus felt and expressed emotions, it can't be the case that emotions are inherently sinful.*

Leader help continues on the next page.

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3. *Jesus is not emotionally detached from pain and suffering; He's truly affected by the suffering of His people.*
 4. *Since Jesus is the very image of God, we know that God is not a cold, distant deity but is intimately involved in our lives. He is both sovereign and personally, emotionally present with us.*

APPLICATION

1. Jesus reveals the ultimate, effectual power of His call⁴ by simply yelling, "Lazarus, come out!" (v. 43). How can this scene give us endurance in evangelism and prayer?
2. Where in your life right now do you feel like Jesus has "delayed"? What's it look like to approach this with faith, rather than distrust?
3. Jesus' call to Lazarus is a kind of picture of how He calls spiritually dead people to eternal life. How can this shape both how we view unbelievers in our lives and how we speak the gospel to them?

PRAYER

Praise Jesus for calling you out of spiritual death.

Passage to guide your prayers: Titus 3:5

⁴ "Effectual call" simply means that, when God wants to save someone, it isn't a struggle for Him, and His sovereign call cannot be resisted or rejected. Here, Lazarus contributes nothing, asks for nothing, and does nothing; Jesus simply gives a life-giving command, and it happens. God gives life where there is none.



Pray for those who have yet to trust Christ, asking Jesus to effectually call them to Himself.

Passage to guide your prayers: Ephesians 2:5

Bring any disappointments, sadness, or confusion you're feeling to Jesus, knowing that He is not distant or apathetic toward you.

Passage to guide your prayers: Psalm 103:13

John 11:45-57

MAIN POINT

Jesus' powerful sign results in both faith and unbelief as opposition to Him mounts, with the Jewish leaders wanting Him to die.

GROUP INTRO

If your personality had to be represented by three emojis, which would you pick and why?

TEXT

1. Read verses 45-48. Why does Jesus' miraculous sign result in faith for some but opposition from others?

Leader help: The response to Jesus' signs depends on God's sovereign work in their hearts, because faith is not a matter of sight or evidence but of God's grace and whether He draws someone to Himself (see John 6:44). The entire point of Jesus doing signs was to reveal Himself; but unless God works to draw sinners to His Son, they will naturally reject and oppose Him.

2. Read verses 49-53. How are both the faithlessness of the Sanhedrin⁵ and the gospel revealed in the words of Caiaphas?

Leader help is on the next page.

⁵ The Sanhedrin is the "council" that John mentions in verse 47.



Leader help: The Sanhedrin's faithlessness is seen in their rejection of the Messiah in favor of their cultural status and comfort. If Jesus' popularity grew, they feared that the Roman government would see it as a rebellion on behalf of the Jews and would therefore crush them, destroy the temple, and remove them from the land. Caiaphas' solution is to simply kill Jesus in order to spare themselves. But he doesn't realize he's summarized the mission of God's Messiah: Jesus has come as the one man between God and man, the single mediator, whose substitutionary death saves all of God's children.

3. Read verses 53-57, then go back to John 10:14-18. Based on these two passages, Jesus isn't afraid of dying, so why does He retreat to Ephraim?

Leader help: Jesus is in total control of His destiny and when and how He will lay down His life. Since the pressure was increasing, and He knew what was in the heart of man (see John 2:23-25), Jesus withdrew in order to prevent an early arrest and death.

APPLICATION

1. Self-preservation, spiritual blindness, and idolatry led the Sanhedrin to not only reject the Messiah but also seek His death. How does the Bible instruct us to deal with our own pull toward self-preservation and idolatry?

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2. To keep their privileges and social standing, the Sanhedrin were willing to set aside obvious signs that revealed the truthfulness of Jesus' claims about Himself. How are Christians today tempted to set aside truths about Jesus to maintain social standing?
 3. Jesus died in order to "gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad," including people in our city. First, how does one become a child of God, and second, can this status be lost, altered, or in any way diminished?

PRAYER

Read and pray through Romans 8:12-17.

John 12:1-19

MAIN POINT

Jesus moves toward the cross amid devotion, opposition, and misunderstanding, presented as the King who fulfills Scripture by giving His life.

GROUP INTRO

If you had to give Jesus one of your most treasured possessions, what would it be?

TEXT

1. Not long after the raising of Lazarus, Jesus is anointed with expensive oil in the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. Read verses 1-8. Why does John deliberately place Mary's anointing before Jesus' triumphal entry, wherein Jesus will be lauded as a king?

Leader help: John's giving the reader a lens for interpreting Jesus' kingship. Jesus' lordship is marked by sacrificial love seen in His suffering, death, and resurrection. In Israel's history, kings were anointed for ruling, but Jesus is anointed for burial. Jesus isn't a king who avoids death and vies for power but a king who embraces suffering for the sake of His people.

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2. Read verses 9-11. Why do the chief priests want to kill both Jesus and Lazarus?

Leader help: Lazarus is literal living evidence that Jesus is God's Messiah, so his continued existence threatens the religious leaders' authority and position. Rather than leading to repentance, the sign of Lazarus' raising from the dead hardens those who oppose Jesus. This is in line with God's acts throughout the Bible, wherein God's displays of redemptive power either soften hearts or harden rebels (think of Pharaoh in Exodus).

3. Read verses 12-19. Why does John quote Zechariah 9:9 and immediately note that the disciples did not understand these things until Jesus was glorified?

Leader help: This prophecy points to a king who comes gently, not conquering by force, yet even Jesus' closest followers initially miss that the prophecy is aiming toward a reign initiated by suffering and death. Only after Jesus' resurrection and the gift of the Spirit do the Old Testament prophecies and promises make sense, even to Jesus' closest disciples. This is also John showing how to read the Old Testament: through the lens of the crucified and resurrected Jesus.

APPLICATION

1. Have you ever been tempted to critique costly devotion (time, hospitality, generosity, vulnerability) because it felt "wasteful" or messy? Why or why not?

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2. What metrics do you use to decide whether your faith is “working” (comfort, growth, productivity, answered prayers)? How does this passage challenge those metrics by presenting a King whose ministry runs through humility, patience, and suffering?
 3. Mary’s devotion to Jesus was public and apparent. What would a small but visible act of devotion to Jesus look like this week?

PRAYER

Ask God to help you truly grasp how good Jesus is so that you value Him above all else.

Passage to guide your prayers: Titus 3:3-7

Confess the ways you’ve resisted Jesus’ path of humility, sacrifice, and suffering for your own comfort or self-interest.

Passage to guide your prayers: 1 Peter 5:6

Praise Jesus for His gentle, sacrificial lordship in your life.

Passage to guide your prayers: Matthew 11:29

John 12:20-50

MAIN POINT

The Lord's *hour* has come, and the Gentiles want to "see Jesus"; Jesus uses the opportunity to proclaim He'll be truly seen only when He is lifted up. Through His death on the cross, Jesus will draw people out of darkness into light.

GROUP INTRO

If your life had a theme song right now, what would it be, and why?

TEXT

1. Read verses 20-26. Why does Jesus answer the Greeks' request ("We wish to see Jesus") by talking about his death and glory?

Leader help: The truest "seeing" of Jesus is not a private meeting but knowing Him as the crucified Son of God who has come to die for sinners. What must be known about Jesus is displayed in His atoning, substitutionary death.

2. Read verses 27-36. What does Jesus mean by "Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out"?

Leader help is on the next page.

Leader help:

The cross is simultaneously judgment and victory. In the cross we see the world's true condition exposed and sin condemned in the flesh of the sin-bearing substitute (this is the "judgment" and Satan's accusatory power broken (this is the "ruler of this world" being cast out). John wants you to see that Jesus is conquering by crucifixion.

3. Read verses 37-50. Why does Jesus say, "Whoever believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me," and why does John emphasize this so strongly at the end of Jesus' public ministry?

Leader help: John closes Jesus' public ministry by clarifying that faith in Jesus is not merely admiration or agreement, but trust in God Himself as He has finally and fully revealed Himself in Jesus. Jesus is not an alternative to the God of Israel; He is the God of Israel, the perfect image of the Father. To see Jesus is to see God. Here, Jesus fulfills the biblical pattern of God revealing Himself.

John's showing that this has been the point of Jesus' public ministry: to reveal God so that those who "see," whether physically 2,000 years ago or spiritually now as they read and hear the Word proclaimed, may believe.

APPLICATION

1. Is there evidence in your life that shows that you love "glory from people" more than "glory from God"? If so, what is it? If not, how did God bring you to that place of maturity?

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2. Do you trust that giving up your status, preferences, timeline, or comfort for Christ and His mission is worth it? Why or why not?
 3. What would costly faithfulness look like in your life right now? Especially in how you use your time, money, body, or attention.

PRAYER

Confess how you've made something other than Christ's love for you central to your life.

Passage to guide your prayers: Galatians 6:14

Thank God for making you one of His people and giving your life true significance and purpose.

Passage to guide your prayers: 1 Peter 2:9-10

Praise Jesus for dying and rising for you, and ask God to draw specific unbelievers to Himself.

Passage to guide your prayers: Revelation 5:9-10

John 13:1-30

MAIN POINT

Jesus turns from public ministry to preparing His disciples for what's to come, symbolizing the loving, spiritual cleansing He'll accomplish on the cross by washing the feet of His sinful followers.

GROUP INTRO

What helps you feel seen, known, or included in new spaces?

TEXT

1. Read verse 1. What does "having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end" mean, and why does John put this at the beginning of this new part of Christ's ministry?

Leader help: John is telling us how to read everything that follows: the motive for Jesus' advance toward His death is love, and this chapter puts that love and Christ's pursuit of sinners on display. This connects Jesus to the entire biblical story, which reveals God's loving, independent movement toward His sinful people.

2. Read verses 2-11. What does Jesus mean when He says to Peter, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me"?

Leader help is on the next page.



Leader help: This is Jesus insisting that relationship or fellowship with Him is received as a gift of grace, not achieved. But for this relationship to exist, sinners must first be cleansed. Only Christ can do this, not us.

To “have a share” with Jesus = union with Him, a union that depends upon and is guaranteed by the cleansing He does. Like in the Old Testament, where access to God required cleansing (the priests had to wash and offer sacrifices for people), Jesus provides definitive washing through His atoning death. Unless you receive this washing by faith alone, you can’t participate in His life and mission.

3. Read verses 12-20. What in this passage shows that someone must first be made new by Jesus before they can act like Jesus?

Leader help: Notice that Jesus says, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher...” He is talking about someone who trusts in Him and banks on His Word. Jesus isn’t shifting from the gospel to moralism; He’s showing how trusting Him produces a new way of life. And unless someone’s first cleansed by Jesus through faith in Him, they won’t be made new.

Not only this, but Jesus isn’t identifying Christians as good people who do good things on their own; instead, He refers to them as those whom He sends (vv. 16, 20). This presupposes a relationship with Him and involvement in His mission. Those who are sent out on Christ’s mission by Christ will be changed and empowered to accomplish His mission in His way.

APPLICATION

1. How would you know if someone's downplaying their sin instead of letting Jesus expose and cleanse it?
2. What would it look like for someone to stop defending their "spiritual résumé" and instead let Jesus wash the areas of their life they'd rather keep hidden?
3. Where in your life (finances, sexuality, career, time) do you quietly believe, "I've got this," instead of living like someone who needs others and is upheld by God's grace?

PRAYER

Confess specific sin to God, either quietly or aloud.

Passage to guide your prayers: Psalm 51:2

Thank God that your holiness is something He will accomplish in you, and ask Him to help you surrender daily to His work in you.

Passage to guide your prayers: Philippians 1:6

Ask God to deliver you from all self-delusion.

Passage to guide your prayers: Psalm 139:23–24

John 13:31 - 14:31

MAIN POINT

Jesus prepares His disciples for His departure, reminding them that His “going” is not abandonment but salvation.

GROUP INTRO

What’s one way your faith has grown in the past year?

TEXT

1. Read verses 21-32. How can Jesus say He is “glorified” right after Judas leaves to betray Him?

Leader help: In John’s Gospel, “glory” is not worldly success or power, but the sacrificial revelation of God’s character. The cross is the moment when the Son perfectly reveals this glory. What looks like defeat is, in reality, the revealing of God’s character. From Genesis onward, God’s glory has been bound up with His covenant faithfulness, fully expressed in Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and ascension.

2. Read verses 31-34. Why does Jesus give the “new commandment” to love here, and in what sense is it “new”?

Leader help is on the next page.



Leader help: The command to love is not new in content (see Lev. 19:18), but in measure, model, and mission. The command is explicitly grounded in Jesus' self-sacrificial love (which is why He qualifies it with "just as I have loved you"). This is the new measure.

This love will be displayed at the cross and then empowered by the Spirit. This is the new model.

And the mission of Christians is to announce Christ's love (as displayed in His life, death, and resurrection) and to accompany that announcement with acts of love empowered by the Spirit. Originally, Israel was called to display God's love to the nations; now the church, formed by Jesus, becomes the vessel of God's mission.

3. Read 14:1-14. What does Jesus mean by, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," and how does this summarize the biblical story?

Leader help: Jesus isn't just a guide to God, a teacher of truth, or a giver of life; He is the exclusive mediator of God's saving presence. After the Fall, access to God was either guarded or prohibited: Eden was closed, priests had to mediate for the people, and the temple restricted entry. Jesus fulfills and surpasses all of these by being the revelation of God ("the truth") and the very means of access to God ("the way"), securing eternal life through His obedient death and resurrection. God brings His people home to Himself through Jesus.

APPLICATION

1. How do we present the gospel as what it really is (news about Jesus for sinners) so that it's not misunderstood as a self-improvement program or moral advice?
2. Why can trusting that Jesus has secured your place with the Father (14:2-3) free you from fear in gospel conversations?
3. In what concrete, costly, and relational ways is Jesus currently calling you to embody His sacrificial love? What's stopping or delaying you from doing this?

PRAYER

Thank Jesus for the certainty of salvation He's provided.

Passage to guide your prayers: Hebrews 6:19-20

Ask God to help you obey some of His specific commands that you view as burdensome or impossible.

Passage to guide your prayers: 1 John 5:3

Ask God to make your group a community where the work of the Spirit is evident and ongoing.

Passage to guide your prayers: Romans 8:9-11

John 15:1-17

MAIN POINT

The Lord tells His disciples that life with God will not be sustained by human willpower or religious fervor, but by union with Him. Jesus is the “true vine,” the faithful Israel, and the Father is the loving vinedresser who attentively and actively works in our lives to make us fruitful.

GROUP INTRO

What aspect of Sunday worship do you love most, and why?

TEXT

1. Read verses 1-2, then read Psalm 80:8-15 and Isaiah 5:7. With the Old Testament usage in view, what’s Jesus saying about Himself when He claims to be the vine?

Leader help: Jesus is saying He’s the true, final, and faithful Israel who bears the fruit God desired from His people throughout the Old Testament. Despite being planted, cared for, and protected by God, Israel repeatedly rejected God and faced His judgment in response. Yet God never gave up on His people or promises. Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s covenant promises and is the central “place” for covenantal belonging. True life, righteous fruit, and relationship with God come from union with Jesus.



2. Read verses 4-11. Who are the “thrown away” branches? Are these Christians who lose salvation, false disciples, or some type of person?

Leader help: Jesus is referring to people who don't cling to Him in faith. Fruitlessness (no growth in love for God and others, no desire for greater holiness and dependence upon Christ, etc.) reveals someone's disconnect from the vine (Jesus). Genuine union with Christ shows itself over time in spiritual fruit. Merely being associated with the church or attending worship gatherings or community groups is not the same as abiding in Jesus, and here the Lord warns against confusing the two. Jesus isn't trying to provoke anxiety in Christians; rather, He is reiterating the necessity of trusting in Him, surrendering to Him, and remaining in Him. Evidence of genuine faith will show up because God works in, on, and through His people.

3. Read verses 9-17. Why does Jesus call His disciples to abide in His love at this point in His ministry?

Leader help: The disciples are about to face the crisis of the cross. Judas just left to initiate Jesus' final turn toward His unjust trial and death. All external signs of security (Jesus' physical presence, public ministry, growing influence) are about to disappear, so Jesus directs their attention to His love. His suffering will appear as defeat, and their own weakness and faithlessness will be exposed, so they'll need the anchor of the gospel to remain faithful and continue God's mission.

APPLICATION

1. How do you substitute *activity* for *abiding*? Or, to ask it another way, what areas of your life reveal functional self-reliance rather than prayerful dependence and resting in Christ?
2. We may not always be aware of when or how the Father is pruning us. Is there a hardship, limitation, disappointment, or correction you've labeled as "loss" that might actually be the Father's merciful pruning? If so, what is it, and how can we support you?
3. One fruit that God ensures His people bear is sacrificial love that reflects His own love. How do we bear this within the body of Christ? How do we bear this fruit outside the church?

PRAYER

Thank Jesus for His steadfast love, and ask for His help to abide in His love.

Passage to guide your prayers: 2 Thessalonians 3:5

Confess your sinful self-reliance and autonomy.

Passage to guide your prayers:

Ask God to make you the kind of disciple who sacrificially seeks the good of others.

Passage to guide your prayers: 1 John 4:19

John 15:18 - 16:33

MAIN POINT

Jesus shifts to a sobering reality: the world that hates Him will also hate His disciples. Yet, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will come and empower all of His followers.

Jesus then promises resurrection, which will turn sorrow into invincible joy.

GROUP INTRO

What's a product or invention you're shocked doesn't yet exist?

TEXT

1. Read John 15:18-25. What does Jesus mean by "the world," and why will the world hate Jesus' followers?

Leader help: We share in Jesus's identity and mission, who was rejected and killed by the world. "The world" in John's Gospel is essentially "human beings organized against God." Disciples' union with Jesus provokes the same rejection He faced from those who hate God.

God's messengers are persistently opposed because there's been a spiritual war ever since the Garden of Eden (see Gen. 3:14-15). So when Christians face opposition or hatred, it isn't evidence of God's abandonment.



2. Read John 15:26 - 16:15. How will the Holy Spirit work in the world after the ascension of Jesus?

Leader help: First, these verses show that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" but a person; therefore, Christians should refer to the Spirit as "Him" or "He."

The Spirit continues Jesus' ministry. He is sent by the Father and the Son to testify about Jesus, convict the world of sin, and guide believers into truth. In other words, the Spirit will expose human guilt (sin), vindicate Jesus through His resurrection and ascension (righteousness), and announce the final verdict of judgment coming to the devil and all who follow him (judgment).

The church's gospel proclamation and discipleship are empowered by the Spirit. So the advance of the gospel isn't on our shoulders; it happens through the work and presence of the Spirit.

Gospel center:

3. Read verses 16-24. Describe how sorrow becomes joy for the disciples.

Leader help: Jesus is teaching about His death and resurrection. The disciples' grief at His crucifixion will be real, but not eternal. Resurrection joy will transform sorrow, just like labor pain is reinterpreted or transformed by the child being born. Christian joy is durable because it rests on Christ's victory, not our circumstances. And Jesus' death and resurrection further strengthen Christian joy by bringing a new privilege: direct access to the Father in Jesus's name.

APPLICATION

1. How do you normally treat hardship when you experience it? As a sign of divine displeasure, or as something Jesus explicitly said would accompany faithfulness?
2. In conversations, ministry, parenting, or personal growth, how do you know when you're striving anxiously rather than expectantly trusting in the Spirit's transforming work?
3. Jesus anchors Christian peace in Himself and His victory. What fears, uncertainties, or pressures are right now revealing where your functional source of peace actually is?

PRAYER

Thank God for the historically grounded anchor of His victory: the resurrection of Jesus.

Passage to guide your prayers: Romans 6:5

Ask God for strength and steadfastness in the face of opposition or rejection.

Passage to guide your prayers: 2 Corinthians 12:8-9

Pray for one another, asking God to give peace where there's fear or exhaustion.

Passage to guide your prayers: Philippians 4:6-7

John 17 - 18:11

MAIN POINT

Jesus prays, asking to be glorified through the cross, resurrection, and ascension, and asking for those whom He loves to be kept, sanctified, and sent.

GROUP INTRO

You get a surprise day off tomorrow; what's your ideal way to spend it?

TEXT

1. Sometimes we rush past observation in our Bible study and miss key details. Throughout chapter 17, how often do "gave" and "given" show up? What does this repetition show us about God?

Leader help: Gave = 4 times. Given = 12 times. This highlights several key truths:

- A. *There's personal distinction within the Godhead. The Father gave Jesus authority, believers, words, and glory. This shows that the Father is not the Son, even though they are both eternal, divine, and equal.*
- B. *This shows that God is the initiator in salvation, not us. Christians are the Father's gift to the Son, meaning they first belonged to the Father by His sovereign choice.*

Leader help continues on the next page.

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- C. *Since Christians are a gift from the Father to the Son, we're secure because our faith rests on God's will and Christ's faithfulness.*
- D. *God's Word is not discovered by humanity but is revealed by God. The flow of God's revelation could be summarized like this:*
- *The Father gives to the Son. The Son gives to His disciples. His disciples give to the world.*

2. Read John 17:1-5. How does Jesus define "eternal life"?

Leader help: Jesus defines it as relational knowledge (see v. 3). In John, "know" means covenantal, experiential relationship and participation. Across the biblical story, this is God's aim: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (see Jer. 31:33 and Rev. 21:3).

3. Read John 17:6-19. These verses carry a theme of keeping and guarding. What kind of safety or security is Jesus praying for?

Leader help: Throughout John, the word translated as "keep" (v. 11) has the sense of guarding or preserving. Jesus is not asking for safe circumstances or protection from suffering but for spiritual preservation. The Father's keeping of Jesus' disciples is grounded in His name and character, not our strength. This theology of keeping is seen in John 18 when Jesus steps forward in faithful protection of His disciples, knowing what He's about to face. So our spiritual safety depends entirely upon Jesus.

4. Read John 17:20-26. Why is Jesus emphasizing unity here?

Leader help: First, this isn't unity at any cost, but unity in the truth and love Jesus gives, as seen in the Word (17:17, 20-26). This unity is patterned after (not equal to) the unity between the Father and Son and has a missional purpose. Notice that Jesus says, "so that the world may believe that You have sent Me" (v. 21). Truly Christian unity points to Christ. This fulfills the biblical goal of God having one unified people under His anointed King (see Ezek 37:15-28). This unity is purchased by and fulfilled in Christ. As He saves people worldwide and unites them to His body, the church, it's a testimony to the world that God's at work fulfilling His promises because Jesus has died and resurrected.

APPLICATION

1. Is there a specific area (ministry, work, parenting, reputation, online presence) in your life where you're seeking honor that bypasses costly obedience? How does this passage both challenge and help us step toward costly obedience?
2. If someone you knew came to you for advice about a relational fracture, resentment, or "cold distance" they've had with another Christian, how would you advise them to work toward unity for the sake of Christ being glorified?



3. In this prayer, we discover that Jesus protects us, prays for us, secures us, loves us, shares His glory with us, sanctifies us, knows us, has given us the Father's revelation, and seeks our good and our joy. What causes you to question these facts, and how can we help one another believe that we really are loved by God?

PRAYER

Read Romans 8:31-39, remembering that Christ's life, death, resurrection, and ascension have secured these realities for us. Pray in response to this passage.

Passage to guide your prayers: Romans 8:31-39