A Reading/Study Guide for the Gospel of John

St. John’s Lutheran Church

January 2021
Reading through the Gospel of John

Dear friend at St. John’s,

One of the most frequent google searches these days is “How do I read the Bible?” During the month of January, we are doing a sermon series entitled “Bible Bootcamp.” At Bible Bootcamp we will learn how to read scripture intellectually, prayerfully, and “disciplefully.” We also are matching you up with an accountability partner, a “Bible Buddy”, to walk with you on this journey.

As part of Bible Bootcamp, please read through the gospel of John according to the following schedule.

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In order to get the flow of the John, it is very beneficial to read large sections of scripture at a time. Thus, we are scheduling to read three chapters a day. This will take about 10-12 minutes—not a bad investment for the benefits that God’s Word brings to your life—peace, joy, patience, gentleness, self-control etc. Furthermore, to digest the Word of God and understand it more fully, it is beneficial not just to read large portions of scripture, but also to read it multiple times. Thus throughout the month, we will read through the whole book four times.

How you choose to meet with your bible buddy is up to you. It seems it would be helpful to touch base with your bible buddy each day maybe through text or phone call. In addition, you could meet with your bible buddy once or twice a week for coffee in person or via video conferencing through your computer or cell phone (if you need help with the tech end of things, please call the church office and one of the church staff can help you).

God bless you on your Bible Bootcamp journey. A verse from John (20:31-32) gives us the purpose of all of this. “Now Jesus did many others sings in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

Sincerely
Pastor Caleb
John
Chapters 1-3
January 4, 2020
(Week 1—Reading Intellectually)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) The beginning of the Gospel of John talks about “the Word.” Who do you think that is? In chapter 1, what other titles are given to this same person?

2) It has been said that John 1:1-18, gives the purpose of Jesus coming into the world. If this is true, what would part of Jesus’ purpose be according to these verses?

3) What do you learn about Jesus in Chapter 2?

4) Chapter 3:16 is a very well known verse. How have you experienced God’s love in your life?

5) What did you find confusing or hard to understand in these chapters?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Most Jews would avoid going through Samaria. Why do you think that Jesus “had to pass through Samaria” (John 4:4)?

2) What do you find most interesting about the feeding of the 5,000 in chapter 6?

3) After Jesus feeds the 5,000, chapter 6 verses 25ff talk about Jesus being the bread of life. Why do you think the miracle and the teaching are this closely connected?

4) What questions/comments do you have after reading these chapters?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) When Jesus goes privately up to the Feast of Booths in chapter 7, people are talking about him. They have division about who Jesus is. Read verses 7:10-13. Who is Jesus in your life?

2) In 8:12, Jesus says “I am the light of the world” and then in chapter 9, Jesus opens the eyes of a man born blind. Why do you think the teaching and the miracle are this closely connected? (Probably similar answer to the question on Jan 5).

3) In 8:12-59, Jesus speaks openly and honestly with people because they needed to hear it. Have you ever had to do this with someone? Did the conversation go well or not so good?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) John chapter 10 talks about Jesus being “The Good Shepherd.” What does this mean for you? Look up also Psalm 23.

2) What does it mean for you that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life” (11:25)?

3) In 11:35, Jesus weeps for his friend Lazarus who had died. What does this tell us about Jesus?

4) Read 12:23. Compare this to 1:4, 7:30, & 8:10. What do you think Jesus’ “hour” or “time” had finally arrived?
John  
Chapters 13-15  
January 8, 2020  
(Week 1—Reading Intellectually)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) John uses 12 chapters to go through all of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Starting in Chapter 13 he slows down a bit. 13-17 take place on Maundy Thursday, the day before Jesus dies. Chapters 18-19 Good Friday. Chapter 20 Easter. Chapter 21 After the Resurrection. Why do you think John uses almost half of his book on the last month of Jesus’ life and more specifically 3 days worth?

2) In 13:1-20 Jesus talks about being a servant. How does the dictionary define “servanthood.” What are some different emotional and physical aspects of servanthood?

3) 14:1-7. What does it mean that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) According to 16:8-15, what is the work of the Holy Spirit? How have you seen this in your life?

2) Jesus talks about tribulation that will take place in our lives (16:33). Why do you think the believer’s life isn’t always easy?

3) Jesus prays for himself and two other groups of people in chapter 17. For what two groups does Jesus pray (v.9 and v.20)?

4) Write down any unfamiliar phrases from today’s reading. Google may help understand what these mean.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) In 19:30, Jesus is hanging on the cross and says, “It is finished.” That is the Greek word “Tetelestai.” A banker would use that word at the end of a loan payment to say, “Paid in Full.” Jesus has bought you not with silver or gold but with his very precious blood. Your debt has been paid in full. It is finished.

2) Read 19:38-42. Who took Jesus’ body off the cross? What does this say about his faith journey (see 3:1-21).

3) Why do you think Jesus would appear to Mary Magdalene first after he rose from the dead?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) If you were the bridegroom in chapter 2, how would you have felt when you heard about the new wine?

2) In chapter 3, Nicodemus comes to Jesus in the secret of night to ask him some questions, what questions would you have to ask Jesus in secret?

3) Compare God’s selfless love in John 3:16 with 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. In your own words, describe God’s love to you.

4) Write down any insights that you learned today.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Name two things that you learned in chapter 4.

2) In chapter 5, how do you picture the setting in verses 5:1-15. What is the smell? The noises? The atmosphere? How would you picture the invalid?

3) Memorize this bible passage: “Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.’ ” John 6: 68-69
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) In 7:53-8:11, Jesus remarks, “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.” Come before Jesus now, confessing your sins and seeking his forgiveness.

2) Regarding 7:53-8:11...how would you feel if you were the woman in this situation? What would Jesus forgiveness feel like? How does it feel in your life?

3) What questions or new insights have you gained in this section of scripture?
John
Chapters 10-12
January 14, 2020
(Week 2—Reading Prayerfully)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) John 10:14-15, how does this impact your life knowing that Jesus KNOWS you?

2) In regards to John chapter 11, have you lost someone close to you? Reflect on a story or memory about them.

3) As you read 12:12-19, imagine the scene. What stands out to you? What emotions might you be feeling if you were there that amazing day? What emotions might you be feeling if you were one of the disciples?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Regarding 13:1-20, imagine the scene like you were there as one of the disciples. What feelings do you experience? Talk about those feelings with God.

2) 14:1-7. What does it mean to you that Jesus has prepared a place for you?

3) 14:27. How do you experience God’s peace in your life?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Google the words to the Hymn, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” Read and think about these words as you spend time with Jesus today.

2) 16:24. What is the promise in this verse regarding prayer?

3) Use Jesus’ prayer in chapter 17 as a model for your prayers today. Pick someone by name and pray the same things for them that Jesus prays in his prayer.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Imagine that you were present during this time of Jesus life. What emotions or feelings would you have experienced, what would it have been like to be...
   a. At the cross—on Friday
   b. The in-between time—Saturday
   c. The Open Tomb—Easter morning
   d. After the Resurrection—in the Locked Room

2) Talk with God about your thoughts and feelings.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Why do you think the Gospel of John starts out with the words “In the beginning?” Compare this with Genesis 1:1.

2) What facts about “the Word” do you find out based on 1:1-18?

3) In Chapter 2, angry Jesus cleans out the temple. How does this picture of Jesus fit with your normal take on Jesus?

4) Jesus says in chapter 3 being born again. For Lutheran Christians this happens at our baptisms, and we begin a life of faith. Throughout our life our faith grows. On a scale of 1 to 10, how far along are you in your faith maturation?

5) Based on your reading for today, go to God in prayer and talk to him about your thoughts and feelings.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) What do we learn about talking to other people about Jesus from his conversation with the woman at the well in Chapter 4?

2) The woman from Samaria had great spiritual need? Who in your circle of people you know has a great spiritual need? Pray for them now, coming to God asking him to reveal how you might help meet their need.

3) Reading 6:16-21, how would you have reacted if you saw Jesus on the water?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Read 7:37-39. What do these verses mean for you and your life? Where do you see the Spirit of God at work in your life?

2) Read 8:31-36. How does this verse relate to your life, especially regarding truth and following Jesus?

3) From 9:31-41, what can we learn from the way Jesus asked and answered questions to help us in our witnessing to people who are ready to believe?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Read 10:10. What does the abundant life look like for a Christian? Is it the possession of wealth and material items or is it something else?

2) In John 12 a woman anoints Jesus feet with expensive perfume. What item is precious to you that might be used for the work of Jesus? (talents, resources, ideas, abilities etc)?

3) Read 12:23-26. What do these verses mean in your day to day life?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Read 13:12-17, what do these verses mean for your life? Think of 1 or 2 ways that you can be a servant this week.

2) 14:18, 26 What comes to mind when you think about an orphan? What does the Holy Spirit do for us?

John
Chapters 16-18
January 23, 2020
(Week 3—Reading “Disciplefully”)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) In 16:20-22, Jesus talks about our sorrow being turned to joy. According to these verses what makes this happen?

2) Describe a time in your life when Jesus brought joy in the midst of sorrow.

3) The majority of chapter 17 contains words of Jesus. If Jesus said it, it must be important. What can you apply to your life from these words of Jesus?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) In chapter 20, Jesus visits the disciples and Thomas has his doubts. As you think about your faith life, what doubts or questions have you had. What doubts/questions might your pre-christian friends have?

2) 21:15-19. Jesus asks Peter to feed/tend his sheep. What does that mean? How do you do that in your daily life?
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) What does John the Baptizer testify about Jesus (chapter 1:29)? What does this mean? (See Genesis 22:1-13, Exodus 12:1-3, 5-8, 12-14, Isaiah 53:4-7).

2) Read John 2:4. What do you think Jesus meant when He said, “My hour has not yet come?”

3) Compare John 3:14-15 with Numbers 21:4-9. In what way is Jesus, the Son of Man, similar to the serpent that was lifted up on a pole?

4) What affirmation or new insight have you gained from your reading today?
John
Chapters 4-6
January 26, 2020
(Week 4—Soaking up God’s Word)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Regarding the healing of the official’s son in 4:46-54, why do you think the official asked at what hour the son began to get better?

2) How has Jesus helped you in your life? What evidence has shown up in your life because of his help?

3) 6:22ff names Jesus as the bread of life. Name 4 or 5 things about what this means based on this section of scripture.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) In 7:45-52, Jesus is ridiculed and Nicodemus sticks up for him. Have you ever been ridiculed for your faith? Did someone stick up for you? Have you stuck up for someone else in this same situation?

2) Why do you think the formerly blind man worshiped Jesus (9:38)? How do your beliefs lead you to worship Jesus?

3) What steps can you take to improve your spiritual vision? What are some specific things that you can pray to God about today?
John  
Chapters 10-12  
January 28, 2020  
(Week 4—Soaking up God’s Word)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) John records many different “I am “ statements about Jesus. What 7 things does Jesus refer to himself as? (See 6:35, 8:12, 10:7, 10:11, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1). Which of these images is your favorite? Why?

2) See Exodus 3:14, what is the significance of the “I am” statements in John.

3) What struck you in today’s reading that made you think differently, or wonder about something?
John
Chapters 13-15
January 29, 2020
(Week 4—Soaking up God’s Word)

Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) Skim chapters 13-17 and not the word “love” and its various forms. How many times does it occur? (in chapters 1-12 “love” is only used 6 times).

2) What does it mean to “Love” according to the gospel of John?

3) Write down any questions or thoughts that you have about today’s reading.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) How do you feel when the meaning of a Scripture passage you have been attempting to understand becomes clear to you? According to 16:4-15, who can we thank for this understanding?

2) Chapter 18 begins the most difficult time in Jesus life. Spend some time thinking about how this was for Jesus and what it means for you.
Questions for Discussion and/or Meditation

1) In Luke 23:34, Jesus is on the cross and he says, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Is there someone in your life that you need to forgive? Sometimes that can be really difficult, so how do you go about doing that?

2) 20:29, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” That’s you! You are blessed by Jesus because you have believed in Him through His Word.

Thanks for participating in our Bible Boot Camp and journey through the book of John! I pray that you continue to be blessed as you approach God’s Word. May it be a life long journey for you!

Pastor Caleb