



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN STUDY

"The Basics" Series

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If we were going to ask someone to write a biography on your life, your closest friend might give the best account. Well, it appears the apostle John was Jesus' closest friend—at least John thought he was! The 21 chapters of John are some of the greatest Scriptures to take students through, especially those just exploring Christ. Peruse this "John Study". Recruit a group of students who know each other and will be excited and committed to come each week. Don't make it a teaching time or set yourself up as the "answer man". You are simply facilitating discussion. Have them take turns reading aloud each chapter, then ask these questions, one at a time. Let them take rabbit trails and ask questions. Feel free to say, "Hmm, that's a great question. Not sure I have a good answer. What does someone else think?" Transform them from passive listeners to engaged discoverers! I've seen hundreds of students either come to Christ or consider Him deeply as a result of the various "John Studies" I've started over the years. May God be with you!

John 1

If you were God, how would you choose to communicate with man?

How do you think we can know if God has communicated with us?

What do verses 1-4 tell us about God's communication?

Why do you think John puts conditions on being part of God's family in verses 11-13? Isn't everyone a part of his family?

How is being a member of God's family similar/dissimilar to your family?

There are five people described in 1:35-51. How did they come to follow Christ? Can you identify with any of these people? How?

How could an understanding that God became a man affect your life this week?

John 2

Why do people believe in miracles or not believe in miracles?

What do you think John wants us to know about Jesus by recording his presence at a wedding?

Describe your response to this miracle. Be honest.

What do you think led Jesus to take such dramatic steps to clear the temple?

If Jesus were to return today, what things do you think he would want to clear out of our churches?

Why didn't Jesus approve the belief of the people in verses 23-25?

Do people today hold those same attitudes? How is this demonstrated?

John 3

If you could ask Jesus one question, what would it be?

Let's develop a brief bio of Nicodemus. Who was he? What was his understanding of Jesus? What do the circumstances of his visit reveal about him? What was his question?

How would you describe Nicodemus' understanding of spirituality?

How did Jesus correct Nicodemus' understanding?

Why did Jesus insist that one must be born all over again to enter God's Kingdom?

What do you think Jesus means by being "born again"?

What would a life look like if one was born again?

What do you think prevents people from being born again today?

John 4

The Jews and Samaritans were religious and political antagonists. A long history had created an intense rivalry and hatred. The Jews considered any contact with Samaritans as a violation of their religious code. Why do you think Jesus would go through Samaria and then talk with a Samaritan woman?

What does this decision tell us about Jesus?

What do you think he meant by being “living water”?

What is the “thirst” that he talks about?

How do we go about trying to satisfy our hungers or thirsts in life?

Why do you think the woman didn’t understand what Jesus meant by “living water”?

What can keep us from experiencing the living water that Jesus describes?

Why were the disciples so surprised to find Jesus with this woman?

How would you have responded if you were one of the disciples?

John 5

Why do you think Jesus chose this lame man out of the multitude?

It was obvious that the man was desperate for healing. Why do you think Jesus asked him, “Do you want to be healed?”

If you were one of the religious leaders, why would you be so upset?

Jesus told the man to stop sinning. Is it possible for someone to do this? Why do you think Jesus gave this command?

In what ways does Jesus say he is equal with the Father? (5:19-31)

What witnesses are mentioned in this passage concerning Jesus? (5:31-47)

What is the point that John is trying to make in presenting these witnesses?

Even after this discussion, people still refused to come to Jesus.

Why do you think they persisted in their unbelief?

Are people today any different?

John 6

In this passage, what motivated people to follow Jesus?

How did He respond to them? Why

What motivates people today to follow Jesus? Are they different from the people in this passage?

What did Jesus mean when he referred to himself as the “bread of life”? How did the Jews respond to this claim?

What do verses 44-45 teach about what God does and what people do in the process of following Christ?

Why didn't Jesus try to smooth things over when he saw that the Jews were offended by what he said?

What teachings of Jesus have you found difficult to accept? Be honest.

Describe the truth Jesus is communicating in verse 63. How would you picture the "life" that Jesus is talking about?

Why do you think Peter and the others decided to stay?

If you had to provide one reason to follow Jesus at this time in your life, what would that reason be?

John 7

Why do you think Jesus' own brothers did not believe in him?

How did the people react to Jesus' teaching?

What did Jesus' response reveal about his own authority?

What misconceptions did people have about Jesus? How do verses 11-13 correct these misconceptions?

Jesus tells the Jews that they do not know God (7:28, 29). Why was Jesus so vehement in his statements?

How would you react if someone told you that you did not know God?

What evidence is given in this chapter for Jesus being God?

Why is Jesus' deity so hard for people to accept today?

How could Jesus being God impact your belief in him?

John 8

Why do you think the Pharisees took this woman to Jesus?

Describe Jesus' attitude toward this woman.

If you were the woman, how would you feel about Jesus?

What does this incident teach us about forgiveness?

What do you think Jesus meant when he referred to himself as the "light of the world"?

In verses 23-24, what startling claims is Jesus making about people's personal destinies?

How did his listeners respond in verse 25?

Do you think people are still confused about Jesus' identity today?

Jesus spoke of truth and freedom in verse 32. What do you think he means by these terms?

In verse 34, note the symptom that people in spiritual slavery continually demonstrate. What must happen before a person can be really free?

Is it possible to believe in God without believing in Jesus?

John 9

What connection did the disciples make between sin and sickness?

Do people today believe the same thing?

How did Jesus respond to this correlation?

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How do you think sin and suffering are related?

What convinced some of the Pharisees to conspire against Jesus?

Why did Jesus keep healing on the Sabbath when it upset the Pharisees so strongly?

What do you think was the blind man's original motive in relating to Jesus? What were the Pharisees' motives?

Who do you most identify with – the blind man or the Pharisees?

What do you think is the point Jesus is trying to make in verses 39-41?

Do you think this is still true about people today?

John 10

What do you think Jesus is trying to teach with the analogy of a sheep, a shepherd, and a robber?

How does Jesus contrast himself with the robber?

What is he trying to say by comparing himself to a gate?

If you were in the crowd, how would you feel about Jesus from what he said?

What does it mean for us to hear his voice? Have you ever heard his voice?

What question did the Jews ask Jesus in 3:22-24? Would you ask this question today?

How did Jesus answer their question?

How did the Jews respond to Jesus' claim?

Why did they consider this claim blasphemous?

How would people today react to these claims of Christ?

John 11

Why do you think Jesus delayed going to Lazarus?

What are the implications of Jesus' assertion that "I am the resurrection and the life"?

What must happen to someone before he or she can share in this promise?

Since Jesus knew that he would soon raise Lazarus from the dead, why did he weep?

Describe the different reactions to this miracle. Why do you think people rejected Christ after this supernatural event? Do people give the same reasons today?

Who do you most identify with in this group – Martha, the believing Jews, or the unbelieving Jews?

What was the rationale used by the high priest to justify the plan to put a good man like Jesus to death?

John 12

Footwashing was a custom of hospitality. How did Mary take this a step further?

How comfortable are you with Mary's act of kindness? Do you identify with her motivation or with the objection of Judas?

What do you think Jesus means when he refers to the devil as the “prince of this world”?

Why do you think Jesus talks about Satan so frequently?

How would you describe people's beliefs about Satan today?

What lesson was Jesus teaching in his illustration about the grain of wheat?

Why is it that some people cannot believe in him?

What do you think Jesus is trying to communicate about judgment in verses 44-50?

How do you feel about Jesus' assertions about judgment?

John 13

Why didn't Peter want Jesus to wash his feet?

What made Peter change his mind and ask for a full bath?

If Jesus were to wash your feet, how would you react?

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach his friends by washing their feet?

Christ made two assertions in verse 13. What does he mean by them? What are their implications for us?

Why do you think Jesus told his disciples ahead of time about his death and betrayal?

How did they respond?

If you were at this same meal, how do you think you would have responded?

What would betraying Christ look like today?

Why do you think Judas betrayed Christ?

In verses 34 and 35, what does Jesus say should characterize all true believers? How do you think Christians are doing at obeying this command today?

John 14

Some say that there are many paths to God. What do you think about this statement?

How does Jesus want his disciples to respond to his departure?

How would you describe God's house?

In what way is Jesus preparing a place for you?

What do you think Jesus means when he says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"?

Would this be a popular statement today? Why or why not?

How does Jesus answer Philip's question? What do you think about his reply?

Who is the “other counselor” in verse 16?

What does this counselor do for the believer?

What promise is made to those who, out of love, obey Christ?

What do you think is the difference between Christ’s peace and the peace of the world?

How do we need this peace today?

John 15

What is Jesus saying about himself and his followers through the illustration of the vine, the fruit, the branch, and the vine dresser?

What happens to the branches that bear fruit? What happens to the branches that do not bear fruit?

How can this teaching affect our lives today?

What is the greatest command? (15:12, 13, 14)

Why do you think love is so important to Jesus?

If our small group loved one another in the way that Jesus described, what would happen?

What difference does it make that the world does not know God?

What makes the world fully accountable for its sin?

What was going to happen to the disciples for following Jesus?

How can these same things still happen to his followers today?

John 16

When we talk about the Holy Spirit, what comes to mind for you?

How will Jesus provide for his followers after he leaves them?

What role of the Holy Spirit in the unbeliever's life? (16:8-11)

What does Jesus promise that the Holy Spirit will do for the Christians? (16:12-15)

Have you ever experienced this work of the Holy Spirit? Describe what you mean.

What does it mean to glorify Christ? How can this be done practically? (16:16-33)

Jesus says a lot about prayer in this passage. How does he describe effective prayer?

Jesus foresaw a crisis in the lives of His disciples. What was it?

What would bring it on? What good would come from it?

John 17

How would you describe eternal life?

Do you think we can know for sure whether we will have eternal life?

What does this passage tell us about eternal life?

From these verses, what motivated Jesus to pray for his disciples?

Why would the world hate Jesus' disciples?

What means did God provide so that his message would reach the world? How do his followers participate in this mission?

If you were listening to this prayer by Jesus, how would you feel about God? About yourself?

John 18

What steps did the religious authorities take to arrest and imprison Jesus?

If you were one of the disciples, how would you have responded to Judas?

How did the people react when Jesus identified himself?

After stating so boldly that he would not deny Christ, Peter ended up denying him. Why do you think this happened?

In what ways can we face the same temptations that Peter did?

How did Jesus respond to his betrayal?

How could his example help us when we feel betrayed?

In what ways do we betray Jesus with our words and conduct?

How did Jesus defend himself at his trial?

John 19

What did Pilate and the soldiers do to Jesus?

Why did the Jews insist Jesus had to die?

If you had been a member of Jesus' family or one of his disciples, how would you have reacted to his crucifixion?

How was Jesus humiliated?

Why didn't the Jews want the bodies of those crucified left on the cross?

What did the soldiers do to Jesus?

Why did John record the details of Jesus' death? (19:35)

How important are the historical eyewitness accounts of Jesus' death and resurrection?

John 20

Who did Jesus appear to and why do you think he chose these individuals?

If you were Mary, Peter, or John, what thoughts would run through your mind when you discovered the empty tomb?

What evidence did the disciples have for Christ's resurrection?

Why do you think the disciples were meeting behind locked doors?

What was different about Jesus after he rose from the dead?

Do you think Thomas' concerns are still true of people today? Why?

What does Jesus say about true belief?

John 21

Describe the final exchange between Peter and Jesus. What do you think Jesus wanted Peter to grasp?

If Jesus had a final exchange with you, how would it be similar to or different from Peter's conversation?

Notice how John ends the book. What does this tell you about his purpose?

Turn back to John 20:31, 32. Do you think John accomplished his goals?

How has your life been affected by this book?