

# *Read John Together*

There are hundreds of Bible reading plans that you can find on the internet with the click of a button. Instead of creating yet another Bible reading plan, we have created a **Read Together** plan.

On Sundays from April to September, Cottonwood will be learning from the gospel of John as a church. This plan will guide you through reading the book of John from now until the end of the series.

You live a busy life. Instead of setting a daily reading goal, this plan sets a weekly reading goal. That way, you and your family can choose whether to read a whole section in one sitting or spread it out throughout the week.

We have prepared a guide that will take you week-to-week. The **As You Read** section will give you guided questions to think about the reading. The **Digging Deeper** section will have advanced questions for those who want to do a bit of a deeper dive.

The **Reflecting** section will have a few discussion questions that will help you apply that week's reading to your life. We recommend doing these with your family or friends. We've left space after each question in case you'd like to write down your answers to record your journey through the book of John.

# *John Reading Plan*

<i>Week</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Week</i>	<i>Reading</i>
Apr. 21 - Apr. 27	□1:1 - 1:34	Aug. 4 - Aug. 10	□13:1 - 13:38
Apr. 28 - May 4	□1:35 - 2:12	Aug. 11 - Aug. 17	□14:1 - 14:31
May 5 - May 11	□2:13 - 3:36	Aug. 18 - Aug. 24	□15:1 - 16:15
May 12 - May 18	□4:1 - 4:42	Aug. 25 - Aug. 31	□16:16 - 17:26
May 19 - May 25	□4:43 - 5:29	Sept. 1 - Sept. 7	□18:1 - 18:40
May 26 - June 1	□5:30 - 6:21	Sept. 8 - Sept. 14	□19:1 - 19:42
June 2 - June 8	□6:22 - 6:71	Sept. 15 - Sept. 21	□20:1 - 20:30
June 9 - June 15	□7:1 - 7:35	Sept. 22 - Sept. 28	□21:1 - 21:25
June 16 - June 22	□7:37 - 8:20		
June 23 - June 29	□8:21 - 8:59		
June 30 - July 6	□9:1 - 9:41		
July 7 - July 13	□10:1 - 10:42		
July 14 - July 20	□11:1 - 11:44		
July 21 - July 27	□11:45 - 12:19		
July 28 - Aug. 3	□12:20 - 12:50		

# *Introduction to John*

## ***What Kind of Book is John?***

The book of John is a “gospel.” The word gospel means “good news.” Gospels were how ancient rulers announced the coming of a new kingdom. So, the book of John announces that Jesus is the Son of God who brings us to eternal life.

## ***What is John About?***

The Gospel of John puts Jesus’s divinity on display through His speeches and miracles, compelling us to believe in Him. John focuses on seven “signs” (miracles) that Jesus performs, and seven statements that Jesus uses to describe Himself. These narratives and speeches reveal that Jesus is not just a special human - He is God in human flesh.

John uses many Old Testament images to show us that Jesus is the same God that showed up throughout Israel’s history. Jesus is not a new God to replace the “old” one. He is the very same God that we read about in our Old Testament. As you learn about Jesus in John’s gospel, you will learn more about the God who created all things and who is active in your life.

## ***Who Wrote John?***

The gospel of John itself does not tell us who wrote it. However, early Christians said that John the disciple of Jesus wrote the book. So, we call this book the gospel of John.

John was a Jewish man who was called to follow Jesus alongside his brother James. He was Jesus’s closest disciple and friend. He was an eyewitness to many of Jesus’s teachings and miracles. It is likely that he also wrote 1, 2, and 3 John, and the book of Revelation.

# April 21 - April 27

## John 1:1 - 1:34

### ***As You Read***

This section tells us that Jesus is God, and He has been around since before the creation of the world. In this chapter, Jesus becomes a human and is baptized by a man named John.

1) John begins his gospel by echoing the words of Genesis 1:1 - "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*" Why do you think John begins his gospel this way?

2) As you read, look for the reasons that Jesus became human. Pay attention to verses 12, 17, and 29, for example.

3) What happened when Jesus was baptized? Why do you think it's important?

### ***Digging Deeper***

John the Baptist believes that he is fulfilling Isaiah's words. Read **Isaiah 40:1-11**. What does this tell us about John the Baptist? More importantly, what can we learn about Jesus from Isaiah 40?

## ***Digging Deeper*** (continued)

John 1:14 says that Jesus “dwelt” or “lived” among us. The word here is related to the word for “Tabernacle,” which is the tent God lived in while the Israelites wandered through the wilderness. What can we learn about Jesus from this connection?

## ***Reflecting***

Jesus already came to the world, but John still had to prepare the way for people to see and receive Him. Jesus is already present in your life - what does it look like to prepare your heart to see and receive Him?

After you're finished, take some time to ponder what you read and what you wrote. Pay attention to what your soul feels, and anything the Holy Spirit might have to say to you.

# *April 28 - May 4*

## *John 1:35 - 2:12*

### ***As You Read***

In this section, Jesus calls His first disciples. He also performs His first sign by turning water into wine.

1) In John 1:35-51, list the ways people believe in Jesus and why they become His students. What does this tell you about Jesus?

2) The seven miracles in the book of John reveal who Jesus is. What does the story of Jesus turning water into wine reveal about Jesus? (see John 2:2-11).

### ***Digging Deeper***

In John 1:51, Jesus compares Himself to the ladder that Jacob saw in his dream. Read about it in **Genesis 28:10-11**. What can this story tell us about Jesus?

In chapter two, Jesus turned water to wine. In the past, God turned the Nile River into blood when He delivered His people from slavery. What can we learn about Jesus from this connection?

## ***Reflecting***

To be a disciple is to be a student. Jesus wants us to be His students. What do you need to learn from Jesus? How can you become his student?"

Jesus "displayed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him" (2:11). Is there a story in your life where God showed you His glory? What did you learn about God from that story?

After you're finished, take some time to ponder what you read and what you wrote. Pay attention to what your soul feels, and anything the Holy Spirit might have to say to you.

# *May 5 - May 11*

## *John 2:13 - 3:36*

### ***As You Read***

In this section, Jesus goes to the Temple in Jerusalem. He is upset by what He sees. Afterward, Jesus tells Nicodemus why He came to earth. John the Baptist tells his disciples more about who Jesus is.

1) What does Jesus find when He enters the temple? How does He react? (See John 2:14-16). What does this tell us about the character of Christ, the Son of God?

2) Highlight the words “believe,” “belief,” and “faith” every time you see it in this section, and for the rest of the book of John. What can you learn about these words from these verses?

### ***Digging Deeper***

In John 3:14, Jesus compares himself to a bronze serpent that Moses used when the Israelites were sick in the wilderness. Read about it in Numbers 21:6-9. What can this story tell us about Jesus?



## ***Digging Deeper*** (continued)

Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit is like a wind that “blows where it wants to” (3:8). The Holy Spirit is how we are born from “water and spirit” (3:5). Compare these statements to Genesis 1:2. What can this connection tell us about the Holy Spirit? What can it tell us about our relationship to the Holy Spirit?

## ***Reflecting***

The Holy Spirit gives us new life. This means that we experience deep change and live more like Jesus. Are there any areas where you need new life? List them. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you live a new life.

This section teaches us that when we look to Jesus, we are saved from trouble and can live in confidence. Are you gripped by fear? Is there trouble in your life? Take a moment to look to Jesus in prayer.

After you're finished, take some time to ponder what you read and what you wrote. Pay attention to what your soul feels, and anything the Holy Spirit might have to say to you.

# *May 12 - May 18*

## *John 4:1 - 4:42*

### ***As You Read***

In this chapter, Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman at a well. Because of their conversation, she believes in Jesus and tells her whole town about Him

1) Imagine what the Samaritan woman was thinking about and feeling during each part of the conversation.

2) Pay attention to what Jesus teaches about worship and about “living water.”

### ***Digging Deeper***

The split between the Samaritans and Judeans went back hundreds of years. Long ago, the nation Israel was united. However, the kingdom split into two; Israel in the north, and Judah in the south. The kingdom in the north abandoned God’s temple and worshipped other gods in other places (2 Kings 17:6-23). The kingdom in the south worshipped at the correct temple, but they were also unfaithful to God.

In Jesus’s time, the northern region was called Samaria and the southern region was called Judea. The people from Samaria and Judea disagreed on what it meant to be the people of God and what proper worship looked like. Reread John 4:19-26 in light of this.

## ***Reflecting***

The Judeans worshipped in truth, but not in spirit. The Samaritans had heart, but they did not have truth. What do you need more of in your worship life - truth, spirit, or both? How might you grow in that area?

Jesus crosses an ethnic line despite what others think (4:9). How might this influence your behavior toward those who are different from you?

After you're finished, take some time to ponder what you read and what you wrote. Pay attention to what your soul feels, and anything the Holy Spirit might have to say to you.

# *May 19 - May 25*

## *John 4:43 - 5:29*

### ***As You Read***

Jesus performs two more signs. He saves a young boy from death just by saying a word. He also heals a paralyzed man. Then, He teaches that He will one day raise the dead to life just by saying a word

1) John contrasts death and life, light and darkness, good and evil. Pay attention to the contrasts in this chapter.

2) The miracles in John are directly related to Jesus's teaching. How do the two miracles (4:46-5:17) complement Jesus's teaching in John 5:19-29?

### ***Digging Deeper***

The Sabbath was a day of rest that was observed every Saturday. No work was allowed on the Sabbath. This was to honor that God is the king of all creation. In John's gospel, the Sabbath is also a day of death. Jesus is laid in a tomb on Friday night and "rests" for all of Saturday (John 19:41-20:1).

With this in mind, what can we learn about Jesus from the fact that He breaks the Sabbath intentionally in John 5:1-18?

## ***Reflecting***

Jesus can break the power of sin and death with just one word. Where do you see the power of death and/or sin in your life? Bring it to Jesus in prayer.

Jesus sets us free, but we also have to stay free (John 5:14). Are there any habits that are keeping you stuck in your old way of living? Take some time to ponder what you read and what you wrote. Pay attention to what your soul feels, and anything the Holy Spirit might have to say to you.

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# May 26 - June 1

## John 5:30 - 6:21

### *As You Read*

Jesus teaches more about His relationship with the Father. Jesus says that Moses's writings teach about Himself. Then, he performs two more signs. He feeds 5,000 people with 5 loaves of bread and walks across a sea.

1) Pay attention to what the disciples of Jesus feel in response to the different situations they face. Then, pay attention to what they feel in response to Jesus.

2) If you are familiar with the Exodus story, take note of all the details that point us back to Exodus.

### *Digging Deeper*

Moses is an important figure in Jewish tradition. He is the prophet that delivered God's people from slavery in Egypt. He is also believed to be the one who wrote the Torah: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In **Deuteronomy 18:15-22**, Moses says that God will one day raise another prophet like himself. This is what the people recognize in John 6:14.

What made the people recognize that Jesus was that prophet? Why do you think Jesus hides once the people recognize Him?

## ***Reflecting***

Jesus involved his disciples in the miracle where He fed 5,000 people. Do you think that Jesus might want you to be involved with what He is doing on earth, too? If yes, what might those things be? If no, why not?

During both signs, the disciples are worried. But, Jesus shows them that He is faithful. What worries do you have? What would it look like to trust Jesus's faithfulness in that situation?

After you're finished, take some time to ponder what you read and what you wrote. Pay attention to what your soul feels, and anything the Holy Spirit might have to say to you.