

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 - 7:36	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		

June 2 - June 8

John 6:22 - 6:71

As You Read

In this section, the 5,000 men that Jesus miraculously fed seek Him out. Jesus teaches them that He is the bread of life. After Jesus's strange teaching, many disciples leave but Peter confesses His faith.

1) Jesus gives a strange teaching in this chapter. As you read, write down the things that shock you or confuse you.

2) In this section, we see two different responses to Jesus. Compare the crowd's response (verses 28, 30, 34, 41-42, 52, 60, 66) to Peter's response (verses 68-69). What differences do you notice?

Digging Deeper

Jesus compares Himself to the bread that the Israelites ate when God sustained them in the wilderness. Read **1 Corinthians 10:1-22** to see another New Testament author give a similar teaching, or read **Deuteronomy 8** to see an important Old Testament teaching on the purpose of the bread in the wilderness. After reading one or both of these passages: *What does it mean that Jesus is the Bread of Life? How would we "eat" from Him and find life?*

Reflecting

The crowds miss out on Jesus because they are looking for signs and for answers to their questions. Peter, on the other hand, recognizes that Jesus is the source of his life. His only question is “to whom else would I go?”

Jesus does not always give us the signs we’re looking for, and He does not always immediately answer our questions. He does, however, promise to give us life as the “bread of life.” What would it look like for you to approach Jesus as the source of your life rather than the answer to your questions?

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.

June 9 - June 15

John 7:1 - 7:36

As You Read

In these verses, Jesus celebrates the Feast of Tabernacles and the Judeans confront Him because they want to kill Him. Jesus teaches about what it means to fulfill the Law, and the crowds are confused by Him again.

1) This passage assumes you remember **John 5:1-18**. You may want to skim read it again to refresh your memory. What do you remember about John 5:1-18?

2) The Law is meant to show us the will of God. Pay attention to the verses where Jesus teaches about God's Law or God's will (verses 14-24). What can we learn about God's will and God's law? How is this similar to or different from how the Pharisees talked about God's will and God's law?

Digging Deeper

The Pharisees in Jesus's day turned the Law into a code for keeping up the right appearance. Jesus claims that the Law was never about making our lives look right on the outside, but rather about transforming our *hearts* to do God's will.

Read **Matthew 22:34-40**, **Romans 13:8-10**, and/or **Galatians 5:22-23**. Based on what you read, what does it mean to "fulfill the Law" or live according to God's will?

Reflecting

Your life might look right on the outside, but Jesus teaches us that God's law is about transforming our hearts. Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal how He might want to transform not just your actions, but your heart.

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.

June 16 - June 22

John 7:37 - 8:20

As You Read

In this section, Jesus compares the Holy Spirit to rivers of water. The crowds doubt whether Jesus is a valid prophet. Jesus forgives a woman caught in adultery, and teaches that He is the light of the world.

1) What can we learn about the Holy Spirit through what Jesus says in this section?

2) What do we learn about Jesus through His words and His actions?

Digging Deeper

The Feast of Tabernacles celebrated God's guidance and provision when the Israelites wandered through the wilderness. During this time, God miraculously provided water from a rock to sustain His people (**Exodus 17:1-7**) and supplied a pillar of light to guide them (**Exodus 33:21-22**). However, they are not allowed to enter the promised land because of their unfaithfulness (**Psalms 95:8-11**).

All of Jesus's actions and dialogue in this chapter take place during the Feast of Tabernacles. What can this connection tell us about Jesus? What can it tell us about the people listening to Him?

Reflecting

The story of the woman caught in adultery shows us that even the most righteous looking people have sin to repent of. Yet, the story also shows us that Jesus freely forgives and frees those who come to Him. Take a moment to come to Jesus. Ask Him to reveal if there is sin hidden in your life. Allow Him to forgive you and set you free.

The Holy Spirit is a well of life when we are weary. Jesus is the light that guides us through the confusing and difficult times of life. Take a moment and list the situations in your life where you need supernatural strength or guidance. Ask God to help 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.

June 23 - June 29

John 8:21 - 8:59

As You Read

In this section, Jesus says that the crowds will not understand who He is until He is lifted up in crucifixion and resurrection. He teaches about what it means to be a child of Abraham and a child of God.

1) What is the key to true freedom according to Jesus?

2) What does it mean to be a child of God according to Jesus?

Digging Deeper

Being a child of Abraham was an important concept for the Jewish people. They believed that if they were part of Abraham's family, that automatically made them part of God's family. And, if they were part of God's family, that meant they had assurance of eternal life.

Jesus teaches that being a child of Abraham and a child of God is not simply about having the right bloodline. It's about living the way Abraham lived. Paul teaches more about what it is like to be a "child of Abraham" even if we are not his physical descendants in **Galatians 3:6-9**. Compare what Paul teaches there to what Jesus teaches in John 8:31-59.

If you are struggling to understand John 8:56-59, read **Exodus 3:13-15**.

Reflecting

When we put our faith in Jesus, we have the right to be called children of God (see John 1:12). How does this make you feel? How would it change the way you see yourself if you believed that about yourself? How would it change the way you live?

The truth about who Jesus is has the power to set us free. In the gospel of John, Jesus is the bread that nourishes us, the light that guides us, the door that gives us access to God, the shepherd who protects us, the vine that gives us life, the resurrection, the way, the truth, the life, and so much more. What truth about Jesus do you need help believing? Take time and ask the Holy Spirit to help you believe that truth.

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.

June 30 - July 6

John 9:1 - 9:41

As You Read

In this section, Jesus heals a man who was blind from birth. After this, He teaches about spiritual blindness.

1) Jesus taught that the Spirit is the water that gives us life. He also taught that He is the light that guides us to life. In this story, Jesus sends a man to wash in water, and he recovers His spiritual sight. All the signs that Jesus performs in John are both literal and symbolic. What can we learn about how Jesus heals our spiritual blindness through this story with those connections in mind?

2) Notice what the Judeans believe about the source of the man's blindness (9:2, 34). Contrast this with how Jesus sees his condition (9:3). What differences do you notice?

Reflecting

Do you have any stories about a time you were spiritually blind but Jesus helped you see the truth clearly?

The Judeans were so focused on identifying, avoiding, controlling, and eradicating sin that they could not see the glory of God right in front of them. Are there any things you are focused on that might be preventing you from seeing the goodness and glory of God in your life or in the lives of others?

Often, we don't realize what is preventing us from seeing God clearly and don't know how to see clearly again. It takes the help of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of Jesus. Spend a few minutes in prayer. Ask Him to help you see Him clearly. Ask Him to help you identify any blind spots you might have.

July 7 - July 13

John 10:1 - 10:42

As You Read

In this section, Jesus teaches that He is the “gate for the sheep” and the “good shepherd.” He has another disagreement with the Judeans, then returns to the Jordan where He was baptized with John.

1) The main idea of this chapter is that Jesus is a good leader as the Messiah and God. Write down any observations you can make about Jesus’s character as leader

2) The people listening either do not understand Jesus or reject Him altogether. Why don’t they believe Him? Why do you think they respond so negatively to His words?

Digging Deeper

When Jesus teaches about being the gate and the good shepherd (10:1-21), He is probably pointing back to **Ezekiel 34:1-16** and **Jeremiah 23:1-4** where God judges the wicked “shepherds” or leaders of Israel and promises that a good shepherd will come.

When the Judeans dispute Jesus’s authority and His status as Messiah and God (10:22-39), Jesus responds with a quote from **Psalms 82** (John 10:34). Psalm 82 depicts a scene where God is talking to the rulers of the nations. God judges these rulers for failing their jobs, and then sends them away.

Read one or all of these Old Testament passages. What can we learn about Jesus’s leadership from them?

Reflecting

Jesus uses the beautiful metaphors of a “gate” and a “shepherd” to show us that He is faithful and caring. What images or words about Jesus as the “gate” or “shepherd” stood out to you? Is there anything He says that you find hard to believe?

Spend some time and read **Psalm 23** slowly and prayerfully. Imagine that you are saying the words directly to Jesus. Write down any words, images, thoughts, or ideas that come to you. Then, take some time in silence to think about 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.

July 14 - July 20

John 11:1 - 11:44

As You Read

In this chapter, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

1) Why is Jesus far away from Jerusalem in the first place (see John 10:31, 39-40). What does Jesus risk by returning to Jerusalem to heal His friend?

2) Jesus gives two different responses to Lazarus's sisters Mary and Martha. What are those two different responses (11:21-27 vs 11:32-36)? What does each response reveal about Jesus?

Digging Deeper

In the Old Testament, death is seen as an inescapable force that swallows up light, life, and hope (example: Psalm 88). Yet, the Old Testament regularly shows hope that someday, something more powerful than death will show up (example: Isaiah 25:8-9).

Another curious example is **Song of Songs 8:6**. What might this verse teach us about Jesus in John 11?

Reflecting

Jesus loves His friend Lazarus so much that He is willing to risk His own life so that Lazarus would have his back. Jesus did the same thing for all of us - He laid down His life so that we could have life. Take a moment and ponder this. Do you find it easy to believe that Jesus loves you that much? What makes it difficult to believe that?

Jesus gives different words to Mary and Martha. What He gives both of them, though, is His presence and love in the middle of their hardship. We can find Jesus's love in our hardships, too.

One way to find Jesus's love in hardship is through prayer. Another way we can find Jesus's love in hardship is through other people. If you are reading this guide with a family or a community, take a moment to pray for each other's hardships. Spend time listening to one another, then spend time listening to the Holy Spirit to see if He gives you any words to say to each other.

July 21 - July 27

John 11:45 - 12:19

As You Read

The Judeans continue to plot to kill Jesus after He miraculously raised Lazarus from the dead. Mary, Lazarus's sister, anoints Jesus's feet. Then, Jesus enters Jerusalem.

The main idea of this passage is that Jesus is prepared for His own death. Pay attention to how He prepares for and teaches about His death. Also pay attention to how other characters prepare or plan for His death.

Digging Deeper

As Jesus prepared for His death, the Jewish people prepared for the Feast of the Passover. **Exodus 12** tells the story about the first Passover when God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt and gives instructions to future generations on how to celebrate that day.

What can we learn about Jesus's words or actions in light of these Passover preparations?

Reflecting

When Mary anoints Jesus's feet, she is preparing Jesus for a burial. When the crowds wave palm branches at Jesus, they are preparing Him for a coronation. Mary expresses her love through sacrifice, while the crowds express their joy for celebration.

Both pictures of Jesus are accurate. Both responses to Jesus are appropriate - even though they look different, they are acts of worship. Jesus is both humble *and* glorious, both crucified *and* victorious, both servant *and* king. Sometimes, we respond with great joy and celebration. Other times, we might respond with great sorrow or a deep sense of love.

When you think about Jesus right now, who do you see? What do you feel?

What does *your* worshipful response to Jesus look like? Is it celebration, gratitude, silence, obedience, love, or something else?

July 28 - August 3

John 12:20 - 12:50

As You Read

Jesus gives his final public teaching before His death.

1) What does Jesus teach us about the purpose of His death (verses 20-36)?

2) Why did so many people struggle to believe in Jesus according to John (verses 37-43)?

Digging Deeper

When John explains why people did not believe in Jesus, he points back to Isaiah's ministry. Isaiah was a prophet in a time when Israel wanted to be saved from their immediate troubles. In Isaiah **6:9-13**, God shows that He will not solve their immediate questions or problems. This is not because He is abandoning them, though. Isaiah sees much better things in Israel's future (see Isaiah 40 and 61, for example). In **Isaiah 53**, Isaiah shows how the people's momentary unbelief leads to the death of the Suffering Servant, which leads to the salvation of many.

How can this help us understand the purpose of the people's unbelief in the book of John?

Reflecting

Jesus gives us what feels like a paradoxical teaching about life and death: “Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life” (12:25). If you’re reading alone, take a few minutes to think. If you’re reading with friends or family, take a few minutes to discuss. What is difficult about this teaching? How would we apply this teaching in our day-to-day lives?

Many people do not fully believe or confess their belief in Jesus because they are afraid of what others think (12:42-43). Are there situations in your life where you’re afraid of what others will think about your faith? What would it look like to be a *little* bit more bold in those situations?

This final public teaching is a “checkpoint” in the book of John. Take a moment and ponder how God has been speaking to you through the book of John so far. What has encouraged you? Are there any lingering questions or discomforts that the book brought up? How has your image of Jesus changed or grown as you’ve read the book of John?