

Encountering Jesus in the Gospel of John.

You're about to embark on a journey of discovery in one of the four historical narratives, or Gospels, about the life of Jesus Christ. The word "gospel" in the original Greek language meant "good news." The New Testament has four good news' books, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Each Gospel paints a different picture of Jesus Christ. Why four books?

As adults, we assume a variety of life roles, often at the same time. These roles include being a husband or wife, mother or father, son or daughter, etc. We do not change in these roles but we may act differently or emphasize certain qualities in each one. The same is true of Jesus Christ. Each of the four historical narratives in the New Testament pictures a different role or aspect of His life and ministry.

In the Gospel of John, the writer paints a portrait of Jesus as the Son of God. The author is John, one of the twelve disciples, followers who had special access to Jesus and His teachings. As an intimate of Jesus, John was an eyewitness to the events, messages, and conversations from Jesus' public and private life. As a close follower and friend, John opens the door of Jesus' private life and ministry to the world.

The Gospel of John helps answer such questions as:

- Who is Jesus?
- What does it mean to follow Him?
- What is true belief?
- What is eternal life and how does one obtain it?

Keep the above questions in mind as you read and discuss John's writings.

The following time-tested discussion questions will yield new discoveries about each chapter of John. In your discussion, do not feel compelled to talk about each question. You can pick from the variety of questions to encourage discovery. Also, not every section of every chapter has a set of questions. This is designed to keep your discussions focused on the most important parts of John's account. Many of the chapters have a "Conversation Starter" to introduce the main subject of the chapter to the group. This question is optional.



John 1

Conversation Starter.

- 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?

Read John 1:1-9.

John starts his gospel with a big idea, the “Word.” Our words reveal what is in our hearts and on our minds. So Jesus Christ is God’s “Word,” revealing His heart and mind to us. To connect with his Jewish audience, John’s Gospel parallels the Book of Genesis in the Old Testament. God’s words in Genesis shows a God in action, speaking creation into existence through His words (Genesis 1:3ff). To his Greek or Roman readers, the “Word” represents the unifying, divine principle behind all of creation. Whether his audience is Jewish or Greek, John wants his readers to know that God became a man in Jesus Christ, fully revealing the Father and His ways to us.

- What do verses 1-4 tell us about God’s communication to man?
- John says that the Word is light and life. What do you think he means by light and life?
- How do you think this light and life is different from other sources of light and life (other religious teachers, books, etc.)?
- John describes this light as the “true light” (verse 9). What would qualify one light as being true, implying that another light is false?
- How do you feel about only one light being true and others being false?
- What test would you ask of Jesus Christ to see if He is true?

Read John 1:10-13.

- What does John say about how one becomes a member of God’s family?
- How do you feel about John’s statement that there’s only one way to become a member of God’s family?
- Why do you think some people receive Him and some do not?
- How would you describe your current relationship to God’s family?

Read John 1:14-18.

- Jesus is described as being full of grace and truth in verse 17. What do you think these qualities mean?
- Why do you think it’s so significant that Jesus is full of grace and truth?
- How do you think people experience Him as grace and truth?
- If a person is a follower of Christ today, how do you think he or she would demonstrate grace and truth to others?
- John says that no one has ever seen God. What do you think about this statement? Would you agree or disagree?
- Why do you think God chose to make Himself known through Jesus?
- How do you feel about the author’s description of Jesus?

Read John 1:19-28.

John the Baptist makes his first appearance in John’s Gospel. From his birth, John the Baptist had a special role. He served as an evangelist for Jesus, the coming Messiah. John challenged people to admit their sins and return to God in preparation for the Messiah’s coming. Great crowds gathered to hear him preach and many were baptized, including Jesus (Matthew 3:13-16). Like most teachers or rabbis, John had followers or disciples.

- In verses 19-28, how does John the Baptist describe his identity and mission?
- Even though he has a sizable following, how does John the Baptist describe himself in verses 26-27?



- What do you think this statement reveals about his character and mission?

Read John 1:29-34.

- The “Lamb of God” refers to the Old Testament religious system where sheep and goats were sacrificed as substitute offerings for a person’s sin or rebellion against God. Why do you think John the Baptist appealed to this cultural image?
- How do you feel about Jesus being called the Lamb of God?
- John the Baptist introduced people to Jesus in first century Palestine. How would a John the Baptist introduce people to Jesus today?

Read John 1:35-51.

- There are five people described in verses 35-51. What are the different reasons why they chose to follow Christ?
- Which of these individuals could you identify with? How do you identify with them?
- What are some reasons why a person would want to follow Jesus Christ today?



John 2

Conversation Starter.

John 2 records Jesus' first miracle. Do you think miracles still happen today?

Read John 2:1-11.

- Describe the miracle Jesus performs.
- Why do people believe in miracles/not believe in miracles?
- What do you think John wants us to know about Jesus by recording his attendance at a wedding?
- Describe your response to this miracle (amazement, skepticism, disbelief, etc.). Be honest.
- John describes this as a “sign” in verse 11. Why do you think he used the word sign rather than miracle?
- What do you think is significant about this being the first sign?

Read John 2:13-25.

The Passover Celebration was a spring festival celebrating Israel's freedom from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12:12-16). In the Exodus account, God commanded the Jewish people to place the lamb's blood over their outside doors. He would “pass over” the houses with the blood, sparing the people inside from judgment. To celebrate this Passover, Jews would eat a special meal together, remembering how God had “passed over” them, sparing them from judgment and securing their freedom from Egyptian slavery. Jewish people from across the Roman Empire would return to Jerusalem for this feast, almost doubling the city's population.

The Jewish temple was strictly divided between people who were Jews by birth and Jews by conversion. Converted Jews worshipped in one area labeled the Court of the Gentiles. Each converted Jew had to pay a temple tax to worship. Since people were coming from around the Roman Empire with a variety of national currencies, they had to convert their currency to the temple money in order to pay the tax and purchase suitable animals for sacrifice. Worship had become a big business.

- Describe the scene at the temple in Jerusalem.
- What do you think led Jesus to take such dramatic steps to clear the temple?
- What does this incident reveal about Jesus?
- If Jesus were to return today, what things do you think He would want to clear out of our churches?
- What does Jesus think about the beliefs of the people in verses 23-25?
- What type of belief do you think He would find to be appropriate?
- If you were in the crowd, how would Jesus look upon your beliefs?

John 3

The Pharisees were a prominent conservative branch of Judaism whose followers upheld the Jewish law to the extreme. While they were motivated to maintain the purity of their faith, much of Phariseism had degenerated into an outward obedience to religious minutiae rather than an act of the heart. The word Pharisee means "to separate." By practicing their interpretation of the Jewish law, someone would be pure towards God by separating from the world's contamination. The Pharisees' sizable following made them a powerful religious and political group in Palestine, with members sitting on the influential ruling Council.

Read John 3:1-15.

- Let's develop a brief biography of Nicodemus. Who was he? What was his understanding of Jesus? What do the circumstances of his visit reveal about him?
- What was Nicodemus' question?
- How would you describe Nicodemus' understanding of spirituality?
- How did Jesus correct Nicodemus' understanding?
- Why do you think Jesus insisted that one must be "born all over again" to enter God's Kingdom?
- What do you think Jesus means by being "born again"?
- How do you feel about this idea of being born again?
- How would a born-again life look different from other lives?
- Would you consider yourself to be born again in the way that Jesus describes it?

Read John 3:16-21.

- What do you think it means that God loves the world?
- How do you think people experience God's love today?
- Why do you think the author makes belief in Jesus essential for obtaining eternal life?
- How would you describe the belief needed for eternal life?
- What happens when one places their belief in Jesus Christ?
- How do you think people today love darkness and not light?
- What could change a person from loving darkness to loving light?
- What have you learned about belief from this section? How could it impact your life?

Read John 3:22-36.

The story now returns to John the Baptist. A dispute has emerged between John's disciples and a Jewish inquirer.

- What appears to be the nature of this dispute in verses 25-26?
- How does John the Baptist address the question?
- John the Baptist draws some distinctives between himself and Jesus in verses 31-35. What is he saying about how Jesus is different from himself?
- John seems to be building a case for Jesus' authority. He says that Jesus speaks the words of God and everything has been placed in His hands. What do you think it means for Jesus to have everything placed in his hands?
- How do you feel about Jesus' authority?
- John the Baptist makes a black and white statement in verse 36. What do you think it means for people to reject the Son?
- Why does rejecting the Son cause a person to forfeit eternal life?
- How do you feel about John's claim regarding one's eternal destiny and their acceptance of Jesus?
- What do you think it means for God's wrath to remain on a person (verse 36)?
- How can a loving God place His wrath upon people?
- Do you think this statement about God's wrath is still true today? Why or why not?



John 4

The Jews and Samaritans were religious and political antagonists. After the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C., the Assyrians up-rooted the ten Jewish tribes from their land and resettled them with captives from other countries. These other captives brought with them their own gods. The Jews and these captives intermarried creating the Samaritans.

The Jews in Palestine at the time of Jesus considered the Samaritans a compromised people. Their worship of other gods, and the construction of an alternative temple to the one in Jerusalem (John 4:20), betrayed their allegiance to the true God of Israel. Any contact with Samaritans was a violation of an obedient Jew's religious code. They carried this to such an extreme that it affected their travel plans. The shortest route from Jerusalem to Galilee lay on the high road straight through Samaritan territory. However, most Jews would not travel that route, preferring to detour around Samaria to avoid contact with Samaritans.

Jesus chose to travel the route through Samaria. On the way, He met and carried on a conversation with an immoral Samaritan woman. No Jewish rabbi would have voluntarily talked with a woman of "ill-repute," nor would he have drunk from her cup. Allowing his lips to touch this cup would have been a religiously unclean act, contaminating his person.

Conversation Starter.

Who could be some "Samaritans" today, people we would avoid?

Read John 4:1-42.

- What do you think Jesus wanted to demonstrate by choosing the route through Samaria?
- If you were one of the twelve disciples, how would you feel about this trip through Samaria? About Jesus talking with a Samaritan woman?
- What do you think Jesus meant by being "living water"?
- What do you think is the "thirst" that He talks about? How was the woman thirsty?
- What can keep people from experiencing the living water that Jesus provides?
- How would you describe the woman's response to this conversation?
- Why do you think her conversation with Jesus had such an impact upon her village (verse 39)?
- What do you think changed in this woman's life?
- How does a changed life impact the credibility of a message?
- If you lived in the same town as this woman, how do you think you would have responded to her story?
- What do you think it means for Jesus to be the "Savior of the world" (verse 42)?
- Do you think that title is still relevant today?

Read John 4:43-54.

- An official from King Herod's royal court begged Jesus to heal his son. How does Jesus answer this request?
- Does Jesus' reply surprise you? Why or why not?
- What does Jesus' reply tell us about true belief?
- Do you think people today approach belief in the same way?
- What role do miracles have in bringing people to faith in Christ?
- Would a miracle make any difference in your belief in God?

John 5

Conversation Starter.

Jesus heals an invalid in this chapter. What do you think qualifies a healing as miraculous? Do you know of or have you experienced any miraculous healings?

Read John 5:1-15.

- 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 a religious leader, why would you be upset?
- Jesus assumes an air of anonymity in this passage. What could His inconspicuous approach tell us about Him?
- Jesus told the man to stop sinning. Is it possible for someone to do this?
- Why do you think Jesus gave this command?
- Put yourself in the shoes of the man who was healed. How would you feel? What would you be thinking?
- Have you had any experiences where you felt God intervened in your life in some miraculous or special way? How would you describe it?

Read John 5:16-30.

- The Jewish leaders turned against Jesus because He claimed equality with the Father (verse 18). This so incensed them that they began plotting to kill Jesus. Why do you think His claim of equality was so upsetting to them?
- Some people today say that Jesus never claimed to be God. From the evidence in this chapter, how do you think Jesus would answer this charge?
- If Jesus is equal with God the Father, how could that impact a person’s response to Jesus?
- In verses 19-31, what are some ways that Jesus claims equality with the Father?
- How do you feel about Jesus’ claim to be God?
- Jesus discusses condemnation and life in this passage. What does He say about these two subjects (verses 28-30)?
- How could we know that we possess the eternal life that Jesus describes?

Read John 5:31-47.

- What witnesses to Jesus’ authority are mentioned in this passage (verses 31-47)?
- What do you think is the point that the author is making by presenting these witnesses?
- In verses 39-40, what does Jesus say about the role of the Scriptures (the Old Testament) in giving eternal life?
- Even after this discussion, people still refused to believe in Jesus. Why do you think they persisted in their unbelief?
- Jesus says that some will accept others who come in his own name but will not accept Him. Who are some of the others that people might accept today?
- It seems that a hindrance to belief is accepting the praise from others (verse 44). What do you think Jesus means by this?
- How could this discussion about Jesus’ equality with the Father affect your understanding and belief in Jesus?



John 6

Read John 6:1-15

- What motivated the crowds to follow Jesus?
- What similar motivations can people have for following Jesus today?
- How did the crowd respond to the free lunch?
- Jesus knew He was the King of the Jews. Why do you think he withdrew from the crowds?

Read John 6:16-40.

- How would you describe the crowd's motivation in verse 26?
- Do you think we can be guilty of the same motives?
- What do you think it means to work for the food which endures? What is this food (verses 27-29)?
- The work of God seems pretty simple. Is it as simple as it sounds?
- What did Jesus mean when He referred to himself as the "bread of life?"
- What are some of the unique qualities of this bread?
- What can we learn about the Father's will from verses 38-40?
- Jesus says that on the last day (the day of judgment) that He will not lose anyone that has been given to Him (verse 39). What do you think He means by this?
- Why do you think eternal life was so important to Jesus' message?
- Do you think people today are as concerned about eternal life as they appear to be in this setting?

Read John 6:41-51.

- How did the Jews respond to Jesus' claim about bread?
- Why was this claim a point of irritation with them?
- Why didn't Jesus try to smooth things over when He saw that the Jews were offended?
- What teachings of Jesus do you find to be offensive? Be honest.

Read John 6:52-59.

- The Jews began to argue about his statement of giving his flesh to eat in verse 52. How does Jesus respond?
- Where does Jesus say that we will find life?
- Eating flesh and drinking blood are vivid analogies. Why do you think Jesus chooses such graphic pictures to describe belief?

Read John 6:60-71.

The general term for a follower or student of a teacher in both Greek and Jewish cultures was a "disciple." Many people considered themselves to be Jesus' disciples but Jesus personally chose twelve to be his closest followers (Mark 3:13-14). In this passage, these disciples are those who followed Jesus but were not considered part of the inner circle of the twelve.

- How did the larger group of disciples respond to his teachings in verses 60, 61, 66?
- If you were a follower of Jesus, how would you have reacted?
- How does Jesus respond to their grumbling?
- What authority does He give to His teachings in verse 63?
- Do you think people today have the same response to His authority as those disciples did?
- Why do you think many of the disciples chose not to follow Jesus (verse 66)?
- What could cause people today to no longer follow Christ?
- Why do you think Peter and the others decided to stay with Him?
- If you had to provide one reason to follow Jesus at this time in your life, what would that be?

John 7

The Feast of Tabernacles celebrated God's provision for the Israelites during the Exodus. People would use branches to create booths in which to live for seven days. This was a special celebration for families, servants, widows, orphans and foreigners in the community. One special feature of the celebration was the pouring of water from the Pool of Siloam.

Read 7:1-13.

- Jesus has reached an interesting point in his ministry. What is happening to Him?
- Why do you think Jesus' brothers didn't believe in Him?
- How does He respond to His brothers' advice?
- Jesus makes a decision to attend the Feast. What is significant about His decision to go in secret (verse 10)?
- How would you describe the crowd's understanding of Jesus?

Read John 7:14-24.

- Jesus now makes his appearance at the Feast. How did the people react to Jesus' teaching?
- Describe the argument Jesus made for the authority of his teaching.
- The crowd believes that he is "demon-possessed." Why do you think they came to this conclusion?
- If Jesus physically appeared in the middle of a worship service today, how do you think people would respond?

Read John 7:25-52.

- How did the crowd react to Jesus' teaching in verses 30-32?
- Jesus tells the Jews that they do not know God. Why was Jesus so vehement in His statements?
- Jesus makes a bold declaration in verses 37-38. What is He saying about Himself?
- What will happen in people's lives when they believe in Jesus?
- What insights does this passage give us about the Holy Spirit?
- If we were to experience the Holy Spirit in our lives (as described by Jesus), what would it be like?
- Can we be Christians and not experience this work of the Holy Spirit?
- Jesus put the crowd in a turmoil about His identity. How do the religious leaders respond to what's going on in the crowd (verses 45-49)?
- Nicodemus makes a defense for Jesus. How did the leaders respond to him?
- How are the responses of people today similar/dissimilar to the reactions in verses 40-52?
- If you were one of Jesus' disciples observing all that was going on, what would you be thinking/feeling at this point in time?



John 8

Conversation Starter.

Do you think God forgives people with no strings attached? Why or why not?

Read John 8:1-11.

Verses 1-12 were not included in the oldest manuscripts of the Gospel of John. While these verses may not belong in the original Gospel, scholars generally believe that it is a historical account and corresponds with the character of Jesus.

- Why do you think the Pharisees brought an adulterous woman to Jesus?
- Describe Jesus' attitude toward this woman.
- If you were the woman, how would you feel about Jesus?
- Do you think Jesus takes this adulterous relationship too lightly?
- What does this incident teach us about hypocrisy and forgiveness?

Read John 8:12-30.

- The religious leaders accuse Jesus of authenticating Himself by his own arguments. How does Jesus defend Himself?
- How does Jesus claim equality with the Father in verse 19?
- In verses 23-24, what claim does Jesus make 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 asserts that He always does what pleases the Father. How do you think His life pleased God?
- Do you think we can live a life that is always pleasing to God?
- What would this kind of life look like?

Read John 8:31-47.

- Jesus spoke about truth and freedom in verses 31-32. What do you think He means?
- What would a person's life look like today if he or she knew the truth and was set free?
- In verse 34, note the symptom that people in spiritual slavery continually demonstrate. What must happen before a person can be really free?
- Jesus talks about fatherhood in verses 39-47. What is He saying about the Jewish leaders' father? What is He saying about His father?
- If God is a person's father, how would he or she respond to Jesus?
- Jesus makes some bold assertions about the devil in verse 44. What is He saying?
- Do you think Jesus viewed the devil as a real figure or a symbol of evil?
- How is our culture's beliefs about the devil similar/dissimilar to Jesus' beliefs?
- Be honest. How do you feel about Jesus' teaching about the devil?
- Is it possible to believe in God without believing in Jesus?

Read John 8:48-59.

Jesus makes some comparisons to Abraham, an Old Testament figure who lived in approximately 1800 BC. Abraham was considered to be the father of the Jewish nation (Genesis 12:1-3). All Jews could trace their lineage to Abraham.

Jesus' statement, "Before Abraham was born, I am" could only mean a claim to deity. "I am" implies continuous existence, an attribute only God possessed. Jesus asserted that before Abraham's birth, He existed. I AM was recognized by the Jews as a title of deity.

- Describe the exchange between Jesus and the religious leaders?
- Jesus makes the statement that "before Abraham was born, I am!" Why do the Jews react to this?
- Jesus never allows people to sit on the fence when it comes to His identity. How is He shaking up your understanding of who He is?

John 9

Conversation Starter.

Many people believe that suffering or illness is a punishment for wrong choices in life (“bad karma”). Do you think we suffer because of the things we do?

Read John 9:1-12.

- What connection did the disciples make between sin and sickness?
- How did Jesus respond to this correlation?
- How do you think sin and suffering are related?

Read John 9:13-34.

- What convinced some of the Pharisees to conspire against Jesus?
- They referred to Jesus as a “sinner.” What do you think this derogatory term meant to them?
- How does the blind man respond to their accusations in verses 30-33?
- The Pharisees threw the blind man out of the synagogue for his commitment to Christ. Do you think a person’s faith in Christ could cause the loss of friendships today? Explain your answer.

Read John 9:35-41.

- Why do you think Jesus asked the blind man about his belief in verse 35?
- How did the blind man respond?
- What would be an appropriate act of worship today when we make a choice to believe in Christ?
- What point do you think Jesus is trying to make in verses 39-41?
- Do you think this is still true about people today?
- What do you think is characteristic of spiritual blindness?
- How would you describe a life that is no longer spiritually blind?
- If you had to rate your life on a scale of 1-10 (1 being blind and 10 full of spiritual light), what rating would you give yourself?



John 10

QuickStart Discussion Questions

Conversation Starter.

In our society today, influential teachers or leaders are recognized by how well his or her book sells. Based on bookstore displays today, what leaders or teachers are influencing people? What are writers saying that seems so attractive?

Read John 10:1-6.

- What do you think Jesus is saying with the analogy of a sheep, a shepherd, and a robber?
- How does Jesus contrast himself with a “stranger”?
- Why do you think Jesus equates his followers with sheep?
- What are the positive qualities of sheep that Jesus commends?
- Do you feel demeaned or uplifted by this comparison?

Read John 10:7-21.

- Comparing Himself to a “gate” seems odd. What point do you think Jesus is trying to make?
- Who do you think is the thief?
- How would you contrast the aims of the thief to those of the shepherd?
- What are some ways that the thief could steal, kill, or destroy (verse 10) in your life?
- What do you think Jesus means when He says that He comes to give life “to the full” (verse 10)?
- Is this type of life attractive to you? Why or why not?
- Do you think Jesus’ meaning of a full life is different from our society’s understanding of a full life?
- How would you know whether you’re experiencing the full life that Jesus describes?
- Who do you think is the hired hand in this setting?
- How would you compare/contrast the hired hand with the good shepherd?
- Who would be some hired hands today?
- What does the good shepherd do for his sheep?
- How does Jesus continue to do this for people today?
- How have you experienced the Good Shepherd in your life?
- What does it mean for us to hear His voice? Have you ever heard Jesus’ voice?

Read John 10:22-42.

- What question did the Jews ask Jesus in verses 22-24?
- What questions do people ask today about Jesus’ identity?
- How did Jesus answer their question?
- What assurances does Jesus give to his sheep?
- What do you think it means that “no one can snatch them out of my father’s hand”?
- How did the Jews respond to Jesus’ claim in verse 31?
- Why did they consider this claim blasphemous?
- How does Jesus counter their charge?
- What caused many to believe in Jesus in verse 42?
- What is one thing that stands out to you in this chapter about the person of Jesus Christ?

John 11

Conversation Starter.

If a friend dies, how would you comfort his or her family and friends?

Read John 11:1-16.

- Why do you think Jesus delayed going to Lazarus?
- The disciples question whether it's wise to return to Judea (verses 7-8). How does Jesus respond to them in verse 11?
- If you were one of the twelve, how would you respond to Jesus' statement?
- What do you think Jesus means by saying the event was intended for their belief?
- How would you describe Thomas' state of mind in verse 16?
- Why do you think he was feeling this way?

Read John 11:17-50.

- What can Jesus' assertion that "I am the resurrection and the life" mean to us?
- What must happen before someone can share in this promise?
- Since Jesus knew that he would soon raise Lazarus from the dead, why do you think He wept?
- Describe the different reactions to this miracle in verses 45-50.
- Why do you think some people rejected Christ after this supernatural event?
- Do people give the same reasons for rejecting Christ today?
- Whom do you most identify with in this group:
 - Mary and Martha
 - the believing Jews
 - the unbelieving Jews
- How important to you is the hope of an after life?





John 12

Conversation Starter.

There are many reasons why people come to faith in Christ. How do you think Jesus tests the sincerity of a person's faith?

Read John 12:1-8.

- Foot washing 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?
- Describe Jesus' response to Judas' objections.
- What are the reactions of people in verses 9-11?
- How do you think you would have responded?
- How would you describe a sincere faith in Jesus?

Read John 12:9-19.

- How does the crowd respond to Jesus?
- What conclusions are the Jewish leaders reaching?
- Why do you think the disciples did not understand the meaning of the prophecies?
- What additional insight do these prophecies, and the triumphal entry event, add to your understanding of Jesus and His mission?

Read John 12:20-36.

- What do you think Jesus is teaching through the metaphor of the grain of wheat?
- What do you think it means for us to either love our lives or hate our lives?
- Would Jesus consider you to be a lover of life or a hater of life?
- How do you think God honors people who serve Christ?
- 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?

Read John 12:37-50.

- How do the Jewish people respond to Jesus' miraculous signs?
- How are the unbelieving people described in verse 40?
- How do you think these attitudes towards Jesus prevail today?
- Many Jewish leaders believed in Jesus but didn't openly profess their belief. How can people be guilty of this same behavior today?
- What do you think Jesus is trying to communicate about judgment in verses 44-50?
- How do you feel about Jesus' assertions about judgment?
- What insight does this passage give about Jesus' relationship with His father?

John 13

Conversation Starter.

You have twenty-four hours left to spend with Jesus. What do you think He would do with you in this time period?

Read John 13:1.

A Jewish Passover meal was a special time for Jewish families and friends. When the guests arrived, the host would make provision to wash each person's feet, feet dusty and tired from walking. The dinner guests would recline on a floor covered with pillows or rugs, rather than sitting around a table with chairs. The meal would begin at sundown with each course of the dinner representing a spiritual truth to the participants. The meal was designed to be a lesson about God's deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

- 13:1 sums up Jesus' ministry up to this point. What insight does it provide about Jesus and His mission?

Read John 13:2-17.

- What's happening in the exchange between Jesus and Peter? (verses 6-9)
- 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 does Jesus want us to learn from His example in verses 14-15?
- What actions do you think Jesus would bless today (verse 17)?

Read John 13:18-30.

- Why do you think Jesus told His disciples ahead of time about his death and betrayal?
- How did the disciples respond to Jesus' declarations in verse 22?
- If you were at this meal, how do you think you would have responded?

Read John 13:31-38.

- Jesus describes the mark of a Christian in verses 34, 35. How would you paraphrase this command?
- How can we demonstrate this type of sacrificial love towards others?
- How do you think Christians today are doing at obeying this command?
- Why does Peter jump into the conversation in verse 37?
- How do you think he would have felt about Jesus' reply?
- How can we be like Peter?



John 14

Conversation Starter.

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

Read John 14:1-4.

- Jesus must have sensed what was happening in the disciples' hearts. How does He address their fear and anxiety?
- Do you think the "Father's house" is a literal place or a figurative one?
- If you could imagine God's house, what do you think it would look like?
- What promise is Jesus making to His followers?
- How can the hope of eternity be a comfort to people today?

Read John 14:5-14.

- What do you think Jesus means when He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"?
- Why can no one come to the Father but through Jesus?
- Is this assertion a popular one today? Explain your answer.
- What is He saying about His relationship with the Father in verses 7-11?
- Do you think we can know the Father without knowing Jesus?
- In verses 13-14, Jesus makes a bold promise about prayer. What do you think about this statement?
- Do you think we can ask God for anything and He is bound to give it to us?
- Have you ever experienced a meaningful answer to prayer?

Read John 14:15-21.

- Jesus' followers appear distraught at His imminent departure. What promise does He provide for them in verses 15-19?
- Who do you think is the "other Counselor" in verse 16?
- What does this Counselor do for the believer?
- How can people today experience the work of the Counselor in their lives?

Read John 14:22-31.

- What question does Judas pose to Jesus in verse 22?
- How does Jesus answer Judas' question?
- What promise is made to those who, out of love, obey Christ (verses 23-24)?
- What do you think is the difference between Christ's peace and the peace of the world (verse 27)?
- In what ways do we need this peace today?

John 15

Conversation Starter.

If you were to survey people today about what they think is the distinguishing mark of Christian, what do you think they would say?

Read John 15:1-8.

- What is Jesus saying about himself and his followers through the illustration of the vine, the fruit, the branch, and the vine dresser?
- What do you think this fruit looks like in our lives?
- What happens to the branches that bear fruit? That do not bear fruit?
- What is required to bear this kind of fruit?
- How would you assess the fruitfulness of your life:
no fruit at all,
just a little fruit,
overflowing with fruit.

Read John 15:9-17.

- If you were one of Jesus' disciples, how do you think you would have felt loved by Him?
- How can we demonstrate to Jesus that we truly love Him?
- Jesus repeats the command about loving each other. Why do you think this is so important to Him?
- If our small group loved one another in the way that Jesus described, what would happen?
- Jesus describes the disciples as His "friends." What do you think it means to be a friend of Jesus?
- Do you think this friendship is extended to us and not just to the disciples?
- Would you consider yourself to be a friend of Jesus?

Read John 15:18-27.

- Jesus chose the disciples "out of the world." What do you think He means by this?
- How can we tell whether we belong to the world or to Jesus?
- What was going to happen to the disciples for following Jesus?
- How do you think His followers face persecution today?
- How could the prospect of persecution affect one's decision to follow Jesus?
- Why would someone follow Jesus if they knew persecution awaited them?
- Would you follow Jesus if you knew persecution awaited you?



John 16

Conversation Starter.

What do you think about the Holy Spirit; is He an influence, your conscience, a person, or an ideal?

Read John 16:1-16.

- How will Jesus provide for his followers after he leaves them?
- Describe the role of the Holy Spirit in the world (verses 8-11).
- What does Jesus promise that the Holy Spirit will do for His followers (verses 12-15)?
- Have you ever experienced this work of the Holy Spirit? Describe what you mean.
- The Spirit promises to guide us to truth (verse 13). What do you think this truth is about?
- The statement in verse 16 seems confusing. What do you think Jesus is saying?

Read John 16:17-24.

- What future needs of the disciples is Jesus addressing in this passage?
- Jesus promises joy to the believer (verses 21-22). Do you think joy is different from happiness?
- What kind of joy is promised to the follower of Jesus?
- Have you ever experienced this type of joy?

Read John 16:29-33.

- What concerns does Jesus raise in verse 32?
- How do you think Jesus “overcomes the world”?
- What hope can these words provide for us today?

John 17

Conversation Starter.

If Jesus were to pray for you, what do you think He would pray for?

Read John 17:1-5.

- Jesus begins His prayer with the statement that He can give eternal life. How does He describe eternal life?
- How is His description similar to or different from how we commonly think about eternity?
- From Jesus' teaching, do you think we can know for sure whether we will have eternal life?
- Jesus repeatedly refers to "glory." Why is glory so important to Him?

Read John 17:6-12.

- What motivated Jesus to pray for his disciples?
- What does He pray for His followers?
- If you were listening to this prayer as one of Jesus' disciples, how would you feel?

Read John 17:13-19.

- Why would the world hate Jesus' disciples?
- Many people would like to escape the "world." What does Jesus say about this?
- What is Jesus hinting at when He says that He is sending us to the world (verse 18)?
- When something is "sanctified," it is set apart for special use by God and is dedicated to His purposes. With this in mind, why is sanctifying the believer so important to God's plan (verses 17, 19)?
- What would a life look like if it was truly sanctified?
- How would you rate your sanctification?
 - I'm uninterested in sanctification.
 - I'm a little sanctified,
 - I'm growing in my sanctification.
 - I'm fully sanctified.

Read John 17:20-26.

- What can we learn about Jesus' life purpose from this section?
- What means did God provide so that His message would reach the world?
- How do his followers participate in this mission?
- Jesus refers to the unity of believers. What do you think He means by this?
- What can separate the followers of Jesus from one another?
- Do you think the church today is living out Jesus' desire for unity? Explain your answer.





John 18

Conversation Starter.

If you were to try Jesus in a court of law, what crime would you accuse Him of?

Read John 18.

Jesus was first brought before the Annas, the former High Priest and advisor to the current High Priest, Caiaphas. Along with the Council (Sanhedrin), these men condemned Jesus with the charge of blasphemy (Mark 14:60-64). The penalty under Jewish law was death. However, the High Priest had no authority to execute a death sentence, so it was necessary to transfer the case to the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. Pilate was in Jerusalem at Passover because the crowded conditions and national fervor sometimes spawned riots. Additional Roman troops would be needed to handle any emergencies.

- 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 (verse 6)?
- 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 be tempted to do what Peter did?
- How did Jesus respond to his betrayal?
- How could his example help us when we feel betrayed?
- How did Jesus defend himself at his trial before both the high priest and Pilate?

John 19

Conversation Starter.

Do you think we have trivialized the death of Jesus in our culture? Why or why not?

Crucifixion was probably the most diabolical form of death ever invented. The victim would carry the crossbeam to the place of execution. He was nailed to this beam through the wrists. A rope would often be tied around the chest and looped to the back of the stake to keep the body from falling over. His feet would then be nailed to a vertical beam driven into the ground. The victim was stripped of his clothing, exposing himself to the mocking of people and to the sun's heat and the chill of the night.

The unnatural position, growing thirst, exposure to the weather, loss of blood, and impaired breathing all contributed to a slow, agonizing death. Because of the tension on the arms, the victim could not breathe normally, filling his lungs with moisture. To gain a breath, and to speak, he would have to push himself up from the cross to try to raise his head. This would stretch the wounds even more and send shock waves through the nervous system. The victim drowned slowly by internal accumulation of fluid. A crucified man might live in this state for up to three days or longer. To hasten death, the soldiers would break the victim's legs so that they could not push themselves up to breathe. This would speed up the death by suffocation.

Read John 19.

- Describe the scene with Pilate, the Roman governor.
- 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?
- Why did John record the details of Jesus' death (verse 35)?
- Why do you think the historical eyewitness accounts of Jesus' death and resurrection are important?
- Do you think Jesus could have accomplished His mission without dying?
- Some would argue that Jesus simply fainted on the cross and that he didn't really die. After reading this account, what do you think of this argument?
- People attach different meanings to Jesus' death. How is His death meaningful to you?



John 20

Conversation Starter.

How does your family celebrate Easter? Is the resurrection of Christ an important part of this celebration?

Read John 20.

- Who did Jesus appear to and why do you think He chose those individuals?
- The disciples seemed surprised at the resurrection, yet Jesus had repeatedly told them this would happen. Why do you think they didn't believe Jesus would be resurrected?
- What evidence is given 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? What was the same?
- Do you think Thomas' concerns in verses 24-29 are true of people today? Why?
- How does Jesus deal with Thomas' doubts?
- What does Jesus say about true belief?
- After discussing the death and resurrection of Jesus, how has your belief been affected?

John 21

Conversation Starter.

If Jesus were to have a conversation with you before returning to heaven, what do you think He would want to say?

Read John 21.

- Describe the final exchange between Peter and Jesus. What do you think Jesus wanted Peter to understand?
- In verses 20-22, what is Peter's concern? How does Jesus respond to this concern?
- What does this exchange tell us about Peter?
- How can Jesus' words help us when we compete or compare ourselves to others?
- Notice how John ends the book. What does this tell you about his purpose?
- Read John 20:31-32 again. Do you think John accomplished his goals?
- If you were to explain to someone why they should believe in Jesus, using the evidence from this book, what would you tell them?
- What do you think is the primary objection people have to believing in Jesus?
- How does the Gospel of John address this issue?
- How has your faith been affected by this book?



QuickStart Discussion Questions



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