



BOOK 43 · NEW TESTAMENT · GOSPEL

The Gospel of John

The Word Made Flesh — Light, Life, and Love Revealed

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

— John 3:16

CONTENTS OF THIS STUDY PACK

01 Visual Overview Infographic

A panoramic lens on the four movements of John.

03 Key Themes & Theological Insights

Logos, Belief, Light vs. Darkness, and the Paraclete.

05 Small Group Discussion Guide

Eight questions with guided prompts and note space.

07 Practical Application

Living the truths of John in everyday life today.

02 Chapter-by-Chapter Narrative Arc

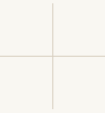
Four sections: Prologue, Signs, Upper Room, Passion.

04 Symbolism & Imagery

Living Water, Bread, Light, Shepherd, and Vine.

06 Key Characters

Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Thomas, Nicodemus — portraits.



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

A Journey of Light, Life, and Love Through the Fourth Gospel

ΛΟΓΟΣ ΦΩΣ

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD,
AND THE WORD WAS THE LIGHT.

John 1:1, 4-5

The Wedding at Cana (John 2)
- The First Sign

Feeding of the 5000 (John 6)
- Bread of Life

Raising of Lazarus (John 11)
- Resurrection & Life

The Resurrection (John 20)
- Victory Over Death

The Crucifixion (John 19)
- The Lamb of God

THE 7 SIGNS

1. Water into Wine (John 2:1-11)
2. Healing Official's Son (John 4:46-54)
3. Healing at Bethesda (John 5:1-15)
4. Feeding the 5000 (John 6:1-14)
5. Walking on Water (John 6:16-21)
6. Healing Man Born Blind (John 9:1-7)
7. Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-44)

THE 7 I AM STATEMENTS

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I AM the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection & Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, & the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the True Vine (John 15:1)

THE 7 DISCOURSES

1. New Birth (John 3:1-21)
2. Living Water (John 4:1-52)
3. The Son's Authority (John 5:16-47)
4. Bread of Life (John 6:22-59)
5. Spirit & Truth (John 7:14-39)
6. Light of the World (John 8:12-59)
7. Good Shepherd (John 10:1-21)

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' John 3:16

TIMELINE: JOHN 1-21

- I The Word Became Flesh
- II Cana & Temple Cleansing
- III Nicodemus & New Birth
- IV The Samaritan Woman
- V Healing at Bethesda
- VI Bread of Life Discourse
- VII Feast of Tabernacles
- VIII The Light of the World
- IX Healing the Man Born Blind
- X The Good Shepherd
- XI Lazarus Raised
- XII Triumphal Entry & Greeks
- XIII The Last Supper & Foot Washing
- XIV The Way, Truth, Life
- XV The True Vine
- XVI The Holy Spirit
- XVII The High Priestly Prayer
- XVIII Arrest & Trials
- XIX Crucifixion & Burial
- XX Resurrection Appearances
- XXI Sea of Tiberias & Restoration

Full-page visual overview — four movements, seven signs, and theological structure at a glance

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The Gospel of John is structured around four major movements: the Prologue and early ministry (1–4), the Book of Signs with seven miracles (5–12), the Upper Room Discourse (13–17), and the Passion and Resurrection (18–21). Unlike the Synoptics, John focuses on theological depth over chronological breadth.

SECTION 1

John 1–4 THE WORD MADE FLESH — EARLY MINISTRY



- 1:1–18** The Prologue: "In the beginning was the Word." John identifies Jesus as the eternal Logos — the divine Word through whom all things were made — who became flesh and dwelt among us.
- 1:19–51** John the Baptist testifies: "Behold, the Lamb of God." The first disciples are called — Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael. Jesus is identified as the Son of God and King of Israel.
- 2:1–12** The Wedding at Cana — the first sign. Jesus turns water into wine, revealing His glory. The disciples believe in Him.
- 2:13–25** Jesus cleanses the Temple: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." He speaks of the temple of His body — pointing to the resurrection.
- 3:1–21** Nicodemus visits at night. Jesus declares: "You must be born again." The most famous verse in Scripture: "For God so loved the world..." (3:16).
- 4:1–42** The Samaritan Woman at the Well. Jesus offers "living water." She becomes the first evangelist, bringing her whole village to meet the Messiah.

SECTION 2

John 5–12 THE BOOK OF SIGNS — SEVEN MIRACLES



- 5:1–47** Healing at Bethesda — the third sign. Jesus heals a man ill for 38 years on the Sabbath, triggering the first serious conflict with Jewish leaders.
- 6:1–71** Feeding 5,000 (sign 4) and walking on water (sign 5). The Bread of Life Discourse: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger." Many disciples turn back.
- 8:12–59** "I am the light of the world." Conflict intensifies. Jesus declares: "Before Abraham was, I am" — a direct claim to divine identity. The leaders attempt to stone Him.
- 9:1–41** Healing the man born blind (sign 6). A masterful narrative of growing faith versus hardening unbelief. The healed man worships Jesus; the Pharisees expel him.
- 10:1–42** "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep." Jesus claims unity with the Father. The Feast of Dedication. Another attempt to stone Him.
- 11:1–12:50** The Raising of Lazarus (sign 7) — the climactic miracle. "I am the resurrection and the life." The Triumphal Entry. Greeks seek Jesus: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

SECTION 3

John 13–17 THE UPPER ROOM — FINAL TEACHINGS



- 13:1–38** The Last Supper. Jesus washes the disciples' feet — a radical act of servant leadership. He predicts His betrayal and Peter's denial. "A new commandment I give you: Love one another."
- 14:1–31** "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus promises the Holy Spirit — the Paraclete (Advocate/Helper) — who will guide them into all truth. "Peace I leave with you."
- 15:1–27** "I am the true vine." The call to abide in Christ. "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." The world will hate those who follow Jesus.
- 16:1–33** The Spirit will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
- 17:1–26** The High Priestly Prayer — the longest recorded prayer of Jesus. He prays for Himself (glory), His disciples (protection), and all future believers (unity): "that they may all be one."

SECTION 4

John 18–21 PASSION, RESURRECTION & COMMISSION



- 18:1–19:16** Arrest in Gethsemane. Peter's three denials. Jesus before Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world." Pilate's verdict: "I find no basis for a charge against him." The crowd chooses Barabbas.
- 19:17–42** "It is finished" (tetelestai — paid in full). Jesus entrusts His mother to John. Blood and water flow from His pierced side. Burial in a new tomb.
- 20:1–18** The Resurrection. Mary Magdalene finds the empty tomb. Jesus appears to Mary: "Mary!" She recognizes Him and becomes the first witness to the risen Christ.
- 20:19–31** Jesus appears to the disciples. Thomas doubts, then confesses: "My Lord and my God!" — the climactic declaration of the Gospel. Purpose statement: "that you may believe" (20:31).
- 21:1–25** Epilogue: Breakfast on the beach. Jesus restores Peter with three questions: "Do you love me?... Feed my sheep." The commission is renewed. The Gospel ends: the world could not contain the books.

KEY THEMES

The Gospel of John is built around four foundational themes — each one revealing a different dimension of who Jesus is and what it means to believe in Him.

01 JESUS AS THE ETERNAL WORD (LOGOS)



01

John opens with the most theologically dense prologue in Scripture: "In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God" (1:1). By identifying Jesus as the **Logos**, John places Him at the center of creation, revelation, and redemption. The **Incarnation** — "the **Word** became **flesh**" (1:14) — is the hinge of human history: the **eternal** God entering time and space. John's audience would have heard echoes of both Genesis 1 (the creative **Word**) and Greek philosophy (the rational principle ordering the universe).

MODERN APPLICATION

The Incarnation means God is not distant or indifferent. He entered our suffering, our limitations, our world — and that changes everything about how we relate to Him.

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." — John 1:14

02 BELIEF AND ETERNAL LIFE



02

John uses the word "believe" (pisteuo) 98 times — more than any other New Testament book. This is not intellectual assent but a living, trusting relationship with Jesus. The purpose of the Gospel is explicitly stated: "these are written that you may **believe** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20:31). Eternal life, in John, is not primarily future — it begins now. Every miracle, every discourse, every confrontation is designed to bring the reader to a decision: Who do you say Jesus is?

MODERN APPLICATION

John's Gospel is an extended invitation to believe. The seven signs, seven "I Am" statements, and seven witnesses all converge on one question: will you trust Jesus with your life?

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son." — John 3:16

03 LIGHT VS. DARKNESS



03

John structures his Gospel around the **cosmic** conflict between **light** and **darkness**. Jesus declares: "I am the **light** of the world" (8:12; 9:5). The **darkness** does not overcome the **light** (1:5), yet people love **darkness** rather than **light** because their deeds are evil (3:19). This is not merely metaphor — it describes the fundamental spiritual choice every person faces. Nicodemus comes by night; Judas goes out into the night (13:30). The contrast is deliberate and pervasive.

MODERN APPLICATION

Living in the light means bringing our whole lives — including our failures and secrets — into the presence of Christ, trusting that His light heals rather than condemns.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." — John 1:5



Unique to John's Gospel are the five **Paraclete** (Advocate/Helper) passages in the Upper Room Discourse (John 14–16). Jesus promises that the **Spirit** will teach, remind, testify, convict, and guide believers into all **truth**. The **Spirit** is not a consolation prize for Jesus's absence — Jesus says it is better that He goes, so the **Spirit** can come (16:7). The **Paraclete** continues the ministry of Jesus in the world through His people.

MODERN APPLICATION

The Holy Spirit is the living presence of Christ in every believer. Prayer, Scripture reading, and community are not just disciplines — they are the means by which the Spirit guides us into truth.

"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things." — John 14:26

SYMBOLISM & IMAGERY

The Gospel of John is saturated with symbolic imagery — water, bread, light, shepherd, vine — each one a window into the identity and mission of Jesus Christ.



LIVING WATER

SYMBOL 01

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Jesus spoke of 'living water' to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well — a well with deep historical significance for both Jews and Samaritans. In the ancient Near East, running water was prized over stagnant cistern water for its purity and life-giving properties.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

Living water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and eternal life. Jesus offers what no physical water can provide: a **spring** 'welling up to eternal life.' The image connects to Ezekiel's **river of life** and the river of the water of life in Revelation 22.



THE BREAD OF LIFE

SYMBOL 02

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After feeding 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish, Jesus used the crowd's **hunger** for more bread as a teaching moment. The **manna** in the wilderness provided the backdrop for His claim to be the true bread from heaven.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

Jesus is not merely a provider of bread — He is the bread. 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst'. The Eucharist echoes this symbolism: bread and wine as the **body** and blood of Christ.



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

SYMBOL 03

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Jesus declared 'I am the **light of the world**' during the Feast of Tabernacles, when four massive golden menorahs illuminated the Temple courts — a celebration of the **pillar of fire** that guided Israel in the wilderness.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

Light is the first creation of God and the defining characteristic of God's nature. Jesus as the Light of the World means He reveals **truth**, exposes sin, and guides the path of life. In Revelation 21:23, the New Jerusalem needs no sun because 'the Lamb is its **lamp**.'



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

SYMBOL 04

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Shepherding was central to Israelite life and identity. The great leaders — Abraham, Moses, David — were all shepherds. Psalm 23 and **Ezekiel 34** established the 'shepherd' as the primary image of God's care for His people. Jesus's audience would have immediately understood the weight of His claim.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

The Good Shepherd 'lays down his life for the sheep' — a direct prediction of the **crucifixion**. Unlike hired hands who flee, the Good Shepherd **knows each sheep** by name. This image of intimate, sacrificial care defines the nature of Christ's relationship with His followers.



THE TRUE VINE

SYMBOL 05

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The vine was a central symbol of Israel in the Old Testament. Israel was God's vine, planted and tended by Him — yet repeatedly failing to bear fruit. Jesus's declaration 'I am the **true vine**' is a direct claim to be the fulfillment of what Israel was called to be.

THEOLOGICAL MEANING

Abiding in the vine is the key to fruitfulness. Branches that do not abide wither; those that do bear 'much fruit'. The image describes the Christian life as one of organic connection to Christ — not striving, but **remaining**. Love is the fruit; the Father is glorified when disciples bear much fruit.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

These 8 questions are designed for a 60–90 minute small group session. Begin with the icebreaker, then work through observation, interpretation, and application questions. Close with the prayer prompt.

ICEBREAKER

If you could have a one-on-one conversation with Jesus — like Nicodemus at night or the Samaritan woman at the well — what is the one question you would ask Him?

.....
.....

01

OBSERVATION

Read John 1:1–14 aloud. John calls Jesus the "Word" (Logos). What does it mean that God communicated Himself through a person rather than just words or laws? What does this tell us about God's character?

Leader's Note:

The Logos concept would have resonated with both Jewish readers (the creative Word of God in Genesis) and Greek readers (the rational principle ordering the universe). John claims Jesus is both.

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02

OBSERVATION

John records seven "I AM" statements of Jesus (6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). Choose one that resonates with you most. Why does that particular image of Jesus speak to your current season of life?

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03

INTERPRETATION

In John 11, Jesus weeps at Lazarus's tomb — even though He knows He is about to raise him. Why do you think Jesus wept? What does this tell us about how God relates to human suffering?

Leader's Note:

This is the shortest verse in the Bible (John 11:35) and one of the most theologically significant. Jesus does not weep because He is helpless — He weeps because He is present. God is not unmoved by our grief.

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04

INTERPRETATION

Jesus prays in John 17 that His followers would be "one" as He and the Father are one. What kind of unity is He describing? How does the disunity in the church today affect its witness to the world?

05

APPLICATION

"Abide in me" (John 15:4) is one of the most repeated commands in John's Gospel. What does it practically look like to "abide" in Christ in your daily life? What habits or practices help you stay connected to the vine?

06

APPLICATION

Peter is restored in John 21 through three questions — mirroring his three denials. Is there an area of your life where you need to receive Christ's restoration rather than carrying guilt? What would it look like to accept that restoration this week?

07

PRAYER PROMPT

Close by reading John 3:16 together slowly. Have each person replace "the world" with their own name: "For God so loved [your name]..." Sit in silence for 30 seconds, then share one word that captures how that truth makes you feel. Close in prayer, thanking God for the specific, personal nature of His love.

08

KEY CHARACTERS

Jesus Christ



The eternal Word of God made flesh — the central figure whose divine identity John systematically reveals through seven signs and seven "I Am" statements.

John the Baptist



The forerunner who prepared the way for Jesus, declaring Him the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29).

Mary Magdalene



The first witness to the resurrection, who encountered the risen Jesus in the garden and became the first to proclaim "I have seen the Lord!" (20:18).

Nicodemus



A Pharisee who came to Jesus by night and heard the famous words about being "born again" — later defending Jesus (7:50) and helping bury Him (19:39).

PRACTICAL APPLICATION — LIVING IT OUT TODAY



Abide in Christ Daily

The vine and branches metaphor (John 15) calls believers to maintain a daily, dependent relationship with Jesus. Abiding is not striving — it is remaining connected through prayer, Scripture, and community.



Love Is the Proof

Jesus says the world will know His disciples by their love for one another (13:35) — love is the church's greatest witness. Ask: does my love for other believers reflect the love Christ has shown me?



Doubt Is Welcome

Thomas's honest doubt and Jesus's patient response (20:24–29) show that questioning faith is part of the journey to deeper belief. Bring your doubts to Jesus, not away from Him.

JOHN — *My Study Notes*

 I AM Statements



 Key Verse

 Signs & Miracles

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Reflection

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“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.”

— John 3:16