

John Part 1
Leader Guide
(NASB AND ESV)

THE WORD BECAME FLESH
(CHAPTERS 1–6)

John Part 1 Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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THE PURPOSE OF LEADER GUIDES

Leader guides are intended for you, the leader, to help plan your discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the theology of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from completing their homework. Leader Guides are not designed to do the homework for you! Please refer to them after you have completed your assignment as a student.

These guides can assist you in preparing the lesson plans to use for leading the discussions. This is not the only way to lead your discussion of the Scriptures, but it is one way you could approach the material in the lesson.

The Holy Spirit must be your guide as you plan to lead these discussions. He is the one who knows what your group needs. Be in prayer for them as they study and for yourself as you plan to lead the discussions.

Keep in mind learning is enhanced when your group is encouraged to verbalize what they've learned. Asking questions will help them to reason through the Scriptures they have studied. Ask the "5 Ws and an H" kinds of questions (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How). Asking these kinds of questions requires more than a yes or no answer.

Visual aids can be a tremendous asset in helping your group to reason through the Scriptures. These discussion guides will give you some ideas for visual aids, but please feel free to adapt, change, or even replace these with your own ideas.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV Precept Upon Precept courses. The ESV follows the NASB with a slash / or is set off with parentheses.

JOHN PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis

- Overview of John 1–9

PURPOSE/ THEME OF JOHN

You could begin your discussion by asking what John’s purpose was for writing this Gospel.

John 20:30-31 is a very clear statement.

John says that Jesus performed other signs in the presence of His disciples. John was one of those disciples who saw the signs (miracles) which Jesus did.

He chose specific signs to accomplish his purpose—he wanted the readers of his Gospel to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name.

So the signs which he wrote about are ones which point to Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

NOTE: As your group discusses the main emphasis of John 1–9, help them understand who Jesus said He is or who others said He is in each chapter. The lesson uses the word “portrayal,” and these portrayals will help students understand how John accomplished his purpose so that believing they may have life in His name.

Don’t let your group discuss too much detail or too many events as they will all be studied more chapter by chapter in subsequent lessons.

JOHN 1

What is the theme of verses 1-18?

The At A Glance chart refers to these verses as the Prologue.

Relate the theme to the portrayal of Jesus in the verses.

Direct your group to their At A Glance charts and “John Chapter by Chapter” as visual aids for this discussion. There is a completed At A Glance chart for these chapters at the end of this lesson’s guide.

The Word became flesh.

John began by establishing that

Jesus is the Word.

He was in the beginning with God, thus eternal.

He is God and Creator.
Life is in Him.
He is the Light of men.
He became flesh.

John also described Jesus as the only begotten God/ from the Father, full of grace and truth. (ESV does not use the word “begotten.”)

How do these portrayals (words pictures of who Jesus is) relate to John’s purpose for writing?

John taught from the very beginning of his Gospel what to believe about Jesus and, in verse 12, how life is available.

Who is the John referred to in this chapter?

It’s John the Baptist, not the gospel writer, the apostle John.

John the Baptist was the one sent from God to bear witness of the Light that all might believe through him, John. He gave witness of the True Light, Jesus.

What is the theme of John 1:19-51?

John continued to tell of witnesses
John the Baptist
and some of Jesus’ disciples.

John’s witness—Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Also John saw the Holy Spirit’s witness as He descended like a dove out of heaven upon Jesus at His baptism. The Spirit was also the Father’s witness that Jesus is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.

Andrew witnessed to his brother Simon Peter—Jesus is Rabbi or Teacher and Messiah.

Philip’s witness to Nathanael—they found the one of whom the Law and Prophets witnessed, Jesus of Nazareth. He fulfilled prophecy.

Nathanael’s witness—Jesus was Rabbi, the Son of God, the King of Israel.

At the end of the chapter, Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of Man.

This chapter presents some of the things one should believe about Jesus and then gives witnesses of those facts.

NOTE: Your group will study each chapter in detail later in this course, so every point might not be mentioned in your discussion of the overview.

JOHN 2

What is the theme of this chapter?

There are two main events.

- Jesus turned the water into wine at a wedding in Cana of Galilee.
- In Jerusalem, He cleaned out from the temple those who were selling and exchanging money.

How does the first event relate to the purpose/ theme of John?

Turning the water to wine was Jesus' first sign, miracle.

That sign manifested His glory and showed Jesus as Creator, having power over nature. Relate this to John 1. All things were made by Him.

The result of that sign was the disciples believed in Him. Relate this to John 20:30-31.

Ask what the rest of this chapter is about.

Jesus went to Capernaum, then to Jerusalem and cleared out of the temple those who were selling things for sacrifices and those who were exchanging money.

Prophecy was fulfilled concerning Jesus' zeal for God's house.

What was the question of verse 18, and how does this fit with John's purpose statement?

What sign do You show us...? Jesus' answer was about His resurrection. His resurrection is a sign recorded in this Gospel to draw readers to belief.

Then Jesus made a prophecy regarding the temple of His body, pointing to His death and resurrection. When Jesus was raised from the dead, the disciples remembered that incident and believed the Scripture and Jesus' word.

In Jerusalem Jesus did other signs and many believed in His name. Relate this to John's purpose. Every sign written in this Gospel is so that the reader will believe in Jesus—that He is the Christ and the Son of God.

You might ask your group if they really believe this about Jesus. They don't need to answer, but to consider the answer they would give. It might be a matter of life and death for some of them.

JOHN 3

What is the main event and theme of this chapter? How is Jesus portrayed?

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again.

Eternal life in Jesus' name begins with being born of the Spirit.

Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man and likened Himself to the serpent Moses lifted up in the wilderness.

John ties together belief and life. The last statement of this chapter is very serious—those who do not obey the Son have God's wrath abiding on them.

John the Baptist said to his disciples that he was the one sent before the Christ. He referred to Jesus as the bridegroom and himself as the friend of the bridegroom.

JOHN 4

Where did Jesus go in this chapter and why? What happened? What are the main events?

Verses 1-42

Jesus left Judea and went back to Galilee. He stopped at a well in Samaria where He met a Samaritan woman.

He asked her for a drink, and then told her that He had living water. He offered her eternal life.

As He told her everything about herself, she recognized that He was a prophet.

She also knew the Messiah was coming, and Jesus witnessed of Himself very plainly that He was the Messiah.

After she told the men of Samaria they believed. They heard and knew for themselves that Jesus was indeed the Savior of the world.

Verses 43-54

Jesus went to Cana of Galilee again, the same place He turned water into wine. He healed the royal official's son who was at Capernaum.

The result of the sign was that the official believed.

Relate this to John 20:30-31.

JOHN 5

Ask about the main events and portrayals of this chapter.

Jesus was back in Jerusalem for a feast and healed a man who had been sick for 38 years. The Jews began to persecute Him because the healing was done on a Sabbath.

Then they sought to kill Him.
Jesus said who He is; He witnessed of Himself that He is equal with the Father.

Other witnesses are: John, Jesus' works, the Father, the Scriptures, and Moses.

JOHN 6

NOTE: As this is a very long chapter and you have three more to discuss, you might limit the amount of time your group discusses this chapter.

Ask what main points are in this chapter, and then allow for a short discussion of each.

Feeding the 5,000

What was the result of the sign?

The people knew He was the Prophet. Compare this with the Samaritan woman in John 4.

The signs caused people to know something about who Jesus is. Studying the Gospel of John will help your group be secure in who Jesus is and their belief of that truth and will prepare them to share with others from the Scripture.

Walking on the water, verses 15-21

Who witnessed the sign, and what was the result?

Only the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, and they were frightened.
Jesus, the sovereign Lord, has authority even over water.

The other miracle was that when Jesus got into the boat, which was 3 or 4 miles out in the sea, it was immediately at land.

Verses 22-65

What's the relationship between Jesus' portrayal and the beginning of this chapter?

Jesus had multiplied food to feed 5,000 people, and then said He is the bread of life, the living bread that came down out of heaven.

Verses 66-71

Peter called Jesus the Holy One of God, the one who has the words of eternal life.

JOHN 7

What are the events of this chapter? What is the main theme?

Jesus was still in the Galilee area because the Jews in Judea were seeking to kill Him.

There might be some questions about Jesus' response to His brothers, but tell your group that they'll study the details of this chapter later.

Jesus went to Jerusalem and taught in the temple.

There was a division among the Jews because of Him.

The persecution against Him heightened to the point that some tried to seize / arrest Him, but they couldn't. It wasn't time yet.

JOHN 8

Ask about the main theme and/ or portrayal in this chapter. Remind your group of John 20:30-31 and how all of the Gospel fits into those statements.

Verses 1-11 contain the account of a woman who was caught in adultery and then brought before Jesus. He didn't condemn her, but told her to sin no more. Relate this to His dealings with the Samaritan woman of John 4.

In verse 12, Jesus said that He is the Light of the world. Again He taught in the temple in Jerusalem, and there were still those who wanted to seize Him but didn't at that time.

Jesus and the Father are witnesses to who Jesus is (verses 14, 18).

In verse 24, Jesus said that unless one believes, "I am," he'll die in his sins. Verses 28 and 58 repeat, "I am."

JOHN 9

What are the main theme and the portrayal?

Jesus healed a man born blind.

He said again that He is the Light of the world.

The sign proved that He gives light to whomever He wishes.

The physical sign pointed to a great spiritual truth.

You might end this discussion by asking your group what they learned new about Jesus, or what they observed about Him that made a new impression on them. Studying the Gospels helps believers to grow spiritually as they learn more about their Lord and Savior. Knowing more about Him grows their relationship with Him.

JOHN

- 1 The Word became flesh, The Lamb of God takes away sin
- 2 Water to wine, Temple cleansed
- 3 Born again, believe and have eternal life
- 4 Samaritan woman believed Jesus is the Christ
Jesus healed royal official's son, his whole household believed
- 5 Jesus healed man on Sabbath/ Father and Son
- 6 Jesus fed 5000, walked on water / I am bread of life
- 7 His hour not yet come / division about Jesus
- 8 Adulterous woman—sin no more / Jesus' testimony—I am
- 9 Jesus healed blind man / I am Light of the world

JOHN PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 2

Lesson emphasis

- Overview of John 10–21

REVIEW

Begin your discussion by reviewing John’s purpose for writing this Gospel. Then ask your students to look at their At A Glance charts and ask for a brief review of John 1–9.

The purpose is found in John 20:30-31.

John recorded certain signs which Jesus did to draw his readers to belief in Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God. Those who do believe have life in His name.

From the beginning of John 1, he tells who Jesus is . . . the Christ, the Son of God. Belief and eternal life are repeated themes in this Gospel.

John 1	The Word became flesh, The Lamb of God takes away sin
John 2	Water to wine, Temple cleansed
John 3	Born again, believe and have eternal life
John 4	Samaritan woman believed Jesus is the Christ Jesus healed royal official’s son, his whole household believed
John 5	Jesus healed man on Sabbath, Father and Son
John 6	Jesus fed 5000, walked on water, I am bread of life
John 7	His hour not yet come, division about Jesus
John 8	Adulterous woman—sin no more; Jesus’ testimony—I am
John 9	Jesus healed blind man, I am Light of the world

NOTE: Remember that the sequence of events and all the details will be covered in each chapter study so don’t let your group discuss too much; stay focused on the Overview.

An At A Glance chart would be a good visual aid for these chapters. Also, have your group get out their “John Chapter by Chapter” chart.

JOHN 10

What is the theme of this chapter, and how is Jesus portrayed?

Jesus referred to Himself as the door of the sheep and the good shepherd.

Jesus laid down His life on His own initiative; no one took it from Him. He came that people may have abundant life.

Jesus was in the temple being questioned by the Jews. He said that He and the Father are one and that His works witness of Him. The Jews tried to stone Him, but He eluded their grasp.

You could ask if they see any connection between who Jesus says He is in this chapter and the portrayals from John 1–9 and John’s purpose for writing.

Jesus is God, presented as equal with God, and He said you must believe that I am *He* or die in your sins. Believing these things means life in His name.

Jesus moved on beyond the Jordan and many believed in Him there.

JOHN 11

Ask what the main event is in this chapter and the purpose of it.

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

This event takes place in Bethany, the village of Mary and Martha. This Bethany is near Jerusalem.

Lazarus’ sickness was not to end in death but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it, that they may believe God sent Him.

Jesus assured Martha that He is the resurrection and the life. Martha believed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. She also called Him “Teacher.”

Lazarus came forth, and as a result, many believed in Jesus. Relate this to the purpose of the book. Remind your group that they too have come to life from the dead if they’re truly saved, born again.

What is the pivotal point in John 11:53-54?

The chief priests and Pharisees gave orders that if anyone knew where He was, they were to report it so that they might seize Him; they planned to kill Him.

Jesus no longer went publicly among the Jews, but stayed near the wilderness with His disciples.

JOHN 12

Ask what events took place in this chapter and how Jesus is portrayed.

The two events are the dinner at Bethany and Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem.

He had dinner with Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and His disciples.

Mary anointed His feet and wiped them with her hair.

Many believed in Jesus on account of Lazarus so the Jews were planning to kill Lazarus as well.

The next day Jesus went into Jerusalem on a donkey amid a great multitude. He was hailed as the King of Israel, the Son of Man, and the Light.

Those with Jesus when He raised Lazarus testified about Him.

You might ask what Jesus says about His hour in this chapter.

Jesus said the hour had come for the Son of Man to be glorified. This is the first time He said this. Previously He said His hour had not come.

This statement also indicates a major segment division in John; as well as the fact that the signs are in John 1–11 (except for His resurrection in John 20 and the catch of fish in John 21).

Many believed, including many of the rulers. Relate this to John 20:30-31.

You might ask where Jesus seemed to focus His ministry at this time.

Prior to this, His ministry was mainly to the Jews in general. He performed signs and miracles to show who He is; there were witnesses and life was offered.

But John 12–17 focuses on His disciples.

JOHN 13

What happened? Who was present? How was Jesus portrayed?

This chapter takes place at the supper.

Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

They called Him Teacher and Lord, and He agreed with them.

Judas left to betray Jesus to the Jews, and Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

JOHN 14

What is this chapter about? How was Jesus portrayed?

John 14–16 is a segment that teaches about the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said not to let your heart be troubled; believe in God, and believe in Him also.
He prepared His eleven disciples for His soon-coming death.
He is the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except by Jesus.

How did this chapter end?

They left supper to go somewhere else—the garden, John 18:1.

JOHN 15

You could ask for the theme of this chapter.

It begins with an allegory about abiding. Jesus used a word picture to teach about life in His name. Jesus likened Himself to the true vine. Life comes through abiding in Him.

The Holy Spirit, the Helper, the Spirit of truth proceeds from the Father and testifies about Jesus.

He gave a warning to His eleven disciples that the world will hate them as it did Him.

JOHN 16

What is this chapter about?

This continues Jesus' warning the disciples about what was ahead for them because of those who have not known the Father or Jesus.

Jesus told them that He was going to the one who sent Him and that it was to their advantage that He go away.

The Helper, the Spirit of truth, would be sent by Jesus.

Verse 33 can be a wonderful encouragement.

JOHN 17

Ask for the emphasis of this chapter.

This is Jesus' prayer before going to the cross.

Jesus totally submitted to the Father's will and said the hour had come.

Verse 3 gives a definition of eternal life which some in your group might have noticed.

JOHN 18

What are chapters 18–20 about?

This segment is about Jesus' arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection.

What is the main event of John 18?

Judas betrayed Jesus; He was arrested and put on trial.

When Jesus was asked twice if He was Jesus the Nazarene, He said, "I am *He*."
This statement, "I am *He*," is repeated several times in John.

Peter denied Jesus three times.

Jesus told Pilate who He is, the King.

The people asked for Barabbas, a robber, to be released instead of the innocent Jesus.

JOHN 19

Ask for the main events in this chapter and the ways Jesus was portrayed.

Jesus was scourged, a crown of thorns put on His head, robed in purple, slapped on the face, and ridiculed. Then He was crucified and buried.

Jesus said, "It is finished," bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.

What is significant about verse 35?

John and the Scripture he wrote are witnesses in this chapter as to who Jesus is.

Who is mentioned by name in this chapter who was also in John 3 and 7?

Nicodemus. Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus in a new tomb in the nearby garden.

JOHN 20

Ask your group about the events in this chapter.

The sign is Jesus' resurrection.

He arose from the dead on the first day of the week, and appeared to the women and His disciples. Eight days later He appeared again to the disciples.

If there is time, ask your group to look at “John Chapter by Chapter” to see the progression of signs—from water into wine to this final sign of Jesus’ own resurrection from the dead.

JOHN 21

Ask about the events in this chapter.

Jesus manifested / revealed Himself to the disciples again at the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee).

He had a special discussion with Peter who had denied Him previously.

Verse 24 speaks about the disciple who was testifying / bearing witness and wrote these things, the things Jesus did.

You could end your discussion by:

- Letting your group share how they used the survey form at the end of the lesson.
- Asking how God ministered to them as they did the overview of the Gospel of John.

JOHN

- 10 I am the good shepherd, door of the sheep; One with the Father
- 11 Lazarus raised, I am the resurrection and the life
- 12 Jesus entered Jerusalem; The hour has come
- 13 Jesus washed the disciples’ feet
- 14 Jesus and 11 disciples; Holy Spirit will come after Jesus
- 15 I am the true vine; World will hate you, hated Me
- 16 Helper, I go away—you’ll scatter
- 17 Jesus’ prayer
- 18 Judas betrayed; Jesus arrested; Peter denied
- 19 Crucifixion and burial
- 20 Resurrection and appearances
- 21 Jesus appeared to disciples, Spoke with Peter

**JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3**

Lesson emphasis

- John 1
- Christ's genealogy

REVIEW

What is the purpose statement in John? Which chapter and verse?

John 20:30-31

Signs in John were written so that the reader will believe Jesus is the Christ and God's Son, and believing have life in His name.

JOHN 1

How does this chapter relate to John's purpose statement?

It's all about Jesus; this chapter states that He is God's Son and the Christ (Messiah).

In Him is life, and He came into the world to give life to men, verses 1-13.

As a visual aid for this discussion, you might list the main points about Jesus from this chapter as they are mentioned by your group. See the last page of this guide for suggestions.

Verses 1-18

Ask what they learned about the Word.

The Word was in the beginning with God and is God.

He is eternal, pre-existent, Creator, and God.

In Him was life, the Light of men that shines in the darkness.

He came into the world. He came to His own—probably a reference to Israel.

The Word became flesh.

Jesus is not named until verse 17 as the one in whom "grace and truth" were realized. Verse 14 says that the Word was full of "grace and truth."

Who is the John named in verses 6-8 and 15?

Chapter 1 tells that God sent John the Baptist (not the gospel writer, the apostle John) to testify of the Light.

John testified about Jesus so that all might believe.

John also testified about His high rank and preexistence.

Jesus was God and became a man.

Some may be hearing for the first time that God came into the world. What an opportunity for you as the leader to present life in His name. The real, true, genuine Light entered this world and enlightens every man—not some men, but every man. But not all men believe. Those who believe in the true Light have life.

Who received Jesus and who didn't in these verses?

If "His own" is a reference to Israel, then as a whole they didn't receive Him.

But some did—like both Johns, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael (all men of Israel).

What do verses 12 and 13 teach about those who believe in Jesus, the Word and true Light?

Believers become children of God, born of Him, when they believe in Jesus.

What else do verses 14-18 teach about Jesus?

He's the only begotten (ESV does not say "begotten.") Son of God, no other is like Him.

No one has seen God except Him.

And He came to explain (ESV—make known) the Father to men.

You can ask your group how they can know what God is like.

Look at Jesus. His glory was manifested to the disciples, and we have a record of this revelation. They are witnesses of His glory, His majesty.

Verses 19-51

What / who are these verses about?

The Jews sent priests and Levites to find out who John was, and he answered, "I am not the Christ."

He also said he wasn't Elijah or the Prophet.

John the Baptist was sent by God as a voice crying to prepare the way of the Lord.

NOTE: "The Prophet" is a reference to Deuteronomy 18:15-18; Acts 3:17-26.

John was a voice crying in the wilderness as Isaiah the prophet said.

He didn't talk about himself but Jesus.

John said Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy, and He's the Lord.

He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

John said two times that He has a higher rank because He existed before John.

Jesus was in the beginning with God and is God.

All things came into being by Him (Creator).

The Word, which was in the beginning, became flesh.

Jesus explained / made known the Father.

How do verses 30-33 compare with verses 6 and 7?

Part of John's testimony was that the Spirit descended as a dove and remained on Jesus. So the Spirit was a witness, a testimony of Jesus too.

This was how Jesus was manifested to Israel (His own), verse 11.

John testified that Jesus is the Son of God.

Ask how this might relate to the purpose of the book.

Who else testified about Jesus in this chapter? What did they say? To whom?

The next day (the 3rd day), John told two of his disciples who saw Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God." That was the second time John said this.

Their response was to follow Jesus, their Rabbi (Teacher).

One of the two disciples was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, who went first to his brother to say they had found the Messiah.

Jesus gave Simon the name Cephas or Peter, meaning a rock or stone.

Jesus found Philip and called him to follow.

Philip then found Nathanael and said Jesus was the one Moses and the Prophets wrote about—the fulfillment of prophecies.

At this point, you might ask what your group learned from the Old Testament passages about Jesus. Use “The Genealogical Tree That Brought Forth ‘The Branch’” as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

Genesis is part of the Law (the first five books of the Bible) which was written by Moses. Isaiah, Samuel, Jeremiah, Micah, and the Psalms all contain prophecy.

Jesus is the seed / offspring of the woman who will crush / bruise the head of the serpent.

He is from Shem, Noah’s son.

Abram was of Shem’s line.

God blessed Abram and told him that all families of the earth would be blessed through him. The seed / offspring is Christ.

God promised Abram descendants / offspring and a land.
He made a covenant with him.
Kings will come from him.

God continued the covenant promises through Abraham’s son Isaac.
Then Jacob, Isaac’s son, was the one through whom the promises were to be fulfilled.
God changed his name to Israel.

The scepter, used by a king, was to be in Judah’s line—one of Israel’s twelve sons, one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but also the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Then from Judah’s line, Jesse came. He was King David’s father.
God promised David that one from him will always be King of Israel.

The righteous Branch
The LORD our righteousness
Immanuel—meaning God with us

Jesus, the Seed / offspring, was born of a virgin and the Holy Spirit.

Even the place of His birth was prophesied.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem as predicted by the prophet Micah.

All was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth (where He grew up), the supposed son of Joseph. He was the one of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote.

Direct your discussion back to John 1.

What was Nathanael's response when Jesus revealed Himself to him?

Rabbi
The Son of God
The King of Israel

What did Jesus tell Nathanael?

- He had no deceit
- He saw him under a fig tree before Philip called him
- He would see greater things—the heavens opened and angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

Help your group connect this with the genealogy cross-reference in Genesis 28:10-14.

In Jacob's dream, he saw a ladder from earth to heaven and angels of God ascending and descending. The LORD was standing at the top of the ladder when He told Jacob that in his descendants / offspring all the families of the earth would be blessed. Jesus is that ladder from earth to heaven.

What do these statements indicate about Jesus, God in the flesh?

He knows all things about all people.

You might ask your group if they are sure that they know Him—know Him like He's described in this chapter.

To end your discussion you might ask what they learned about Jesus that ministered to them individually.

It's so important for them to understand that Jesus is God in the flesh and that they must believe in Him to have life in His name.

Encourage them that they'll learn from their Teacher as they study the rest of John.

The Word

In the beginning with God
Was God
Brought all things into being
Life in Him
Light of men
Came into the world—to His own, became flesh
Jesus Christ—grace and truth
Only begotten of Father—came to explain the Father
Lamb of God who takes away world's sin
Manifest to Israel by Spirit at baptism
Son of God
Rabbi—Teacher
Messiah—Christ
Moses and Prophets wrote about Him
King of Israel

JOHN PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis

- John 1–2
- Jesus' preexistence through childhood and relationships

REVIEW

What is the theme / author's purpose for John? Where in the text of John is it?

John 20:30-31

The author, apostle John, wrote about certain signs that Jesus did so that his readers might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Believing in His name gives life.

Ask how John began his Gospel and what he established.

John immediately established Jesus' relationship to God the Father—they are one. Jesus, the Word was in the beginning. Jesus is eternal. He is God. He was preexistent. All things came into being through Him. He is the Creator. He was life and Light.

Those who receive Him and believe in Him are born of God.

The Word became flesh, a man. He explained / made known the Father and showed His glory.

JESUS' BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

Ask your students what they learned from Matthew and Luke as they filled in the information on the chart about the chronology of Jesus' life. Direct them to the chart as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

Matthew and Luke begin by showing how the Word became flesh, Jesus' birth.

Let them share what they learned from the cross-references about Jesus' birth and childhood and how they relate to God becoming flesh.

Luke 1:5-80

Gabriel appeared to Zacharias, a priest in the temple, and told him that he would have a son who was the forerunner of the Lord, the one to prepare the way for Messiah. Because Zacharias / Zechariah did not believe Gabriel, he was mute until his son was born. That son was John the Baptist.

Gabriel also announced to the young virgin, Mary, that she would conceive a child by the Holy Spirit. This was God’s glorious plan so that eternal life could be offered in His name.

- Son of the Most High, the Son of God
- Throne of David
- His name—Jesus

She believed what the angel Gabriel told her.

John referred to Jesus as the Son of God many times in the Gospel of John.

When Mary visited her relative Elizabeth, Zacharias’s / Zechariah’s wife, Elizabeth’s baby leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and called Mary the mother of her Lord.

When John the Baptist was born, Elizabeth confirmed his name to be John as her husband had said. Zacharias’ / Zechariah’s voice returned and he praised God.

Zacharias / Zechariah, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied about Jesus. He knew Jesus, the Lord, was salvation and forgiveness of sins for the people.

Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph had planned to send Mary away, but an angel of the Lord told Joseph in a dream that the Child had been conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Even before Jesus was born, Joseph was told to name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. His name was also Immanuel, God with us. This fulfilled a prophecy made in Isaiah 7:14; 9:6.

Compare with John 1. John says the Word was in the beginning with God and became flesh. It also says that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Luke 2:1-39

Jesus was born in Bethlehem because of a census. The Roman emperor’s name, Caesar Augustus, is given as well as Quirinus the governor of Syria. Luke established the historical time of Jesus’ birth.

An angel announced to shepherds the birth of a Savior Who is Christ the Lord. They were told how and where to find the Baby. They glorified God, because they found Him just as they had been told.

Jesus was taken to Jerusalem to be presented before the Lord.

The Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would not see death before he saw the Lord's Christ, the consolation of Israel.

Matthew 2:1-23

Herod was king of Judea when the Magi / wise men arrived in Jerusalem looking for the King of the Jews. They were following a star in the east.

The chief priest and scribes told Herod that Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. He would come forth as Ruler and shepherd Israel.

The Magi / wise men, warned by God not to tell where the Baby was, returned a different way.

Joseph was warned by an angel of the Lord, and he took the family to Egypt. This was a fulfillment of prophesy.

After Herod ordered all baby boys 2 years of age and under in Bethlehem and its vicinity to be killed, an angel told Joseph to return to Israel. They went to Galilee, where Nazareth is.

Compare this to Nathanael's comment about Jesus in John 1.

Luke 2:40-52

He grew, became strong, and increased in wisdom. The grace of God was on Him.

At 12 years of age, He stayed behind in Jerusalem after the Passover celebration. His parents found Him in the temple listening and asking questions of the teachers.

Everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding and answers. The Son of God was in their midst in the temple, the one who explained the Father.

When His parents questioned Him, His reply was that He had to be in His Father's house. They didn't understand this statement. By saying this, He was calling God His Father.

Jesus continued in subjection to His parents and increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men.

These are profound truths your group can discuss and ones they must come to terms with. One of your main questions throughout this discussion can be, "Do you believe this?" Continue to relate these things to the purpose of the book, because this is Life.

JESUS' RELATIONSHIPS IN JOHN 1–2

Ask your group what they learned about Jesus' relationships in John 1 and 2.

John 1

John the Baptist

There isn't any conversation between Jesus and John given, but John said about himself that he was not worthy to untie Jesus' sandal—even though they were cousins.

John came to bear witness to the Light. Jesus came before John; He existed first. John was born first, but he knew that Jesus is eternal.

He was the voice crying in the wilderness to make straight the way of the Lord. He said Jesus is the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. He put the focus on Jesus, not himself.

God sent John to baptize Jesus. He baptized Jesus, recognizing who He is, because he saw the Spirit descend and remain on Him. He knew Jesus was the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.

John spoke about Jesus to his disciples and as a result, Andrew and another of John's disciples followed Jesus. They called Him "Rabbi."

Andrew

Andrew and the disciple with him went with Jesus to where He was staying. Then Andrew brought his brother Simon Peter to Jesus, saying they had found the Messiah.

Simon

Up to this point Simon Peter was known as Simon, son of John. Jesus looked at him and renamed him, Cephas (Rock). Jesus knew Peter inside and out and who Peter would become for the kingdom of God. (Peter's name will be discussed later in the course.)

Philip

Jesus purposed, intended to go to Galilee and found Philip, saying to him, "Follow Me."

Philip recognized who Jesus is. He then found Nathanael and told him he had found the one Moses had written about in the Law and that the Prophets wrote about. Philip knew Jesus was from Nazareth and was the son of Joseph.

Nathanael

Nathanael questioned whether any good thing could come out of Nazareth. Philip said to come and see.

Jesus said Nathanael was an Israelite in whom is no deceit. Nathanael had an honest, seeking heart. He did come, and he did see.

Nathanael wanted to know how Jesus knew him. He knew that Jesus saw inside him, his heart, his thoughts. When Jesus told him, Nathanael called Him Rabbi, the Son of God, the King of Israel. Jesus did not deny anything Nathanael said.

All of these men knew the Scriptures and prophecies concerning the Messiah or they would not have been able to make the statements they made.

JOHN 2

Verses 1-12

Ask what the first event is in this chapter and what they learned about Jesus' relationships.

The wedding at Cana is the place of Jesus' first sign, turning water into wine. A sign points to something. This sign showed Jesus' power and its purpose was to manifest His glory. It was proof of His divine authority.

The wedding was on the third day, probably the third day after leaving for Galilee and finding Philip (John 1:43).

Jesus did not live in seclusion. He was around people and at social gatherings. In this case, the wine ran out, and Jesus' mother told Him. She knew who He was; Gabriel had told her. She heard from witnesses—Elizabeth, the shepherds, the Magi, Simeon and Anna, maybe even Joseph.

She told the servants to do as Jesus said. The servants did not question her or Him, but did as they said. The servants would have known where the wine came from and recognized His power.

When He called His mother *Woman*, it was not a negative comment but a respectful term, an affectionate term.

The disciples believed after this sign. They were beginning to understand who He is.

After this, Jesus, His mother, brothers, and disciples went to Capernaum for a few days.

Verses 13-22

Ask about the event of these verses.

The Passover was near, and Jesus went to Jerusalem.

He found money changers in the temple and men selling oxen, sheep, and doves. He made a scourge of cords and ran them all out, men and animals. He turned over the money tables and cleaned house.

He said to stop making His Father’s house a house of merchandise / trade. Jesus exercised His right as the Son of God to clear this business out of the Temple. It was to be a place of worship, not commerce. There is no mention of anyone trying to stop Him.

The disciples remembered from the Scripture, “Zeal for Your house will consume me,” (Psalm 69:9)—another fulfillment of prophecy.

The Jews asked Jesus for a sign to show His authority. He responded with a sign of the prophecy of His resurrection. The Jews didn’t understand but thought He referred to the literal temple. They did not know the Scriptures or have a believing heart.

When Jesus was raised from the dead, the disciples remembered this prophecy and believed the Scripture and what Jesus had said.

Verses 23-25

Ask what they learned from these verses about Jesus.

While in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in His name, seeing the signs.

Jesus was able to see hearts and was not entrusting Himself to men because He knew what was in man.

Compare this to what Jesus said about Simon and Nathanael in John 1. True faith believes the Word when there are no signs. You might ask how that is still true today.

You could close by asking if they have a relationship with Jesus Christ that is evident and what that evidence might be.

**JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 5**

Lesson emphasis

- John 3
- “Signs”

REVIEW

Ask your group to use “John Chapter by Chapter,” the column where they listed Jesus’ signs, as they discuss this lesson.

You might begin the discussion by asking why John wrote his Gospel.

So that his readers believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
So that they then have life because of that belief in Jesus’ name.

To do that John wrote about certain signs which Jesus did, and John saw.

John 1

The Word, from the beginning as God, became flesh.
He came to explain the Father (ESV—to make the Father known).
He’s the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world

- The Messiah
- The Son of God
- The Son of Man

John 2

Jesus’ first sign was in Cana of Galilee.

He turned water into wine at a wedding.
It manifested His glory.
His disciples believed in Him as a result.

Ask how this might relate to John 1:1-3.

Jesus is the Creator. He has power over creation.

What other “sign” is mentioned in John 2?

The sign of Jesus’ resurrection.

According to the text, this was in response to the question about Jesus’ authority.

It's connected with His zeal for the temple, the Father's house. God is His Father. He and the Father are one. But His body replaced the temple as the dwelling of God on earth.

JOHN 3

Verses 1-21

Why did Nicodemus go to Jesus?

Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, went to Jesus, because of the signs.

At this point you might ask for the definition of the word "sign."

Although in John these signs refer to miracles Jesus did, the word means that these miracles point to something or distinguish something. These signs in John indicate that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

What did Nicodemus say about the signs?

No one can do the signs Jesus did unless God is with Him.

John 2:23 says that Jesus did other signs which John did not specify. These were causing people to believe in Him.

Nicodemus was wondering about Him as well.

He might have come at night because he was afraid and didn't want his peers to see him with Jesus.

What did Jesus tell Nicodemus? What was their conversation about in verses 3-13?

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again to see the kingdom of God. Entering God's kingdom was not automatic for him because he was a Jew or even their leading teacher. He had to be born of God's Spirit.

NOTE: The phrase "born again" will be studied more fully in the next lesson.

John 1:12-13 says that as many as received Jesus/ believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. These are not born of blood, man's will, or the flesh. God gives them this right. It's a spiritual birth. It's by God's doing.

Nicodemus did not understand, because Jesus was speaking of spiritual things and Nicodemus of earthly things. This is obvious by his two questions: How can a man be born when he is old? How can these things be?

What was the comparison Jesus used to explain those who are born of the Spirit?

They're like the wind.

The wind blows where it wishes—spiritual birth is of God, not man.

Hear the sound.

Don't know where it comes from or where it goes.

Jesus spoke to him of heavenly things which cannot be understood with earthly reason.

He told Nicodemus He was the Son of Man and had descended from heaven. He knew, because He was in the beginning with God and is God, that salvation was outside man's earthly knowledge. Nicodemus knew facts but he did not know the truth. You might ask if that is still true for some people today.

What did Jesus tell Nicodemus in verses 13-21?

He referred to Himself as the Son of Man and the Son of God in these verses.

This is the context of John 3:16.

These verses connect believing and eternal life. Many people know John 3:16, but how many truly understand what it means?

Another comparison Jesus made for Nicodemus was of the serpent in the wilderness and the Son of Man. Both were lifted up. The account of the serpent is in Numbers 21, which a Jewish teacher would know about. Assure your class that they will get to study this further in the next lesson.

What is the repeated emphasis in these verses?

Believe in Jesus and have eternal life.

Those who don't believe will perish and are judged.

Ask what your group learned from the contrast of light and darkness. Compare with John 1:4-9.

Judgment

Light came into the world

Men loved darkness because of their evil deeds

They hate the light fearing exposure of their deeds

They'll not come to the light

Men who practice the truth come to the light

Their deeds, then, are shown as wrought (ESV—carried out) in God

John 1:4-9 says that Jesus is the light of men and enlightens every man...whether his deeds are from God or evil.

Verses 22-36

What are these verses about? Where? Who?

Jesus left Jerusalem and went to the land of Judea (ESV—Judean countryside), the rural area of that region, spending time with His disciples and baptizing.

NOTE: John 4:2 states that Jesus was not the one baptizing but the disciples were the ones actually baptizing.

John was to be thrown into prison.
He still had some disciples.

Verses 26-36 are more testimony John the Baptist made about Jesus.

There was no jealousy on John's part about men turning to Jesus from him. John knew his instructions to baptize came from heaven. He only received what he was given from heaven.

He reminded them that he told them he was not the Christ but sent before Him. He was the friend; Jesus was the bridegroom. And John's joy was full because of that.

John's ministry must decrease as Jesus' ministry increased.

John continued to tell his disciples that Jesus came from heaven, that God sent Him.

Jesus gives the Spirit without measure. John knew this because God had told him that the dove would descend and remain on the one who would baptize in the Holy Spirit.

The Father loves the Son and gave all things into His hands.

Ask how verse 36 compares with what they have already discussed in chapter 3.

- Whoever believes in the Son will have eternal life, life now and in heaven.
- Whoever believes is not judged.
- Whoever does not believe will perish.
- Whoever does not believe is judged already because they did not believe in the only begotten Son of God.
- Whoever does not obey shall not see life. The wrath of God abides on him.

NOTE: This is the only time the word "wrath" is used in the Gospel of John.

You might ask if “obey” and “believe” are the same and why.

In verse 18, John made it clear that one who doesn’t believe in Jesus’ name has been judged already. Verse 36 connects “not obey” and “not see life” with the wrath of God abiding on that person. Not believing brings judgment; judgment is the wrath of God.

Believing a sign does not make one saved. Believing facts does not make one saved. Believing truth that changes the mind affects the conduct. Those who do not obey will face the wrath of God in the future as well as now. The wrath of God abides on that one.

True belief results in deeds. God’s deeds worked out in a person who truly believes in Jesus as the Son of God, the Christ.

Help your group understand that chapter 3 is about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, not head knowledge.

Relate this chapter to the purpose of the book.

Only those believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Son of God, will have eternal life.

The signs point to Him as God, as Nicodemus saw.

SIGNS

What other “signs” did John record? What does the text indicate about each?

John 4:46 – 54

Jesus healed an official’s son.

The man was in Cana, where the first sign was done, and his son was in Capernaum.

The result was belief—the man and his whole household.

Sickness and distance are under His control.

John 5

He healed a man who had been lame / invalid for 38 years. Time is under His control.

It was the Sabbath when Jesus healed him, and that caused persecution from the Jews.

John 6

Jesus fed 5,000+ from a few fish and loaves of bread.

He walked on water, and the disciples saw it.

When He got in the boat, it was immediately at land.

John 9

On the Sabbath He healed a man born blind. Belief and persecution resulted.

John 11

He raised Lazarus from the dead.

These “signs” are progressive in nature and “signify” Jesus as God, over all. Jesus gives life. He’s master over death.

John 20

Jesus’ own resurrection and appearances afterward to the disciples

John 21

He gave the disciples a great haul of fish to show them who He was.

Ask your group what they learned from Acts 2:22, the words studies, and how these words might be different.

Acts says that Jesus the Nazarene, was attested (exhibited or accredited¹) by God with miracles, signs and wonders (ESV—mighty works and wonders and signs). These were performed in their midst.

A miracle / mighty work is a display of power or ability.

A wonder causes whoever sees it to marvel.

Jesus is God. The “signs” point to this fact. “Miracles” demonstrate His ability or power as God. The “wonders” He did brought amazement to those who saw.

Nicodemus came to Jesus because of such.

Ask your group to really think about these signs Jesus did in John. What is their response?

¹ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*, marginal note (Acts 2:22) (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

**JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 6**

Lesson emphasis

- John 3
- Born again

REVIEW

Ask your group how John 1–3 begins to fulfill John’s purpose for writing this Gospel.

Jesus, the Word who became flesh, is God and came to explain / make known the Father. Those who receive / believe in Him are born of God.

He turned water to wine, and those who saw it believed in Him.

He spoke of the sign of His resurrection as proof of His authority from the Father.

Many believed in Him because of the signs He was doing.

Nicodemus came to Him because of the signs.

John recorded specific signs so that people may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The result of that belief is life.

What did Nicodemus know about Jesus? How / why?

He knew that Jesus was from God because of the signs.

According to John 2:23, Jesus did signs when He was in Jerusalem for Passover.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee. Compare this with John 1:19-28.

What did Jesus know about Nicodemus? How?

He knew that Nicodemus needed to be born again.

John 2:24-25 says that Jesus knew all men and what was in man.

BORN AGAIN

Ask what your group learned from John 3 about being born again.

There is a short list at the end of this lesson’s guide as a sample visual aid for this discussion.

Jesus told Nicodemus that unless he was born again, he could not see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus did not ask Jesus a question, but Jesus went directly to Nicodemus' problem.

You might ask how Jesus could do that.

John 2:23-25 says that Jesus knew what was in man. John's gospel is written to show that Jesus is God. The fact that Jesus is God made it possible for Him to know what Nicodemus really needed.

Nicodemus didn't understand the comment, because he responded by asking how a man could be born when he is old. Jesus answered that one has to be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

Verse 6 explains verse 5. That which is born of the flesh (physical birth, born of water) is flesh. That born of the Spirit (spiritual birth) is spirit.

NOTE: Be aware that some commentators have other explanations for "born of water," such as water baptism and the washing of the water of the Word.

Then Jesus said to him, "You must be born again." Being born again is necessary to enter the kingdom.

The kingdom of God was promised in the Old Testament Prophets. Nicodemus, as the ruler and teacher in Israel, knew those promises.

Ask your group what they learned in the cross-references about being born again.

John 1:12-13

Jesus gives the right to become children of God—spiritual birth—to those who believe in His name who were born of God, not man.

Believing in Him = born of God.

Galatians 4:23-29

There is a distinction between those born of the flesh and those born through the promise of the covenant, born of the Spirit.

Those who are children of the flesh will persecute the children of promise.
Watch for this in John.

1 Peter 1:23

This new birth is a spiritual birth. It comes through the living, abiding word of God. Those who are born again believe what God says, the gospel of Jesus to begin with.

God's Word, His promises lead one to belief, like reading John's gospel and understanding the truth about Jesus resulting in belief and life.

How can a person tell if he has been born again?

1 John 2-5

John also wrote the letter named 1 John.

In it he continued to teach believers about the spiritual birth.

Those born of God practice righteousness. Relate this to John 3:21.

God's seed, the Holy Spirit, abides in those born of God. Because of that, they don't continue in sin as before their spiritual birth (salvation).

Being born of God results in a life of love.

Those born of God overcome the world by their faith.

Jesus who was also born of God keeps believers so that the evil one does not touch them.

How does the wind illustrate those born of the Spirit, John 3:8?

The wind blows where it wishes.

God gives spiritual birth, not man.

You hear the sound of it but don't know where it comes from or goes.

The sound is evidence of the wind's presence.

But man is not in charge of where it goes or comes from.
Spiritual birth is directed by God, not man.

You might ask about Nicodemus's reaction.

He asked, "How can these things be?" Nicodemus didn't understand these spiritual things. He didn't yet accept Jesus' testimony, verses 11 and 12.

Some of your group might remember later references in John to Nicodemus which seem to indicate that he believed in Jesus later.

You might ask if they know anyone who has asked something similar, or if they had thought that way themselves.

In verse 12, Jesus mentioned heavenly things which earthly men don't understand apart from God's Spirit. Relate that to what John the Baptist said in John 3:22-36.

Ask how Jesus continued to explain to Nicodemus that he must be born again.

Discuss Numbers 21:1-9.

He used an illustration from the Law with which Nicodemus was familiar.

Jesus told him that as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so must He, the Son of Man, be lifted up.

On their way from Egypt to Canaan, the Israelites were cared for by God. He provided their food (manna from heaven that tasted like sweet wafers) and water and Moses' leadership. But they became impatient and began to grumble and complain. They spoke against God and Moses and complained about the food.

The Lord sent fiery serpents into their camp that bit many, and they died as a result. The people went to Moses, admitted that they had sinned against God, and asked him to intercede for them. They wanted him to ask God to remove the serpents.

God told Moses to make a bronze serpent, put it on a pole, and lift it up. Everyone who was bitten could look up at the serpent and live.

Jesus told Nicodemus He would be lifted up as the serpent was, referring to His crucifixion.

Just as the people confessed that they had sinned against God and looked up to live, so Nicodemus must confess his sin, look to Jesus, and believe in Him in order to live, to have eternal life.

Nicodemus was an outwardly righteous man. But just as those in the wilderness had to obey what God said, so Nicodemus must obey, believe, and look to Jesus.

Ask how this helps explain being born again.

Jesus was lifted up on a cross and died for our sins, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

He is God's provision that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life which begins at the spiritual birth, when one believes.

How does John 3:16 fit into this explanation?

It answers "Why?" ... "For God so loved the world."

God loved the world and gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him would not perish. God provided salvation.

LIGHT

Ask what your group learned from observing what John taught about the Light.
How does this fit with being born again, being saved?

Jesus, the Word of God, who is God. God, the light that came into the world, spoke those things to Nicodemus. There is a definite connection as He spoke about the two in the same context.

Nicodemus came to Jesus, even though it was at night.
Men who love and practice evil don't come to Him, but hate Him.

Men love darkness because their deeds are evil. The light exposes deeds. Those in darkness hate the light and won't come to it, so they can continue in their evil deeds.

The one who practices truth comes to the light. His deeds show that they are of God and are accomplished by God.

Nicodemus thought that his deeds were “wrought (ESV—carried out) in God” because he was a teacher in Israel, a religious leader. But Jesus said that it's only those who come to Him—as the Light—who truly do deeds of God.

John 1:4-9; 8:12; 9:5

These verses say that Jesus is the light of the world. He was in the world, witnessed to, and enlightens every man. If one follows Jesus, he will not walk in darkness.

John 11:9-10; 12:35-36, 46

Jesus came as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Him will not remain in darkness. When one believes in Jesus Christ, the darkness is removed and he does not stumble.

Jesus called Nicodemus to believe in Him.

1 John 2:9-10

Loving one's brother is indicative of one who walks in the light; this is same as one born of God.

Hating one's brother indicates that he walks in darkness.

Give your group time to discuss the life-changing truths in these verses.

Help them understand that being born again is more than intellect, believing something. It's a life change. It's being born from above because the Spirit is inside. Believing is being firmly persuaded of truth so behavior is affected.

How does John 3:36 support this evidence of the spiritual birth, of salvation, of truly believing in Jesus?

Jesus spoke the words of God and gave the Spirit without measure. He baptizes with the Spirit and one can't enter the kingdom of God without the Spirit. Being born again is all of God.

Verse 36 connects believing and obeying.

Anyone who believes in the Son, has faith in the Son, has eternal life. These are not judged now or later, but have eternal life. They will not perish.

If anyone doesn't obey the Son, he won't see life but will perish. There will be an awful future for that one, but also the wrath of God abides on him even now.

There is no middle ground. Either one is born again or he is not. One either believes / obeys or there is no life, and the wrath of God abides on him now. There is eternal life or wrath.

Ask how a person can know if he is born again. Give as much time as you can, because one of your goals is to help your group understand what this phrase means and how to verbalize it.

You might end your discussion by asking your group if they are sure they are born again.

Born Again

Necessary to enter the kingdom of God

Of the Spirit, of God

Those who believe in Jesus are born of God.

Beginning of spiritual life, eternal life

Results:

Righteousness

Love

Obedience

Not continuing in sin as before salvation

JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 7

Lesson emphasis

- John 3–4
- Jesus' example, fishers of men

REVIEW

You can begin by asking about the book's purpose and how John accomplished that purpose in chapters 1 – 4. Use the At a Glance chart for a visual aid.

John 1	The Word / God became flesh	Jesus is God
John 2	1 st sign brought belief / Jesus' authority to cleanse temple	
John 3	Born again—believe and have eternal life	
John 4	Living water for Samaritan woman / healed man's son	

Signs caused some people to believe in Jesus.
Belief and eternal life are connected.

Use the chart in the lesson as a visual aid for this discussion.

NICODEMUS

Begin your discussion with Nicodemus. You might ask how this contact with Nicodemus was initiated and what they learned from this encounter.

Nicodemus sought Jesus because of the signs. He recognized Jesus as a teacher and acknowledged that no one could do these signs unless God is with him.

He was a religious leader, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews.

Jesus knew Nicodemus's deepest need—to be born again. He immediately confronted Nicodemus with spiritual truth, using an illustration about the wind that Nicodemus could understand. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from or where it's going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

Jesus explained that new birth involves belief and uses the example of the serpent being lifted up in the wilderness. Let your group share what they remember from the last discussion in relation to this example.

Nicodemus was a teacher and Jesus used the Scripture to explain truth to him. He would have known the circumstances surrounding this event and understood the message Jesus was trying to communicate.

Those in the wilderness looked at the serpent because they recognized their need. And Jesus told Nicodemus his need was to be born again.

So Nicodemus had a point of reference as he listened to Jesus tell him that he must believe. Jesus showed him a picture of His crucifixion. He told Nicodemus that He would be lifted up and the same result would be true with Him as was true in the wilderness—that whoever looked to Him in faith would have eternal life.

The new birth for Nicodemus would come about as a result of believing in Him. Jesus emphasized that in John 3:16. Belief involves practicing the truth, and belief is manifested in obedience.

You might ask about the content of the witness Jesus gave Nicodemus.

- A need for spiritual birth.
- The coming crucifixion.
- Eternal life is based on belief in Jesus.

Ask how Nicodemus responded.

There was not an immediate positive response. Nicodemus did not understand. He continued to ask questions and Jesus continued with more truth. At that point, Nicodemus might not have understood, but later in the Gospel of John it seems from Nicodemus's actions that he did believe.

You might ask what your group learned from Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus.

Our responsibility is to witness—to be fishers of men. It sometimes involves dealing with those who are religious, those who know the Scriptures, or those who have heard the truth.

Ask if they've ever assumed people are already born again because they're religious.

SAMARITAN WOMAN

How was Jesus' exchange with the Samaritan woman different from His testimony to Nicodemus?

Nicodemus came to Jesus. Jesus approached the Samaritan woman.

John 4:4 says Jesus had to go through Samaria. This does not mean there was no other way to Galilee; there were several. Jesus had to go through

Samaria, because there was a need for this woman to hear the truth about God and have her life changed, along with many others from that area.

Jesus was sitting by the well at the sixth hour, weary and evidently thirsty. The Samaritan woman came to the well.

Jesus asked her for a drink and opened the door for conversation. He led her thinking from physical water to the fact that He could provide living water.

She was surprised Jesus spoke to her, as she was a woman and a Samaritan.

NOTE: The Northern Kingdom of Israel had been taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B.C. Samaria was the capital of Israel. Only the poorest of the land were left behind, and they intermarried with the exiles brought to Israel from other countries. These were the Samaritans—part Jew and part Gentile.

Jesus was able to introduce her need through her circumstances. This is similar to what He did with Nicodemus. He was able to take Nicodemus's statement when he came to Jesus, and show him his need to be born again.

What was Jesus' approach in witnessing to her?

With the Samaritan woman, Jesus made the approach. He was able to show her that she had a need, and it was much greater than just physical. Jesus let the woman know that He was the only one who could satisfy her and that was with living water.

What type of person was she?

He brought her face-to-face with her personal situation, her immoral way of living. He was able to do that by asking her to go and call her husband. She responded that she did not have a husband.

He knew everything about her. By acknowledging Him as a prophet, she was, in a sense, confessing her need, that what He said was true of her.

What was the content of His witnessing / testimony?

When Jesus brought up her marital situation, she shifted the conversation. Quite often this will be the response of a person because they feel uncomfortable, their need is exposed, or because sin is exposed. They might focus on a religious disagreement.

Jesus told her the Jews were right; they worshiped what they knew. Salvation is from the Jews. Compare John 1:11-13.

He told her that God is spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and truth. True worship is not a place but inside, personal, here and now. This is the worshiper whom God desires—one who worships according to the truth of His Word.

Jesus also told her why He had the right to even talk to her. He revealed to this woman that He was the Messiah. Imagine the cleansing she experienced. She now had value. This unworthy, outcast woman would have her thirst quenched forever.

You might ask how people try to quench their own thirst.

Ask how Jesus' conversation with His disciples relates to the context of this chapter.

The Scripture says at this point His disciples came and marveled that He had been speaking with a woman.

They asked Him to eat, and He said His food was to do the will of His Father. He spoke about white fields ready for harvest. The Samaritans were part of those fields. One sows; another reaps. The harvest was ready, but laborers were needed.

There are fields ready for harvest today, and laborers are needed. Believers are to be part of that labor. They are to be fishers of men. Sharing the gospel should be looked on as necessary as food.

What was the result of this encounter?

She was so convinced she had found the Messiah that she went to tell the men of the city. Her witness had a profound impact on the people.

Some from the city were converted because of the testimony of the woman, others because of Jesus' own words.

Let your group share what they learned from this encounter about being fishers of men. If there's time, you might ask if any can relate to this woman's testimony. It is good to remember our desperate need for salvation, for a changed life that only comes through faith in Jesus, the Christ.

THE OFFICIAL

Ask what they learned from this encounter.

This man had evidently heard of Jesus' healings before, as he went to Jesus as soon as he heard Jesus was again in the Galilee area.

The official himself made the contact. He had a desperate need as well.

Some find Jesus when they have reached the end of their rope and all hope is gone. This man needed help; his son was deathly sick. He wanted Jesus to come and heal his son.

“Sir” in verse 49 could be translated “Lord.”¹ He knew about Jesus and His miracles and must have believed Jesus could heal his son.

What did Jesus say and do? What were the results?

Jesus’ response to the man in verse 48 may not be a rebuke but sorrow over the spiritual blindness of the people. They needed to see to believe, just like today. The man asked for a miracle; Jesus simply confronted him on the issue of miracles.

The official thought Jesus had to go to Capernaum to make his son well. Jesus told him to go, that his son lived. The man believed Jesus’ words.

He left for home and found out that his son was living and that the difference had come at the very hour he had been with Jesus. The father knew that it was because of what Jesus had done that his son lived.

He believed and his household.

Ask how this encounter shows us how to fish for men.

Being available for those in desperate need, at the end of their rope.

This may be the perfect time to share the reality of Jesus Christ.

Ask what your group learned in general about witnessing.

These are some things they might share.

- Jesus met people where they were. He is THE example.
- He dealt with them on their level of understanding. He used examples that they could identify with. He was concerned for them personally.
- He was always direct. No compromising.
- He used Scripture.
- He responded to their needs appropriately. Some came to Him. He went to others.
- Jesus did not give out the truth just to those who responded in the right way. He gave out the truth regardless of the response.
- He caused these people to recognize their need to know truth and their need for forgiveness.

¹ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*, marginal note (Jn 4:49) (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

- Witnessing involves far more than just being able to read a tract to someone.

Believers should notice others' true needs—the need to be saved—that they cannot save themselves. The message then should focus on that need.

Witness as a way of life requires that we live in such a way that we honor and glorify God, so that those who come to us will come because there is something different about us. Our witness should include a life that backs up the words we speak so when people hear the truth, they will see that truth is a reality in our lives.

**JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 8**

Lesson emphasis

- John 5
- Father and Son relationship
- Witnesses concerning Who Jesus is

REVIEW

What is the theme / purpose of John? How does John 1–4 fit into that theme / purpose?
Use the At a Glance chart as a visual aid.

Specific signs were written that the reader may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. That belief results in life, eternal life.

John 1	The Word became flesh, John testified so that all might believe
John 2	Jesus turned water to wine, cleansed the temple
John 3	He told Nicodemus to be born again, believe and have life
John 4	He offered living water to Samaritan woman; healed man's son They both believed and told others about Him.

JOHN 5

Verses 1-9

What are these verses about?

There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Jesus went to a pool called Bethesda where many people who were sick gathered and encountered a man who had been sick for 38 years.

NOTE: The last phrase of verse 3 and all of verse 4 are not included in earlier manuscripts but they are in the NASB. The ESV has a footnote about this.

When Jesus saw the man, He knew that he had been there for a long time and asked him if he wished to get well (ESV—wanted to be healed). This sick man explained that someone else was always able to get to the water before him.

This man had a desire to get into the water and was not able to because of his illness. Jesus told him to get up, take his pallet / bed, and walk. The man became well immediately, took up his pallet / bed, and began to walk.

Verses 10-18

Who and what are these verses about?

Jesus healed on the Sabbath. The amazing reaction was that there was little notice given to the fact that a man who had been sick for 38 years was healed. The Jews reacted in a negative way, because their perception was that Jesus had broken the Sabbath.

They wanted to know who the person was who told the man to take up his pallet / bed and walk, but the man did not know. Jesus had slipped away into the crowd.

Jesus found the man in the Temple and told him to not sin any more so nothing worse would happen to him. The man then told the Jews it was Jesus who had made him well.

As a result, the Jews persecuted Jesus and wanted to kill Him because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

How did Jesus respond to the Jews?

Direct your group to look at their charts “The Relationship of the Father and Son” as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

He spoke of His Father’s continuous work, even on the Sabbath. Jesus identified with that work, saying He was working also. The Jews recognized Jesus’ words, “My Father,” as Jesus claiming equality with God.

Jesus’ signs and the witnesses prove that He is who He claimed to be.

The Jews wanted to kill Jesus because He talked about His Father.

The controversy intensified and the Jew’s attitude became a desire, a seeking to kill Him all the more, because He was breaking the Sabbath and calling God His own Father.

Verses 19-23

Ask what happened in these verses.

Jesus continued to explain what it meant that He is working and the Father is working, which explains their relationship. The Son does as the Father does and can do nothing of Himself.

The Father loves the Son and shows the Son all things:

- Greater works
- Gives life
- Judgment

Verses 24-30

What did Jesus say about His authority? His relationship with His Father?

The one who hears and believes Jesus' words:

has eternal life
does not come into judgment
passes from death into life now

Verse 25 tells about how one passes from death into life.

The spiritually dead who hear and believe Jesus' voice / call.

When they hear and believe, then they live.

Verses 28-29 are about the future for all in the tombs, believers and unbelievers.

They'll all hear Jesus' voice and come out of the tombs.
Those who have done good deeds are resurrected to life.
They're the ones who believed in Jesus.

Those who did evil will be resurrected to judgment, punishment.
They're the unbelievers.

What does verse 30 tell about Jesus?

He did nothing on His own nor sought His own will, only the Father's will.

This is an example for all believers. This is how one does good.

Verses 31-47

What are these verses about?

The testimonies or witnesses

What do Numbers and Deuteronomy teach about witnesses?

Evidence had to be based on two or more witnesses.

Jesus said if His witness had been the only witness, then His testimony would not be true or "admissible as legal evidence."¹

Direct your group to their charts on "Witnesses" in the lesson as a visual aid for this part of your discussion.

¹ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*, marginal note (Jn 5:31) (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

Who / what are the witnesses?

Verses 31-35, John the Baptist

The first witness Jesus introduced was John's.

John said that Jesus:

- is the Lamb of God
- is the Son of God
- existed before
- came from heaven
- speaks what He has heard from God.

Verse 36, Jesus' works

His works testified that the Father had sent Him.

Healing the man who had been sick for 38 years was a witness as to who He is.

Verses 37-38, The Father

God Himself gave witness of who Jesus is, but the religious refused to believe God because they did not really know His Word nor believe God.

Verses 39-44, The Scriptures

The Jews searched the Scriptures for eternal life, but missed the point. They (the Jews) did not have the love of God in them.

Jesus came in His Father's name and the Jews did not receive Him because they were more interested in glory from one another than the glory that comes from God alone.

Verses 45-47, Moses

There was no reason for Him to accuse them before the Father because Moses would. If they had believed Moses, they would have believed Jesus, because Moses wrote of Him.

You might close by asking how this lesson impacted their lives.

**JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 9**

Lesson emphasis

John 6

REVIEW

You might begin by asking your group to recite John 20:30-31.

Then ask how many times they marked eternal life in John 6.

Also, ask for a review of the signs in John 2–5 and let them share what these signs show about Jesus.

John 2

Jesus turned water into wine—the beginning of signs He did in Galilee. That sign manifested His glory and showed Jesus as the Creator, having power over nature.

Jesus cleared out the temple in Jerusalem and made a prophecy regarding the temple of His body, pointing to His death and resurrection. When Jesus was raised from the dead, the disciples remembered that incident and believed the Scriptures.

During the Passover in Jerusalem, Jesus did other signs and many believed in His name. Relate this to John's purpose. Every sign written in this Gospel is so that the reader will believe in Jesus—that He is the Christ and the Son of God.

John 4

Jesus healed the royal official's son. It was the second sign in Galilee. The result of the sign was that the official believed and his whole household. Jesus healed the man's son over a distance. Since He is God, Creator, He has authority over time and space.

John 5

Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath who had been sick for 38 years. The man, given the opportunity to believe Jesus had the power to do this, picked up his pallet and walked.

Jesus has power over illness, regardless of the number of years. He can make a person whole. His works were a witness that God had sent Him.

What are the three segments presented in the lesson for John 6?

Verses 1-21	Jesus' signs
Verses 22-59	His teaching
Verses 60-71	The results

See the last page of this guide for a sample visual aid for this discussion.

JOHN 6

Verses 1-21

Ask about the timing of John 6 and where Jesus was.

Jesus was back in Galilee.

The Passover was near.

NOTE: If the “feast of the Jews” in John 5 is a reference to Passover, then a year passed between these two chapters. If the feast in John 5 was another feast, then a few months had passed. It was one or two years since John 2:13.

A large crowd followed Him because of the signs.

What is the first event in this chapter?

Jesus saw the multitude coming to Him, and He gave Philip a test. Just like Jesus knew the man in chapter 5 had been sick for 38 years, just as He knows what is in man’s heart, He knew what He was going to do in this situation.

Jesus fed 5,000+ people—a sign

Many said, as a result, that Jesus was truly the Prophet who was to come.

The disciples gathered twelve baskets of bread fragments that were left over.

Another result was that the people intended to take Jesus by force to be their king.

What was the second sign? Who saw it?

Jesus walked on water, and only His disciples saw it.

The boat was immediately at land when Jesus stepped into it, another miracle.

They were frightened, but He said, “It is I; do not be afraid.”

Jesus is there when circumstances are dark, hard, and fearful.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Who is Jesus? How do they apply knowing who He is to their lives?

Verses 22-59

What are these verses about? Where was Jesus?

He went to Capernaum and taught in the synagogue there.

He knew the people came to Him because He fed them—not because of the signs. The signs would have shown them that He is the Son of God, so that they might believe and have life. But they didn't seek Him for that reason.

He used the sign of feeding them to teach the truth about eternal life. When He spoke of works, they thought there was something they could do to earn life.

Jesus explained that the work is to believe in Him who was sent by the Father.

He called the crowd to believe in Him as the bread of life from heaven.
He compared Himself with the Old Testament manna, bread from heaven.

They wanted to be fed like the Israelites in the wilderness. Jesus told them it wasn't Moses who fed the Israelites but God. That bread was temporary. This bread gives eternal life.

God's bread which comes down from heaven gives life to the world.
They wanted that bread but were thinking physically, not spiritually.

Just as earthly bread is necessary for physical life, heavenly bread is necessary for eternal life. Jesus is the source of life.

What do verses 37-40 teach about the Father and salvation?

Jesus said all that the Father gives to Him will come to Him.

The Father's will is that Jesus lose no one given to Him.

He will raise them up on the last day.

Everyone who believes in the Son has eternal life and will be raised on the last day.

What was the response?

Those who heard grumbled because Jesus said He was the bread out of heaven.
Because they knew His parents, they didn't believe He came from heaven.

What did Jesus repeat in verse 44? Why?

The Father draws those who come to / believe in Jesus.

Those who are taught, who have heard and learned from the Father, come to Him.

They believe, and He will raise them up on the last day. Salvation is of God.

The Jews did not believe. In this chapter, they were looking for works to do for salvation. The Father gives, and Jesus does not lose one of them. The work is to believe.

What is the contrast in verses 49-50?

Old Testament

Those who ate the manna still died.

Jesus

He is the bread of life out of heaven. Those who eat (believe) will not die.

Moses wrote about the manna in the Law of the Old Testament. Jesus said that Moses wrote about Him, John 5:46, 39-40. Philip told Nathanael the same thing, John 1:45.

Verses 52-59

What statement did Jesus make in verse 51, and how did He explain it further in these verses?

Eat this bread and live forever.

The bread is His flesh, which He gives for the life of the world.

He spoke of spiritual truth, as He had done with Nicodemus in John 3.

He used natural illustrations, as with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman.

Eating and drinking is symbolic for believing in Him.

The one who does this abides (remains) in Jesus and Jesus in him.

That abiding is part of life in His name.

Verses 60-71

What were the results of His teaching?

Many of the people who had been following Jesus, called disciples, grumbled and argued because Jesus had just made some difficult statements.

Jesus' declaration of who He is and what is necessary for eternal life cleared out the uncommitted, those who followed only to be fed. Jesus' message meant commitment, a change of belief, a life change, and they knew it.

Jesus' words are spirit and life.

Again He spoke of the Spirit who gives life, as with Nicodemus.
The flesh is of no profit—cannot give life.

Who / what did Jesus know?

He knew that many did not believe.

He knew who would betray Him—Judas specifically.

Then again, He said that no one can come to Him unless the Father grants him.
Judas had not been given, drawn, granted from the Father.

Ask how this relates to other verses they learned in John 2, 4, and 5.

Jesus didn't need someone to tell Him about man; He knows what is inside a man.
He knew the man at the pool had been ill for 38 years.
He knew everything about the woman at the well. Jesus, God in the flesh, is all-knowing.

Many left because of the difficult statement Jesus made. This is a turning point in the book of John. It's the last part of Jesus' earthly ministry.

You might ask if this is still true today. How do people respond when they hear the high call of being a disciple of Christ? Have those in your group shared this high calling and watched the hearer walk away?

You could ask why.

Jesus answered that question in this text. It is only those that the Father draws that will come to Him.

Who are verses 67-71 about?

The twelve disciples

What happened? What did Jesus ask them? Why?

He asked if they too wanted to walk away.

Simon Peter spoke for all of them (he thought).
“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”
They believed and had come to know Who Jesus is.
All of them except Judas, but Peter didn't know that.

What was Jesus' response?

Jesus reminded them that He chose them, the twelve, to follow Him as His disciples. That did not mean that Judas had been chosen for salvation, because he didn't believe. Jesus

did not lose even one of those God gave Him for salvation (verse 39). All who truly believe will be raised on the last day, none lost by Jesus.

Jesus knew from the beginning who did not believe and who would betray Him. He knew from the beginning when He chose Judas to be one of the twelve. Judas was a devil, but he didn't turn and walk away at that time with the many others who did.

You might end the discussion by asking what impact this study has had in their lives. What are they learning about Jesus and His words, and do they truly believe that He is Who He says He is?

The signs Verses 1-21	The teaching Verses 22-59	The results Verses 60-71
Jesus fed 5,000+ He walked on water Boat immediately at land	I am the bread of life from heaven Eat and live forever	Many disciples turned away Peter and ten believed Judas did not believe

**JOHN PART 1
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 10**

Lesson emphasis

- The twelve disciples
- Calling, choosing, and training

REVIEW

To begin this discussion you might ask what your group remember from John 1–5 about the disciples.

John 1 tells of four disciples by name.

Andrew
Peter, Andrew's brother
Philip
Nathanael

NOTE: Nathanael is not named in the other three Gospels, but is mentioned again in John 21:2. Many Bible scholars think that Nathanael is the same person as Bartholomew.

What happened in John 1 with these men?

Two of them, Andrew was one and maybe John the author of this Gospel was the other, were first disciples of John the Baptist.

After John's testimony about Jesus, they followed Him, at least for a while.

Andrew found his brother Simon (later Jesus named him Peter, the rock) and told him that they'd found Messiah. Then Andrew brought Peter to Jesus.

Jesus found Philip and called him to follow Him.

Peter, Andrew, and Philip were all from Bethsaida.

Philip found Nathanael, who was from Cana, and told him that they had found the one Moses and the prophets wrote about—Jesus of Nazareth.

Bethsaida, Cana, and Nazareth are in the Galilee area of Israel.

It seems from the text that this was the first encounter any of these men had with Jesus.

Was there any other mention of the disciples in John 2–5?

They were at the wedding in Cana when Jesus turned the water to wine.
They saw His glory and believed in Him.

2:22

After Jesus was raised from the dead, they remembered what He said and believed the Scriptures and His Word.

3:22

Jesus was spending time with them and baptizing.

4:2

They were baptizing.

4:8, 27, 31-38

His disciples went into the city of Samaria while Jesus stayed at the well. When they returned, they were amazed to find Him talking to a woman. As they urged Him to eat, He spoke to them of the harvest and their part of sowing and reaping.

Ask what time reference John 3:24 established.

John the Baptist had not yet been put in prison.

The events of John 1 take place before John was imprisoned.

Use the chart in the lesson, “The Calling and the Choosing of the Twelve,” as a visual aid for your discussion.

CALLING THE DISCIPLES

Ask what your group learned about this from the other Gospels.

Matthew 4:12 and Mark 1:14 both state that Jesus heard John the Baptist had been put in prison. Therefore, both accounts about the disciples happen at a later time than John 1.

Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20 record the same event or calling.

Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee and saw two sets of brothers fishing.

Peter and Andrew

James and John, who were with their father at the time

He called them to follow Him, and immediately they left their nets and boats to follow.

Jesus told them that He would make them fishers of men.

Luke 5:1-11,27-28

This seems to be a different incident or calling.

Jesus taught people from a boat and led Peter to a great catch of fish.

Peter's confession shows he realized who he was before Jesus.

James and John were with him at this time.

They left everything and followed Jesus.

Jesus called Levi (called Matthew, Matthew 9:9), the tax collector, to follow Him.

This event is also in Matthew 9 and Mark 2.

All of these men left everything and followed Jesus.

This call to Peter came after Jesus had healed his mother-in-law and many had been healed, Luke 4:38-41.

Since Luke gives the chronological account of events in Jesus' life, it helps with placing these events. Matthew does not give his account of Peter's mother-in-law until Matthew 8:14-15.

Ask how these Scriptures relate to John 1:29-51.

John 1 and 2 took place before John the Baptist was in prison.

The above references took place after.

John 1:29-51 helps one understand that some disciples originally met Jesus when John the Baptist was preaching, went to a wedding in Cana with Him (John 2), spent time with Him. Those events were before He called them to follow Him permanently.

You might ask how this relates to discipling people now. Give time for discussion.

CHOOSING THE TWELVE

Ask your group what they learned about this.

Luke 6:12-19; Mark 3:13-19

Jesus went off to the mountain and spent the whole night in prayer to God.

If Jesus spent this much time in prayer, should His own, believers, pray to know God's will?

After praying all night, He called His disciples (which means “followers” or “learners”) to Him and chose the twelve whom He called apostles (which means “ones sent out”).

Simon whom Jesus named “rock”—“Peter” in Greek, “Cephas” in Aramaic
Andrew, Peter’s brother
James, son of Zebedee
John, James’s brother Jesus named Zebedee’s sons “Sons of Thunder”
Philip
Bartholomew—who probably was Nathanael
Matthew (Levi) the tax collector
Thomas
James, son of Alphaeus
Simon the Zealot
Judas (Thaddaeus)
Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus

You could ask if there is any practical lesson in this for believers today.

Jesus gave Himself to those who had responded to His call to follow Him anywhere.

If God has given us the responsibility to pour our lives into others, Jesus is the example of how to do that. He spent His time with those who would take His message to others.

TRAINING THE TWELVE

How did Jesus train them?

Jesus taught them, but their understanding was progressive.

He demonstrated before them the things He later sent them out to do. They learned to teach as they heard Him teach.

Matthew 10:1-11:1; Mark 6:7-13, 30-32; Luke 9:1-11

Jesus instructed them.

He warned them.

He told them what to do when persecuted.

He gave specific directions to them.

He gave them authority to do what He told them to do.

He sent them out in pairs as He trained them to be apostles.

Then they reported to Him what they had done when they returned.

He sent them out to preach repentance—what John the Baptist and Jesus preached. Jesus gave them power and authority over demons and to heal diseases.

They were to go, take nothing with them, and proclaim the kingdom of God and repentance. If a city received them, they were to stay there. If not, they were to shake the dust off and move on.

When they returned and reported to Jesus all they had done, He took them away by themselves to Bethsaida. They were tired and had no time for themselves, but Jesus said they needed time alone with Him.

Crowds found out where they were and followed them. Jesus welcomed the crowds, teaching them about the kingdom and healing their sick.

Relate this to the Gospel of John. What had these disciples / followers / learners heard and seen?

Jesus taught very clearly who He was. He repeated that He was sent by the Father. He said repeatedly that in order to have eternal life, one has to believe in Him.

He never compromised truth. He taught in simple terms. With Nicodemus He made sure he understood that he must be born again and that new birth was going to come as a result of belief.

When He dealt with the woman at the well, He made sure she understood that God is spirit and that those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. He told her He was the Messiah. He presented the truth of who He is.

Jesus taught about His relationship with the Father. After He healed the man who was lame for 38 years, Jesus said that He and the Father are equal.

Jesus made it clear that He is the bread of life. He never made it easy, just so they would follow.

He walked on water and fed the multitudes. His miracles always pointed them to God.

They heard Him as He interacted with the Jews.

They had been with Him at various times; now they were with Him all the time. However, it is toward the end of His ministry on earth that He concentrated completely on them.

You could ask how Jesus' example helps believers in discipling others today.

As believers we can disciple the same way—teaching and by example.

Parents are responsible to disciple their children. Children will learn as they see their parents' example and as they are taught truths in every situation of life.

As Precept Upon Precept leaders, you have a great opportunity to disciple a group of people by teaching, leading the discussion so that it is relevant to their lives.

Also, you have the responsibility and opportunity of being a good example of a godly person for them to see and follow. So many today need a godly example of what a Christian really is so that they can know how to follow Christ.

Ask your group to share what they learned about discipling from this study.

You might ask if there is any further application for them.

Many of the disciples walked away in John 6.

It is possible to be a disciple and not be a Christian because a disciple is just a learner or a follower. But it is not possible to be a Christian and not be a disciple.

Judas was a disciple, but ultimately he departed.

He was a disciple for a while, but he was not a true believer.

You could end by asking how God spoke to them during this study of John 1–6. Encourage them to continue by studying John Parts 2 and 3.