

# The book of John



*Daily devotions*

## Day 1

### Read John 1:1-18

Read slowly, underlining anything that stands out; use question and exclamation marks to read actively through the passage.

In one fell swoop, we find any thought that people express: “Jesus was a really great teacher, a good man...and that’s it”, completely dismantled. John’s opening claim is that Jesus is every bit as much God as God Himself. Distinct from God, but all of God. We start with a mystery, but one that John does not retreat from. He says if you want to know Jesus, the most important thing for you to know is that He is God. Let’s start there. CS Lewis commented on this, saying *I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God.*

**Pray: Thank Jesus for coming into a world that He knew would not receive Him.**

Further reading: Genesis 1:1, Proverbs 8:23, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16, Malachi 3:1, Hebrews 1:2, Isaiah 53:3, 1 Peter 1:23, Colossians 1:19

## Day 2

Read: John 1:19-51

In this passage, we see 3 “Come and see” moments; 1 inferred and 2 overt. Firstly, Jesus says “Come and see where I am staying, which is not a “check out my crib” moment, but so much more than that. This, really, is a statement that says “come and check out my life. Andrew, (probably) John, come and see that I am good”. This is followed by Andrew telling his brother Simon Peter, “we’ve found Him! The anointed one! (inferred) come and see!” an invitation that what I have experienced, I now invite you to experience. Then, Philip, from the same town as Andrew and Simon Peter let Nathanael know they’ve found Jesus. When Nathanael objects, Philip simply answers, “come and see”. The invitation is powerful. Anyone of those people at any time could have said “I’m good thanks!” and the invitation still would have done its job. We can never control the acceptance of an invitation, only the giving of one; conversely, it can never be accepted if not received.

John the baptist knew who he was and who he wasn't. He didn't look at Jesus and feel jealous through comparison. He knew his function, Jesus' function, and was ok with it. Let's remember that Jesus was John the baptist's cousin on his mother's side. We rarely feel tempted to compare with people at vastly different stages than us, rather, those who are like us in many ways. We compare apples with apples. Who are you tempted to compare with in life?

**Pray: Pray for 5 people in your current spheres that you would love to extend an invitation to. Pray for confidence and security in who you are, and to be able to celebrate those in your life who are succeeding, and to help those who aren't. Repent of any ugliness of comparison.**

Further reading: Luke 3:15, Isaiah 40:3, Acts 1:5, Isaiah 53:7, Isaiah 11:2, Genesis 22:1-18, Genesis 28:10-17

## Day 3

Read: John 2

In chapter 2 we see the first of 7 miracles that John reports. Perhaps these newlyweds were relatives of Jesus, given that Mary felt some responsibility, or perhaps she had an empathetic response to what was happening.

We see new wine put in the jars that were used for ceremonial cleansing. A celebration instead of a ritual. Next, at the temple, Jesus cleanses it and refers to a new temple: people will no longer need to go to the temple to encounter God, they will go through Him. Many people believed in Him because of His miracles, but Jesus knew how humanity will change on a dime.

*Questions for your journal: What do you love about this miracle? Are you a new wine person (celebrating what God has DONE) or a ceremonial cleansing person (trying to DO the right things to be good enough)? We all tend to do both at various times. How can you be intentional about focussing on believing, rather than focussing on behaving? Right behaving follows right believing!*

**Pray: Give God all the glory for your salvation. Consciously come to a place of humility, knowing there is nothing you can do to earn it. Let it truly sink in.**

Further reading: Mark 7:3, Exodus 14:31, Malachi 3:1, Psalm 69:9, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Deuteronomy 31:21, 1 Kings 8:39

## Day 4

Read: John 3

From the outset, one of the common themes of John is light and dark. Nicodemus comes to hear about the light, from the light, in the dark of night, in the dark of religious tradition. Nicodemus struggles to grasp these deep matters because he takes everything so literally and tries to rationalise them into his understanding. Jesus, speaking of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, knows it is beyond full human understanding. Hence Nicodemus' response: how can these things be?

Do we sometimes fail to trust God when we don't understand? What makes us believe that we should be able to wrap our heads around GOD? Is this human arrogance? If not, what is it?

Jesus is God's one and only Son in a special way. As read in chapter 1, we all have the right to be His children – sons and daughters, but Jesus is His capital S Son. That is why His death makes way for our life. Him being condemned on the cross makes way for our adoption as children, freeing us from condemnation.

John continues to make way for Jesus, as he declared in chapter 1. He preaches that Jesus has the ability to overturn whatever rituals that are in place. He pre-existed before the rituals, so He can replace, fulfil, or nullify them. He gets the final say.

*Journal: Where is your faith limited because you are depending on your understanding? Do you feel the good weight of being freed from judgment? Are there times that you prefer ritual over relationship?*

**Pray: Give God praise that you are born again – born from above! Reread John 1:12-13 and thank God that this is who you are.**

Further reading: Numbers 21:5-9, Ezekiel 36:25-26, 1 Corinthians 15:50, Ecclesiastes 11:5, Proverbs 30:4, Genesis 22:2, Isaiah 9:6, Ephesians 5:11-13, 1 John 1:6, James 1:17, 1 Corinthians 15:47, Daniel 7:14

## Day 5

Read: John 4

Jews and Samaritans did not associate with each other. Men and women did not talk together unless they were related, or chaperoned. Certainly, religious people did not associate with those who were sinners. Jesus breaks every social, cultural and religious divide here. The result is that an entire village comes to know Him. It started with one conversation that Jesus went out of His way to have; it was not necessary to go through Samaria. He went out of His way to find this one lost sheep.

We are familiar with the artesian springs that bubble up out west in Moree; when Jesus says well, that is the imagery He is using. This living water bubbles up to heal, restore and refresh. Think of that next time you're in the Moree hot pools! Freely available to all. Jesus will expand on this illustration later.

When we share Jesus with others, especially when we go out of our way to do so, it is so satisfying! There are people waiting to hear this good news, we need eyes to see them. They might not be the people we expect, as stated in John 1: His own did not receive Him; but in 4:42, we see the Samaritans recognising Him as the Saviour of the World.

We then see the second of seven miraculous signs in the book of John. Upon receiving assurance from Jesus, the royal official (probably serving "king" Herod) took the 33km journey back to Cana and learns his son is well, at the exact time Jesus pronounced him so. Coincidence? Not likely.

**Pray: On day 2, you prayed for 5 people that you would love to extend an invitation to. Pray for these 5 people again and ask God that you might be able to have a spiritual conversation with them.**

Further reading: Genesis 33:18-19, Genesis 48:22, Acts 10:28, Isaiah 12:3, Jeremiah 2:13, Revelations 21:6, Isaiah 55:1, Isaiah 58:11, Psalm 145:18, Psalm 40:8, Luke 10:2, 1 Timothy 4:10

## Day 6

Read: John 5

The third of the seven miraculous signs in John gets Jesus into hot water (no pun intended) not because of the miracle itself, but because of the explanation He gives for it. They are not happy that He healed someone on the sabbath, but they are horrified at the reason He gives. He says God never stops working, so I don't stop working either. If my dad doesn't, I won't. In answer to their horror and persecution, Jesus ramps up His claims! He continues to reiterate His connection with His Father and lets them know that they don't have His love in them. He is making Himself clear.

*Journal: When confronted with opposition, how do you react? What would stop you, or what stops you, from speaking truth? Why would they be mad someone was healed? Do you ever get mad at the way that God blesses people you wouldn't? This man had had this disability for 38 years – what is something you've been struggling with for a very long time?*

**Pray: Ask God to be made well and receive the freedom and healing He has for you. Determine to stay the course to see the victory.**

Further reading: John 1:18, Isaiah 35:6, Jeremiah 17:21, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Peter 1:17, Acts 17:31, Daniel 12:2, 1 Corinthians 15:52

## Day 7

### Read: John 6

Here we have miracles 4 and 5 of the 7, and the 1st of 7 "I AM" statements.

Jesus asks a question of the disciples that Philip answers using human reasoning. However, he does submit what they do have, rather than staying with what they don't have. He can't fathom what use they would be, but he still offers them. Jesus then performs this incredible act, feeding 5000 men, plus any women and children with them, making the morsels into a feast. If Jesus was political, or seeking human fame, this would give Him the impetus to start an uprising; his reaction is to quickly seek solitude.

Miracle 5: Here comes Jesus walking on water. Casually proving Himself to be much more than a man.

The first I am statement comes from the age-old question, what do we have to do to please God? Jesus gives a revolutionary answer: you have to believe in me. The difficulty for us then, is that we constantly try to add to that. Jesus + ..., that will please God. To stay focussed on believing that Jesus is enough, means we have to turn away from worry, fear, guilt, and anything else that would tear our focus away. When Jesus makes this statement, the crowd ask for a sign...the crowd will always love a sign. They'll stay while ever things are exciting and suit them. The one who truly follows Jesus loves the person. Jesus says to them "you want signs? You get me". They misunderstand Him and ask for bread for their bellies. Jesus says I am the bread of life. When they don't like that, as always, He ramps it up, and says, you need to eat my flesh and drink my blood. You need to take part in My life. This turns away the haters, but also the hanger-onners. Jesus is left with the 12, and the sound of crickets in the background. As tumbleweed rolls across the setting, (not scriptural, added for dramatic effect), Jesus says "what about you fellas?" In a statement that will hold us through all that we don't understand, the answer comes back "You're the only one with the words of life".

*Journal: Have you ever been offended at God? Where did that get you?*



## Day 8

Read: John 7:1-52

If you have siblings, you are familiar with their taunting, mockery and maybe their derision. Jesus understands even that!

The conjecture about Jesus continues. If you have had people misunderstand you, Jesus understands even that! Referring back to past events, Jesus reminds them of their fickleness – right now they are amazed at His teaching, but not that long ago they wanted to kill Him for healing someone on the Sabbath. They are amazed at His teaching, knowing that He had not had any formal training. These speculators are face to face with the WORD and accuse Him of being uneducated. It's laughable, but completely unfunny at the same time. They question His origin, Galilee as a backwater; Jesus goes next level by standing in the temple and declaring that He has come from God. As the conjecture continues, as opposition accelerates, He expands on what He said to the woman at the well. He has what we need for our parched hearts. As the commotion breaks out, even the officers sent to arrest Jesus can't bring themselves to do it. Trouble is brewing, but Jesus knew that.

*Journal: Are there times when you flip flop in your trust of who Jesus is? What affects your conviction? What is your reaction when people misunderstand you? What do you think it should be?*

**Pray: Thank Jesus for remaining immovable for us. Thank Him for His grace, as He knows our hearts and loves us anyway.**




Further reading: Deuteronomy 16:13-14, Psalm 109:5, Acts 4:13, Acts 7:8, Isaiah 11:3, Leviticus 23:36, Isaiah 35:6, Joel 2:28, Proverbs 18:13

## Day 9

Read: John 7:53-8:59

It is commonly understood that 7:53-8:11 was not part of the original John; not found in the original manuscripts, not consistent in literary style, not backed up by other scripture. The only thing it seems to be consistent with is Jesus' character, so worth a read, but we will not comment on it here. We take up comment in verse 12, with the second I AM statement: I am the light of the world. We were introduced to this idea in chapter 1, we see it as a recurring theme as we read, here we see Jesus state it plainly. His enemies attempt to refute him on the basis that their law states you need a witness. Jesus makes the original "as God is my witness" declaration. We then, are either in the light, or in the darkness, by our rejection or acceptance of Jesus.

Jesus keeps dropping truth bombs on them, with no thought for His own popularity. As we read a few days ago, He has to do what the Father wants. It can seem confusing when He says "I don't judge...I do judge" but in the context, He doesn't judge as they judge, He judges accurately. As much as the rulers hate Him, many people begin to believe. To those who believe, Jesus states that they will be set free by the truth as they follow Him. There is this divine revelation that will bring freedom, and sonship, not just service. The rulers continue to take offense at Him, and get into a "no, you are" battle. They sound like primary school children as Jesus' rebuke falls on deaf ears. Finishing with the blasphemous claim "I AM" they try to kill Him, but it's not time. Blasphemy is when someone speaks sacrilegiously about God. Jesus was speaking truthfully about God, confessing that that is exactly who He is.

*Journal: Go for a \_\_\_\_\_ today. What is something that occurred to you from the passage,    it raised, and something you can apply moving forward?*

**Pray: Ask Jesus for help as you live in the light. You are a child of the light; pray to live up to that truth.**

Further reading: Leviticus 20:10, 1 Samuel 16:7, Deuteronomy 19:15, Exodus 3:14, Romans 6:22, Romans 8:2, 2 Peter 2:19, Galatians 5:1.

## Day 10

Read: John 9

6th miracle! Just one to go. This man provokes a question from the disciples, about sin and sickness. Given that the man was born blind, the disciples ask was it the parents or the man who sinned, in utero. In rabbinic Jewish teaching, it was said that if a pregnant woman worshipped in a heathen temple, the unborn baby committed adultery. The disciples are asking which sin caused the sickness. The two do go hand in hand; there would be no sickness and decay if there had been no sin, but Jesus makes it clear that while that is universally true, it can't always be applied individually. There are unfortunate events, and assigning blame is counterproductive. Having just claimed to be the light of the world, Jesus now proves that in a physical manner. The man born blind can see. Can you even imagine, taking in the world for the first time?

If you think about the way a blind man would have to live then, their posture, their gait, everything; now consider them seeing, and how ALL that would change. Little wonder people didn't recognise him! When he begins to tell his testimony, the Pharisees are ropable that he was healed on the Sabbath. It's almost like Jesus is doing this on purpose ;) The parents, instead of being overjoyed and filled with gratitude to the one who just gave their son a new lease of life, are scared of losing their social standing, and so do not vouch for the healing. The son won't have any of it. Having been an outcast of society for this long, he has nothing to lose. His testimony is one that gives all who don't feel they have the right words great hope. He simply says "I don't claim to know it all. I just know that I used to be blind, and now I can see".

*Journal: I use to be... and now I... How would you fill in these blanks? You can argue theological positions all day long, but no one can argue with your experience. I used to...and now I...Spend 5 minutes right now, not preparing a discourse, but reflecting and jotting down your experience.*

**Pray: Ask God who you could share this with.**

Further reading: Isaiah 35:5, Psalm 146:8, Isaiah 29:18, Hebrews 1:1-2, Psalm 66:18, Psalm 34:15, Ezekiel 12:2, James 4:17

## Day 11

Read: John 10

Often Jesus is saying/doing something, and the disciples/crowd are experiencing the opposite. He might open blind eyes, but they can't "see" what is happening in front of them. He tells them about how the sheep hear the shepherd's voice, but they can't understand Him. In this chapter we have 2 more I AM statements: I am the Good Shepherd, and I am the gate for the sheep. Calling Himself the shepherd recalls the line of David, who started out a shepherd. It also recalls the book of Ezekiel, where the LORD chastises the bad shepherds over the people, and says that He, Yahweh Himself, will take care of His sheep.

By saying I AM the gate, He is saying that He is the only way into the sheepfold. To try and enter any other way is an illegitimate entry. We just celebrated Easter and remembered the horrific way that Jesus died. He emphasises here that He went to the cross willingly, and for you and me. Followed immediately by intense threats and persecution, it is so hard to fathom that Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to do this.

*Journal: Is there any place that you only serve for the "pay"? The pay might be praise, promise of promotion, recognition, attention...if none of those things were guaranteed, would you still serve others? Where is God calling you to lay your life down? Paul said he died daily – where are you still crawling off the altar where you should have stayed dead?*

**Pray: Thank Jesus for the wonderful Shepherd He is. Ask Him to help you let go and let Him – read through Psalm 23. Consider being your own shepherd – you get control. Consider Him being your Shepherd – you get rest, restoration, guidance...**

Further reading: Zechariah 11:17, Psalm 82:6 (if this can be said of mere men making judgments, how much more can God be used of Jesus?), Proverbs 27:23, Jeremiah 23:1, Ezekiel 34:2, 14

## Day 12

Read: John 11

Our 7th miracle – and what a miracle. With it comes I AM statement 5Ironically, Lazarus is restored to life, and that leads to Jesus' death. Jesus sees His death as glorification, that is the purpose for which He came. The motif of light and dark is more poignant now that Jesus has declared Himself to be the light. If the disciples put two and two together, they now know that when Jesus refers to the light, He refers to Himself, and darkness means being without Him.

Martha heads out to Jesus, ever the responsible and active one. Prior to the miracle, Jesus tells Martha "I am the resurrection and the life", and from her in return there is faith and a Messianic declaration. Some may know Peter's Messianic declaration; Martha's is less quoted, but no less important.

Jesus is indignant at the effects of the fall. All things having been created through Him, having seen it in its perfection, seeing it not as it should be, aggravates Him.

Note how Lazarus comes out of the tomb and remember from Easter how Jesus comes out. Lazarus is wrapped in grave clothes; the material is over his face; when Jesus leaves the tomb the linen is neatly folded. Why is this? Lazarus is the recipient of a resurrection; Jesus is the perpetrator: HE takes His life up again.

John makes sure that his audience know they are ALL included in the plan for reconciliation to God. And now the hunt for Jesus to arrest Him is on.

*Journal: Name a dead thing in your life that you are quite sure is dead and buried, that is truly important to you. Rate your belief in God from 1-10 to bring that dead thing to life.*

**Pray a prayer of faith, or a prayer for help with your unbelief, depending on where you rated it.**

Further reading: Proverbs 4:19, Acts 24:15, Colossians 3:4

## Day 13

Read: John 12

This chapter is the end of Jesus' public ministry in the book of John. It is largely taken with His death: firstly, anointed for burial; secondly letting some seekers know that He is about to die. John spells out that many remain blind to who He is, but that some do believe. It is like chapter 1 all over again "He was rejected, but as many as received Him and believed in His name, to them He gave the right to be called the children of God". Just as the book has largely been recounting those who reject Him, it is about to pivot and talk about those who have received Him.

In the middle is the beautiful picture of His "triumphal entry". It is almost a send up of a traditional triumph. The triumphant conqueror is meant to have a procession of plunder, personnel, and prisoners. He is meant to be on his war horse. There should be self-promotional fanfare, right to the heart of the city. Jesus stays out on the edge, rides a young donkey, alone. Jesus doesn't need the crowd to confirm His credentials; He knows exactly why He is there and what He is doing.

*Journal: Consider Judas' greed, and where it led him. Doubtless it didn't start with betraying the man he had left everything to follow 3 years prior; it was a little here and there around the edges. Are there any edges you need to be aware of, that left untended have an unintended trajectory?*

**Pray: Give Jesus your offering today. Stay here a moment, forgetting the to do list. It cost Mary something to bring her offering. Let it cost you as you give Him your love and thanksgiving and devotion.**

Further reading: Deuteronomy 15:11, Psalm 118:26, Zechariah 9:9, Psalm 91:15, Psalm 6:3, Acts 9:7, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Isaiah 53:1, Romans 10:16, Isaiah 6:9-10

## Day 14

John 13:1-17

What. A. Passage. The upside-down nature of the kingdom of God is on full display. What causes someone to spend their last moments doing the most menial task left for the lowest of servants or slaves? V3 says "Because Jesus knew that the Father had handed all things over to him, and that he had come from God and was going back to God" ...you can serve like this when you know who you are and whose you are. Secure in that knowledge, Jesus served. V4 has a plural – his outer clothes. He potentially stripped down to a loin cloth, like a slave. It's all "downhill" from here. From washing people's feet, to laying down His life, there is no fathoming His humility. It can only be that this is truly who our God is! Pause. What? How? God is so selfless. He truly must love us. Everything He does is to show us the full extent of His love (V1).

Sometimes we serve and serve because we think we aren't good enough. The challenge then is to know who we are and whose we are, that we are seated in heavenly places, that we are saved and called, that God has chosen us in advance...and serve from that place, rather than an inferior stance. Peter is offended at the act; he sees humiliation rather than humility, which exposes something in him. Do other people's acts of service ever seem too much for you?

*Journal: Where do you need to take off the robe of any status or influence you might have, and swap it out for the towel of a servant? How are you going with serving? How is your mindset – do you feel some things are beneath you? Do you feel like YOU are beneath, and you need to remember where Christ has seated you?*

**Pray: God, I need my mindset to wrap itself around this. I am the head and not the tail, I am above and not beneath, but I need to willingly take the towel of a servant and be willing to do the most menial of tasks. Help me to know that I'm not too good for anything – I've simply been made right with You through Jesus.**

Further reading: Psalm 51:2,7; Ephesians 6:9, 1 Timothy 5:10, 1 Peter 5:3, Matthew 10:24, James 1:25

## Day 15

### John 13:18-35

How counter intuitive to humble yourself completely before someone who is about to betray you, and then offer them a meal. How do you react when someone betrays you? I withdraw, self-protect, be guarded – if I saw this coming, Judas wouldn't have heard a peep out of me for about 3 weeks prior!

We clearly aren't God. He is completely beyond; His ways are higher than ours, His thoughts are higher than ours. He is patient when we reject Him to watch Netflix; when we neglect Him for whatever is so important in our lives, when we disown Him through our actions or words. As He loves us and shows it through His words and deeds, He asks us to love each other.

*Journal: Who are you currently living in self-protection mode with? Perhaps you feel betrayed or abandoned by them. Firstly, have you forgiven them yet? Today is the day. Secondly, have you started to pray for them yet? Praying blessing and favour over their life disarms the enemy in yours.*

**Pray for God's love to dwell in you so deeply that you can love others as He has asked. Admit no amount of self-will can achieve it and submit and surrender your inability to our amazing Father.**

Further reading: Psalm 41:9, Romans 12:10, 13:10



## Day 16

### John 13:36-14:31

This is a beautiful recount of the disciples during uncertainty. They are all stressed about Jesus saying that He is going. They chime in with their concerns: first Peter, then Thomas, then Philip, then Judas...and Jesus patiently listens and addresses their concerns. He is our Lord, but He is also our friend! Oh, how He loves us!

Jesus condescends to the level of our heart status. Peter feels ready to go the distance, Jesus lets him know, nope, you aren't. But, let me comfort you, because I know this is hard for y'all.

I AM statement 6 – I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Most inclusive statement found in the book of John might be 3:16 God so love THE WORLD that WHOSOEVER believes in Him will not perish...the converse is this exclusive statement: NO ONE comes to the Father except through me. Everyone is invited, not everyone will accept the invitation. Sometimes we wish it was narrower, narrowed down to who we think deserves it. Sometimes we wish it broader as Jesus is a leap too far for our loved ones. Caution here: we are not God, we don't determine the plan. He is the way, He is the truth, He is the life. We see through a glass dimly.

The Holy Spirit sent to us. Pause. What a plan – Jesus pays it all, and then gives us power through His Holy Spirit, available to all, all empowered. Residing with us, living in us. Come on somebody! The Holy Spirit giving us peace, courage, comfort, boldness, advocacy, help.

**Pray: Pray that you would be continuously filled with the Holy Spirit today.**

Further reading: Romans 5:2, Hebrews 1:3, 2 John 1:6, Acts 1:4, Romans 8:26, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Acts 10:41, Proverbs 8:17, Philippians 4:7, Philippians 2:6

## Day 17

### John 15&16

A big one today, to get the flow of the discourse. It starts with the final I AM statement. With this I AM statement is the key to living a victorious Christian life: by staying vitally connected to the source, living in Him, abiding in Christ. Trying to do this on our own is impossible, we will bear no fruit. We become shrivelled up and useless – that is not to condemn us, it's to compel us: stay connected to Him! We are chosen, anointed, and appointed to bear much fruit. God's plan for us has always been fruitfulness, and if we live in submission to and partnership with Him, that will be our story. Also, because we are in Him, when we ask for things, we are asking according to His will, rather than ours, which means our requests will be granted.

Side note: we'll be hated. For those of us who love to be liked, this is unfortunate, but hey, you can't say we weren't warned. Seriously, we need to reconcile this, otherwise every rejection is a temptation to flip flop. If we get that this is to be expected, we can be resolute.

*Journal: How much of your requests are from your will? How can you intentionally stay connected to the vine? How can you keep the joy that Jesus talks about?*

**Pray: Commit yourself to staying connected to the vine, letting His life and vitality flow into yours. Pray for the strength to love self-sacrificially.**

Further reading: 2 John 1:5, Romans 5:7-8, 1 John 3:16, Proverbs 18:24, James 4:4, Acts 14:22, Psalm 109:3, 1 John 5:6, 1 John 3:1, Zechariah 13:7, Romans 8:37, 2 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 4:7

## Day 18

### John 17

Jesus prayed. He prayed that He would be glorified (in His death), He prayed for the disciples, and He prayed for those who don't yet know Him.

Today, let's spend real time praying the same.

Pray that Jesus would be glorified. Go through every sphere that affects your life – pray for Him to be glorified in the world, in our country, in our government, in entertainment, in your workplace, in your family, etc, etc, etc...anywhere you can think of. Name the space and envision how Jesus could be glorified there.

Pray for the church. The believers. For understanding, faith – go through verse 6-8, and pray the things Jesus prayed.

Pray for those you desperately want to see come to Christ. Call them by name into the kingdom. Let your heart break for them. If you don't know what to pray, pray in the Spirit. If you don't know how to pray in the Spirit, ask for the gift of tongues, and begin to pray for those people...if another language begins to flow, allow it to.

## Day 19

### John 18:1-27

The devastating part of the gospels. I still tear up, even though surely, I've heard this event recounted maybe a thousand times. Our Jesus, doing this for us. "Amazing love, how can it be, there's a God who weeps, there's a God who bleeds, O praise the one, who reached for me, Hallelujah to the Son of Suffering".

The motif of light and dark is on display here. They come in the darkness of night to arrest the light of the world.

This is the first, unofficial hearing of Jesus, before the formal gathering of the Sanhedrin could be convened. That is how Peter is able to get so close to the action. It's possible that Jesus and Peter were across the courtyard from one another. It's possible that Jesus heard Peter's vehement denial. How heartbreaking! If you've been abandoned, Jesus knows your pain. If you've been weak and had no conviction, Jesus knows your frailty; he knew Peter would do this, and had already decided to entrust the church to him.

*Journal: Try not to move on too quickly from this moment. The passion of the Christ is meant to be pondered. Different traditions have different methods to do so, such as the Catholic stations of the cross. Today, tomorrow, the next day, even though you know this, try to take your time and process what is happening. Jesus' whole ministry is leading here.*

**Pray: Thank Jesus, and praise Him for whatever stands out to you here.**

## Day 20

### John 18:28-19:16

Having endured the Jewish questioning, Jesus is handed to the Roman authorities for the purpose of having Him killed. The Jewish leaders' hypocrisy is real. They won't go in for fear of being defiled, and yet they are having a man killed who hasn't done anything except upset the status quo.

If we want to be kind, there is a real charge of blasphemy. As we read on day 9, this was always their contention point. They are trying to obey Torah, but they are so blinded by the law that they can't see the life. Blasphemy isn't blasphemy if the person claiming to be God actually is God. They think they have Pilate's support, because he gave them some soldiers to arrest Jesus, but they butt up against him as they ask for his support in the judgment.

From historical evidence we know that Pilate is not a man of conviction. He is weak willed, and even though he knows Jesus poses no threat to the Roman Empire (with regards to force), he will not release him. The crowd is too much for him. The crowd, having brought Jesus with the charge of revolution, demand the release of Barabbas who is a known revolutionary. The hypocrisy continues, culminating as the Jewish leaders yell, they have no king but Caesar. To declare such a thing is completely against Torah, but they see nothing wrong with their actions. Pilate hands him over.

*I see the crowd in Pilate's hall, Their furious cries I hear; Their shouts of "Crucify!" appal, Their curses fill mine ear. And of that shouting multitude I feel that I am one, And in that din of voices rude I recognize my own. I see the scourgers rend the flesh Of God's beloved Son; And as they smite I feel afresh That I of them am one. Around the Cross the throng I see That mock the Sufferer's groan, Yet still my voice it seems to be, As if I mocked alone. 'Twas I that shed that sacred Blood, I nailed him to the Tree, I crucified the Christ of God, I joined the mockery. Yet not the less that Blood avails To cleanse me from sin, And not the less that Cross prevails To give me peace within.*

## Day 21

### John 19:17-42

The charge and reason for execution was inscribed on the notice; initially hung around His as He walked to Calvary, and then nailed to the cross. King of the Jews, because that's the claim the Jewish leaders gave for Him to deserve capital punishment, and it was probably Pilate's last dig at them. As Caiaphas didn't know what he was saying when he said "one man should die for the nation", as Mary did more than she knew by anointing Jesus with the perfume, so Pilate writes more than he knew by inscribing this declaration. He refuses to back down from it.

The accepted Roman practise of the "quaternion", the 4 Roman soldiers responsible for the execution, receiving the executed's goods, fulfilled scripture. 4 soldiers, 4 women, and in the midst of it Jesus makes sure His earthly mum will be ok.

Because Sabbath would begin at 6pm, and the Jews would not be allowed to do any work, they wanted the deaths hurried up. Romans would leave bodies there for days as a warning; in the slave uprising involving Spartacus, 6000 survivors were crucified along the Appian Way, left there for birds and weather, so that passers-by knew what happened to those who threatened the emperor. Jewish law, however, forbade the executed from being left overnight. Jesus lay down His life when His mission was accomplished; no one took it from Him.

***Journal and prayer: Let thanksgiving flow as you ponder these events.***

Further reading: Genesis 22:6, Acts 2:23, Exodus 28:32, Psalm 22:18, Psalm 22:15, Psalm 69:21, Exodus 12:16, Deuteronomy 21:23, Joshua 10:26, Psalm 34:20, Exodus 12:46, Zechariah 12:10, Revelation 1:7, Acts 13:29, Psalm 45:8

## Day 22

### John 20

HE IS RISEN!!!

Where the graveclothes are is relevant because if anyone had carried the body off, they wouldn't have bothered unwrapping it first. While John believed first, Mary got to see the risen Christ first. Telling the disciples was amazing in and of itself, given that the testimony of a woman was not rated in the first century. Death and the grave having been no obstacle to the king of kings and the lord of lords, locked doors sure weren't about to be. Jesus' greeting "peace be with you", which He promised them before He died, has been proclaimed by the church ever since. They rejoice, fulfilling His promise to them at their last meal. Jesus gives them the power to proclaim the forgiveness of sins, which from here they will spend their lives doing. Jesus condescends even to the level of Thomas' unbelief, and even as we wish He would show Himself to those around us, Jesus' statement reminds us that without faith it is impossible to please God. It all comes down to faith. John reminds us that there is recorded evidence for us to examine, and the desired result is to come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

**Pray: Thank God for the ability to put your faith in Jesus. He is the one who called you, so give Him all the glory.**

Further reading: Acts 2:24, Acts 17:3, Psalm 122:8, 1 Corinthians 5:4, Psalm 22:16, 1 Peter 1:8

## Day 23

### John 21

You made it! A month of May in the book of John. 5 weekend messages, 5 midweek studies, 23 days of devotions.

Rather than observations, and further readings, take time now to sit with Jesus. Imagine He's just cooked you breakfast on the beach. What do you want to talk to Him about? What do you want to ask Him? What do you want to thank Him for, from what you've learnt about Him over the last month?

Drag yourself back from the concerns of your life, into the book of John. Pause and consider all that He did here, and give Him praise.