



**Fall 2022 Riverside
Small Groups Study**

Gospel of John

Part 1

John 1 - 7

Gospel of John: Chapter 1

It is important for disciples to learn to trust the Holy Spirit to be at work in their lives and to interact with scripture on their own rather than leaning on the teaching of others. Jesus asked around 307 questions in the Gospels and only answered 3. Jesus also often taught in parables, forcing the listeners to use their God-given abilities to listen and discern. This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture. Trust God to be in your discussion and if there is a question or an issue that you would love to discuss more come Sunday morning at 9:00 AM to Coffee and Scripture at Ridgetop Coffee and Tea.

Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow. Those not reading out loud to the group might find it helpful to circle, underline, mark words or phrases that stick out as they listen.

John 1:1-14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How is God inviting you to change? What is God inviting you to be?

➤ _____

✓ Who is Jesus to you?

➤ _____

✓ The Greek word "Logos" is translated "word" in this passage. Logos conveyed "the thing that gives meaning" to Greek speakers and Hebrew speakers would have connected it to the Hebrew Scripture phrase, "Word of God" which conveyed God's presence. What does it mean to you that the Gospel writer chose a word that conveyed meaning to both Greeks and Hebrews?

➤ _____

What does the passage say about who Jesus is? Why is this important to the overall story of the Bible?

➤ _____

Read the passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow. Those not reading out loud to the group might find it helpful to circle, underline, mark words or phrases that stick out as they listen.

John 1:15-51 (NRSV) ⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ”) ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

²³ He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ”
as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶ John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷ the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” ²⁸ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Lamb of God

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'³¹ I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel."³² And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him."³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'³⁴ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."

The First Disciples of Jesus

³⁵ The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples,³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?"³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed).⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth."⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of

Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!”⁴⁸ Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.”⁴⁹ Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”⁵⁰ Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.”⁵¹ And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How is God inviting you to be a disciple?

➤ _____

✓ Lambs were sold in the Temple for people to offer as a sacrifice. How did the religious leaders hear John’s words, “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world/”?

➤ _____

✓ What did Andrew do “first” according to verse 41?



What is one take away from this chapter you want to remember or apply this week?

Gospel of John: Chapter 2

It is important for disciples to learn to trust the Holy Spirit to be at work in their lives and to interact with scripture on their own rather than leaning on the teaching of others. This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture.

Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow. Those not reading out loud to the group might find it helpful to circle, underline, mark words or phrases that stick out as they listen.

John 2:1-12 (NRSV) ¹ On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴ And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." ⁶ Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. ⁹ When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." ¹¹ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

¹² After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How is God inviting me to wait for the right time? What makes waiting hard for humans?

➤ _____

✓ What does this story say about Jesus?

➤ _____

John 2:13-25 (NRSV) ¹³ The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵ Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." ¹⁸ The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

²³ When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed

in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing.²⁴ But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people²⁵ and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ What “table” in your life can you imagine Jesus wants to overturn?

➤ _____

✓ What did Jesus say will prove His authority and His identity?

➤ _____

What is one take away from this chapter you want to remember or apply this week?

Gospel of John: Chapter 3

This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture. Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow.

John 3:1-21 (NRSV) ¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Those

who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God.¹⁹ And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.²⁰ For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed.²¹ But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How is God inviting you to change? What does “born again” mean to you?

➤ _____

✓ Nicodemus was a biblical scholar so Jesus knew he would recognize the story of the bronze snake in Numbers 2:4-9. What does the story of the bronze snake in Scripture reveal about Jesus and our response to Jesus?

➤ _____

✓ How is John 3:17 good news?

➤ _____

John 3:22-36 (NRSV) ²² After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. ²³ John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized ²⁴ —John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.

²⁵ Now a discussion about purification arose between John’s disciples and a Jew. ²⁶ They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him.” ²⁷ John answered, “No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.’ ²⁹ He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice. For this reason my joy has been fulfilled. ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.”

³¹ The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. ³³ Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified this, that God is true. ³⁴ He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. ³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God’s wrath.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

- ✓ John was sent to live a life that pointed to Jesus, so he baptized. Who in your life pointed to Jesus? What did they do that helped you see Jesus?

- _____

- ✓ What does this passage say about John the Baptist?

- _____

What is one take away from this chapter you want to remember or apply this week?

Gospel of John: Chapter 4

This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture. Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow.

John 4:1-42 (NRSV) ¹ Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, “Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John” ² — although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized— ³ he left Judea and started back to Galilee. ⁴ But he had to go through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” ⁸ (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” ¹¹ The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹² Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” ¹³ Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” ¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.” ¹⁷ The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is

true!"¹⁹ The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet."²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem."²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him."²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us."²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."²⁷ Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?"²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,²⁹ "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?"³⁰ They left the city and were on their way to him.³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something."³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."³³ So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?"³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work."³⁵ Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting."³⁶ The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together."³⁷ For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.'³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."³⁹ Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done."⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days.⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word.⁴² They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you

said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How is God inviting you to change?

➤ _____

✓ What can you learn from the disciples’ actions in this story?

➤ _____

✓ “Many” believed in Jesus because of the woman’s words. What did she say?

➤ _____

✓ The religious people of Jesus’ day avoided Samaria. John 4:4 says Jesus “had to go” to Samaria. Where or who is your “have to go” today?

➤ _____

John 4:43-54 (NRSV) ⁴³ When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee ⁴⁴ (for Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet’s own country). ⁴⁵ When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival.

⁴⁶ Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” ⁴⁹ The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my little boy dies.” ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. ⁵¹ As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, “Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him.” ⁵³ The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he himself believed, along with his whole household. ⁵⁴ Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ What makes it hard to believe without seeing?

➤ _____

✓ What is “belief” in this passage?



What is one take away from this chapter you want to remember or apply this week?

Gospel of John: Chapter 5

This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture. Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow.

John 5:1-29 (NRSV) ¹ After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

² Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. ³ In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁵ One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” ⁷ The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” ⁸ Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” ⁹ At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, “It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.” ¹¹ But he answered them, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your mat and walk.’ ” ¹² They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take it up and walk?’ ” ¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. ¹⁴ Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you.” ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. ¹⁶ Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still

working, and I also am working.”¹⁸ For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

¹⁹ Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.²⁰ The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished.²¹ Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes.²² The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son,²³ so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.²⁴ Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

²⁵ “Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.²⁶ For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself;²⁷ and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.²⁸ Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice²⁹ and will come out—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?



✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?



✓ What is your mat, or in other words, what is God inviting you to do to move forward in faith?



✓ Compare Jesus' words in verse 24 with the religious leaders concern for the man carrying his mat on a sabbath. What is it about rules that seems attractive to us?



John 5:30-47 (NRSV) "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

³¹ "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that his testimony to me is true. ³³ You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. ³⁴ Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. ³⁶ But I have a testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, ³⁸ and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

³⁹ "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you

have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. ⁴⁰ Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. ⁴¹ I do not accept glory from human beings. ⁴² But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. ⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ What do you search to find truth?

➤ _____

✓ What is the difference between praise from humans and praise from God?

➤ _____

What is one take away from this chapter
you want to remember or apply this week?

Gospel of John: Chapter 6

This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture. Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow.

John 6:1-59 (NRSV) ¹ After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. ¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world." ¹⁵ When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How would this story be different if instead of Philip you were the disciple he asked where are we to buy bread for these people?

➤ _____

✓ Why does this story end with Jesus withdrawing alone?

➤ _____

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. ²⁰ But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." ²¹ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

²² The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there. They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. ²³ Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” ²⁶ Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷ Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.” ²⁸ Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” ²⁹ Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” ³⁰ So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?” ³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ ” ³² Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴ They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

³⁵ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; ³⁸ for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

⁴¹ Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” ⁴² They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” ⁴³ Jesus answered them, “Do not complain among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by

God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.⁴⁷ Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life.⁴⁸ I am the bread of life.⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.⁵⁴ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day;⁵⁵ for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.⁵⁶ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”⁵⁹ He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?”⁶¹ But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you?⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.⁶⁴ But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him.⁶⁵ And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶ Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him.⁶⁷ So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?”⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You

have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.” ⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil.” ⁷¹ He was speaking of Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for he, though one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ Would your life be changed if you were in the boat when Jesus walked on water?

➤ _____

✓ What was the difference between following Jesus because they were looking for a sign and following Jesus because they ate their fill (vs.26)? What are people looking for today?

➤ _____

✓ What does verse 66 say about the definition of success most Christian Churches use today (often defined by large attendance, big budgets, lots of programs)? What is success when it comes to being church or followers of God? How is it measured?

➤ _____

What is one take away from this chapter
you want to remember or apply this week?

Gospel of John: Chapter 7

This study of John does not rely on giving a group all the answers, but on empowering the group to make disciples as Jesus made disciples, wrestling with questions and scripture. Read each passage as a group and then wrestle with the questions that follow.

¹ After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish to go about in Judea because the Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him. ² Now the Jewish festival of Booths was near. ³ So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing; ⁴ for no one who wants to be widely known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." ⁵ (For not even his brothers believed in him.) ⁶ Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil. ⁸ Go to the festival yourselves. I am not going to this festival, for my time has not yet fully come." ⁹ After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

¹⁰ But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were in secret. ¹¹ The Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, "Where is he?" ¹² And there was considerable complaining about him among the crowds. While some were saying, "He is a good man," others were saying, "No, he is deceiving the crowd." ¹³ Yet no one would speak openly about him for fear of the Jews.

¹⁴ About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. ¹⁵ The Jews were astonished at it, saying, "How does this man have such learning, when he has never been taught?" ¹⁶ Then Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me. ¹⁷ Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own. ¹⁸ Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him.

¹⁹ "Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why are you looking for an opportunity to kill me?" ²⁰ The crowd answered,

“You have a demon! Who is trying to kill you?”²¹ Jesus answered them, “I performed one work, and all of you are astonished.²² Moses gave you circumcision (it is, of course, not from Moses, but from the patriarchs), and you circumcise a man on the sabbath.²³ If a man receives circumcision on the sabbath in order that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I healed a man’s whole body on the sabbath?²⁴ Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”

²⁵ Now some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, “Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill?²⁶ And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah?²⁷ Yet we know where this man is from; but when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.”²⁸ Then Jesus cried out as he was teaching in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I am from. I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him.²⁹ I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.”³⁰ Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come.³¹ Yet many in the crowd believed in him and were saying, “When the Messiah comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

³² The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering such things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent temple police to arrest him.³³ Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little while longer, and then I am going to him who sent me.³⁴ You will search for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come.”³⁵ The Jews said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?³⁶ What does he mean by saying, ‘You will search for me and you will not find me’ and ‘Where I am, you cannot come’?”

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?



✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ How is God inviting me to change my response, both internal and external, when people complain about me? What is God inviting me to be?

➤ _____

✓ Why is it hard to not judge by appearance?

➤ _____

Rivers of Living Water

³⁷ On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ ”³⁹ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

⁴⁰ When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, “This is really the prophet.”⁴¹ Others said, “This is the Messiah.” But some asked, “Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he?”⁴² Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?”⁴³ So there was a division in the crowd because of him.⁴⁴ Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

⁴⁵ Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why did you not arrest him?”⁴⁶ The police answered, “Never has anyone spoken like this!”⁴⁷ Then the Pharisees replied, “Surely you have not been deceived too, have you?”⁴⁸ Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him?”⁴⁹ But this crowd, which

does not know the law—they are accursed.”⁵⁰ Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked,⁵¹ “Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?”⁵² They replied, “Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee.”

✓ What word/phrase caught my attention?

➤ _____

✓ Where does this passage touch my life experience?

➤ _____

✓ What would you have done if you were Nicodemus? What is God inviting you to change?

➤ _____
➤ _____

What is one take away from this chapter you want to remember or apply this week?

