

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

A study of the Gospel of John

The Gospel written by John was written “so that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His name”. John 20:31

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith . . . Hebrews 12: 2

Lesson 1 -	Who Is Jesus?	John 1
Lesson 2 -	I am He - The Messiah (Christ)	John 4: 1 – 42
Lesson 3 -	I am the Bread of Life	John 6: 1 – 59
Lesson 4 -	I am the Light of the World	John 7: 1 – 8: 30
Lesson 5 -	I am He - The Son of Man	John 8: 21 – 59
Lesson 6 -	I am the Door for the Sheep I am the Good Shepherd	John 9: 1 – 10: 12
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Lesson 8 -	I am the Resurrection & I the Life	John 11: 1 – 48
Lesson 9 -	I am Teacher & Lord	John 13: 1 – 35
Lesson 10 -	I am the Way, the Truth & the life	John 13: 31 – 14: 31
Lesson 11 -	I am the true Vine	John 15: 1 – 16: 4
Lesson 12 -	I am He – Jesus of Nazareth	John 18: 1 – 27
Lesson 13 -	I am a King	John 18: 28 – 19:30
Lesson 14 -	The Risen Christ	John 19: 31 – 20:31

Study Time Suggestions for this series

Preparing – Get your Bible(s), study guide, extra paper, pen or pencil and find a quiet place where you can focus on God’s Word without distractions. The suggested Scripture verses and thoughts will help you to clear your mind and open your heart to the Lord so that you can hear His voice and experience His presence through the Holy Spirit.

Listening - As you read the suggested Bible verses, remember that this is not simply another book to be analyzed, evaluated, or even memorized on your own. God’s Spirit will enable you to see and hear things from the Word of God that are meant just for you. He will give you insight and understanding as you rely on Him.

Pondering – Take time to think about the suggested questions and any other ideas which God has brought to your attention while you have been reading. John Piper has a new book that has just been published called simply, Think. It is a clear call for believers to use their minds effectively as well as their emotions in order to love God and love people!

Responding – There were many different responses to Jesus as He walked among and talked to the crowds and to individuals. Some had their lives transformed because they believed and were given the gift of life, eternal life. He waits today, just as He did then, to hear your questions and then your response to His claims and to His call.

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Lesson 1

WHO IS JESUS?

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**So the Word became human and made His home among us.
He was full of unfailing love (grace) and faithfulness (truth).
And we have seen His glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.** John 1: 14 –NLT

Who was this man named Jesus? People were asking that question when He was walking this earth more than 2000 years ago and they are still asking that same question today. There is probably no clearer or concise answer to that question than what John, His disciple, presents in his book. This gospel is all about Jesus – who He is, what He did, and why He came to live among mankind. Do you want to know Him? Then read on . . .

Preparing – As you quiet your mind and your heart before God, read Hebrews **12: 1 – 2**. Do you want to know Jesus? Do you want to “run with endurance and joy the race that God has planned for you”? Then make these verses your prayer - an expression of your thanksgiving, your questions, and your requests.

Listening - Read John 1. Read it again and again, using different translations. Let the Holy Spirit give you insight and understanding as you read about Jesus. Feel His presence – He wants you to know who He really is.

1. Focus on John 1: 1 – 4 and verse 14. Each sentence tells you something very important about Jesus. What does John want you to know and to believe?
2. John the Baptist had a very important role as he prepared the people for the coming of their Messiah. Read about his birth and his mission in Luke 1:57 – 80 and Luke 3: 1 – 19. What did this John accomplish?
3. What do you learn about Jesus from John the Baptist? John 1:6 – 18
4. When the religious leaders wanted to know more about John's identity, how did he explain it? John 1:19- 28
5. What do you learn about Jesus' identity from his encounters with the disciples? Why were they willing to leave everything familiar and follow Him?

Pondering –

1. John the Baptist called Jesus “the Lamb of God” – verses 29 and 36. What do you think he meant by this descriptive phrase?
2. John, the disciple, used this phrase many times in his book of Revelation. Why?
Revelation chapters 5, 6 and 7
Revelation 19: 6 – 9
Revelation 21: 22 - 27
Revelation 22: 1 – 6

Responding – It's a personal choice – to receive and to believe. Have you made that decision or are you still on your way to making it? John's purpose in writing this book is found in John 20: 29 - 31. Do you have life?

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Lesson 2

THE MESSIAH

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The woman said, "I know the Messiah is coming – the one who is called Christ. When He comes, He will explain everything to us."

Then Jesus told her, "I AM the Messiah!"

John 4: 25 – 26 – NLT

Is there a more beloved musical presentation than The Messiah? Handel composed this amazing choral proclamation based on the prophecies in the Old Testament and the fulfillment of them in the person of Jesus from the New Testament in 1741. Since that time, people throughout the world have joined together, especially in the Advent season, to sing this music and to rejoice in the truths proclaimed through it. What is your favorite song?

Preparing – They (the Israelites) wanted a king who would reign and bring peace on earth, but instead God sent His own Son who would bring them the gift of life eternal through his death and resurrection. What are you looking for when you think about "Jesus Christ, the Messiah"? This is a good time for confession and transparency as you focus on the great "I AM"

Listening – Read **John 4: 1 – 42**. Read it again and again using different translations. This is a true story about Jesus!

1. Jesus introduced Himself to a Samaritan woman. Put yourself in her place. Picture this woman as clearly as you can using descriptive adjectives.
2. For centuries the Jews had been looking for the Messiah - "the Anointed One" - who would come and set up a new kingdom for them - a king who would reign with justice and righteousness. Obviously, this Samaritan woman also knew about a coming Messiah. How does Jesus fit these prophecies?

Psalm 2: 1 - 9	Isaiah 59: 20
Psalm 45:1 - 6	Jeremiah 33: 14 - 16
Isaiah 9: 2 - 7	Daniel 7:13
Isaiah 11: 1 - 10	Micah 5:2
Isaiah 53: 1 - 12	Zechariah 9: 9 - 13
3. What information does Jesus give to this woman about Himself and His identity?
4. Jesus had just begun His public ministry at this time. Why are the Pharisees already concerned about Him? How did this impact the choices Jesus made?
5. Why do you think Jesus chose to reveal Himself and His mission to a woman, to a Samaritan, to an outcast? What was the result of her sharing her testimony?

Pondering –

1. What did Jesus offer to this woman that made her curious and receptive to Him?
2. What did Jesus explain to His disciples about Himself and His mission?

Responding – A personal encounter with Jesus, the Messiah, is always a life-changing experience. What is it that He wants you to understand today as you identify with the woman, the disciples, or the village people? What discovery will you share with your friends?

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Lesson 3

THE BREAD OF LIFE

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“Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life.

He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty.’”

John 6: 35 and 48

Did you know that bread is one of the oldest prepared foods known to man? There is evidence that since prehistoric times, humans have been making some form of bread. Through the centuries and in every culture, it has often been considered a staple food. Sometimes the word means the visible loaf, but it can also refer to the basic necessities of life. So when Jesus tells the Israelites that He is “the bread of life”, they understand that this is a claim with huge ramifications. He is more than the manna that their forefathers received in the wilderness. He is the Living Bread! What does that mean?

Preparing – Song writers can often help us express our thoughts and desires. Make this well known hymn your prayer.

“Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land.

I am weak, but Thou are mighty. Hold me with Thy powerful hand.

Bread of heaven, bread of heaven, feed me ‘til I want no more. Feed me ‘til I want no more.”

Isaiah 58: 11 – The Lord will guide you always. He will satisfy your needs.

Listening - Read John 6: 1 – 59. Try to imagine yourself in the crowd and as one of Jesus’ disciples.

1. What had Jesus, the disciples & the crowd just experienced – John 6: 1 - 24?
2. Read John 6: 25 - 59 – The people have just spent time listening to Jesus and witnessing some miracles, but they want to hear more. Find the six questions that Jesus answers and write them down. Then try to summarize His answer to each question. (The story of the “manna” – God’s provision for their physical needs is in Exodus 16.)
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to help these people understand about who He is? How would using the visual example of bread help them to understand more about Him?
4. This is not the first time that Jesus has introduced the concept of “eternal or everlasting life”. Why is this so important? What do they need to grasp from the One who “has come down from heaven and gives life to the world”?

Pondering -

1. What does Jesus mean in John 6: 55 - 56? Try to explain this simply and clearly. The following verses may give you some helpful insight, too.

John 3: 14 – 16	John 5: 24 - 25
John 3: 36	John 5: 37 - 40
John 4: 13 – 14	John 6: 27
2. There seems to be an open invitation for anyone and everyone to believe in Jesus. How do you reconcile this truth with Jesus’ comment in John 6: 37 and 44?

Responding - Jesus has promised that “those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled”.

How is your satisfaction level?

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Lesson 4

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

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“When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, **‘I AM the light of the world.**
Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” John 8: 12

Light and darkness. Day and night. These were God’s very first act of creation and he called the light good. Then on the fourth day he created the sun, the moon, and the stars in the expanse of His universe that is beyond the capabilities of man to grasp. Think about the impact of the sun and then consider the night sky and the wonders of the constellations and galaxies which extend far beyond our imagination. What is the difference between taking a walk in the dark and a walk when it is light outside? Why would you want to carry a flashlight when it is dark?

Preparing – Too often people are satisfied with knowing that there will be “a light at the end of the tunnel”. Do you agree with that idea or do you think that Jesus just might mean that He would like to give you His light while you are in the tunnel of sadness, confusion, or distress? Take some time and let Jesus speak to you from His words in John 8:12.

Listening - Read John 7: 1 - 8: 30. Read it a few times before you begin your study. What is the mood of the day?

1. As a news reporter, sum up the events of this important week when the Jews come together to celebrate the Feast of the Tabernacles in order to remember their journey through the wilderness.
2. Why did Jesus wait until the second half of the week to make His appearance?
What happened when He did begin to teach at the temple courts?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to help the crowd, his followers, and the antagonists understand?
4. How do the following verses help you understand what Jesus meant by His proclamation that He is the “light of the world and that those follow Him will have the light that leads to life.”
John 1: 4 – 9
John 3: 19 – 21
John 9: 5
John 12: 35 - 36, 46
II Corinthians 4: 5 - 7
Ephesians 5: 8 - 14
Colossians 1: 11 - 12
I John 1: 5 - 7
I John 2: 7 - 11

Pondering –

1. There were many levels of disbelief – from doubt and questions to anger, resentment and threats. What did Jesus do to dispel this opposition? What made Him so secure and confident?
2. What do you think Jesus means in Matthew 5: 14 – 16?

Responding -

Jesus said, “I am the world’s Light. No one who follows Me stumbles around in the darkness. I provide plenty of light to live in.” (The Message) With thankfulness, let Jesus, God’s Son, shine His light of love, grace, mercy, joy and peace into the tunnels of your addiction, guilt, or inadequacies.

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Lesson 5

THE SON OF MAN

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“So Jesus said, ‘When you have lifted up the **Son of Man** on the cross, then you will understand that **I AM He**. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me.’” John 8:28 (NLT)

It has been said that “the two titles, Son of God and Son of man, together declare the whole truth as to Jesus’ person”. From what you know, do you believe that this is a true statement? Many religions, as well as history, acknowledge that Jesus was born into a human family and that He has had a prophetic influence on humanity through the centuries. Others are convinced that He was deity, but have little idea about the importance of understanding what was accomplished when He willingly came to earth to declare and demonstrate the love of His Father, making forgiveness possible. Where do you stand on these very important issues?

Preparing – Let Jesus tell you through reading Philippians 2: 5 – 11 what it was like for Him to leave His Father and become a “Son of Man”. Why don’t you give Him your thanks and praise as you read each phrase?

Listening - Read John 8: 21 – 59 Jesus is still at the temple answering the questions of the crowds and leaders.

1. The title “Son of Man” has already been used in the book of John several times. Jesus often used it to help the people understand his identity, but it was also a big stumbling block for them, especially the religious leaders. What did Jesus explain about this title in John 3: 14 – 15 and John 12: 30 – 36. You can read about Moses in Numbers 21: 4 – 9.
2. The Book of Matthew was written as a biography. It presents Jesus as the King, but the King of a totally different Kingdom - the Kingdom of heaven. Yet the name “Son of Man” is used 28 times. What can you learn about the “Son of Man” from Matthew?

8: 20	17: 9, 12, 22
9: 6	19: 28
10: 23	20: 18, 28
11: 19	24: 27, 30, 37, 39, 44
12: 8, 32, 40	25: 31
13: 37, 41	26: 2, 24, 45, 64
16: 13, 27 - 28	
3. It is easy to get caught up in the arguments of the Pharisees and antagonists, but who else is described? For those who were listening, what did they learn about this man, Jesus?

Pondering – What do you think about the following three quotes?

1. “He could be the Son of Man only because He is the Son of God.”
2. “The Son of God in eternity became the Son of Man in time, whose manhood shall be glorified with His Godhead to eternity.” John 8: 50 and 54
3. “The Son of God became the Son of Man that you who were sons of men might be made sons of God.”
Augustine

Responding –

One of the most quoted Bible verses throughout time is found in these verses – John 8: 32. That freedom comes to those who believe Jesus. If you believe, what has this freedom done for you? What could it do?

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Lesson 6

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I AM THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP and THE GOOD SHEPHERD

“Therefore Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, **I AM the gate for the sheep.**
I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.”

John 10: 7 and 9

“**I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

“**I am the good shepherd;** I know my sheep and my sheep know me.” John 10: 11 and 14

With demanding voices and accusatory questions, many of the people were seeking to disprove the claims that Jesus was making about Himself. The Pharisees were eager to protect their own positions and authority. So how does Jesus respond? He performs a miracle and then He gives them a word picture to help them understand who He is and what He is going to do for them. Can you think of an illustration that would be more meaningful than the one that He used? Why would the picture of a shepherd and a gate for the sheep be so helpful then and throughout the centuries?

Preparing – As you think about this lesson and the things that you already know about a shepherd, quiet your heart and focus your mind on **Your** shepherd by reading Psalm 23 and giving your thanks to Him.

Listening - Read John 9: 1 - 10: 12. Read it again out loud to feel the impact of the blind man’s story and then read Jesus’ message to them in John 10: 1 – 12 several times.

1. Make a list of all of the characteristics that Jesus explains to them about a shepherd. How do these qualities or traits illustrate who Jesus is and what He was going to do?
2. In the Old Testament the Jewish people were very familiar with the picture of God as Israel’s Shepherd - Leader. What did they know and experience and what prophecies did they have?
Jacob’s blessings - Genesis 48:15 and 49: 24
Prophecies Isaiah 40: 10 - 11
 Jeremiah 31: 10
 Ezekiel 34
 Micah 5: 4
3. Who do think Jesus is referring to in John 10:16? How does Jesus feel about a “lost sheep”? Luke 15: 1 - 7
4. Other New Testament writers give us more insight. What do these verses add to your understanding?
Hebrews 13:20
I Peter 2: 24 - 25
I Peter 5:4
Revelation 7: 17

Pondering –

1. What do people have in common with sheep? What do you have in common? (Isaiah 53: 6)
2. What do you think Jesus means when He calls Himself “the gate for the sheep” – John 10: 7

Responding – As you listen to The Shepherd as He calls your name, what do you hear Him saying to you?

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Lesson 7

THE SON OF GOD

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“Jesus said, ‘I and My Father are One.’” John 10: 30

“Jesus said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” John 10: 36

Jesus, the Son of God, is co-equal, co-eternal & co-essential with the Father. - Bible Dictionary

Just a few months before Jesus had been at the Temple for the Feast of Tabernacles – John 7. Now he is there again for the Feast of Dedication, which we know today as Hanukkah. The desperation to know if Jesus really is who He claims to be is increasing, but so is His willingness to be very clear. How many miracles does it take? Or what does it take for someone to believe the truth?

Preparing – Just think about it for a little while – “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son. . .”

Pause. Don’t hurry. Look at each word and give thanks. Do you believe it?

Listening - Read John 10: 22 - 42

1. What did you learn about the Father and the Son in this passage?
2. What miracles have you already read about in the Book of John? (The other Gospels record many more.) Why do you think there were such varied reactions to these events?
3. How important is it to Jesus that the people recognize Him as the Son of God?
 - A. Jesus is first introduced as the Son of God in Luke 1: 26 - 37.
 - B. John the Baptist testified to Jesus’ identity in John 1: 18, 29 - 34.
 - C. Satan used the title in his temptations of Jesus in Luke 4: 1 - 12
 - D. Jesus identifies Himself as the Son of God.

John 3: 16 - 18	John 6:40
John 5: 19 - 30	John 8: 28 - 29, 54 - 56
4. What do you notice about the place and circumstances, where it is recorded that people did believe?

Pondering –

1. The book of I John uses this title often. If you can, read the whole book and note each reference to the Father and the Son. (It takes about 10 - 15 minutes to read it.) Now look back and give some thought to what you have read. What seems important to you?
2. Some of the Jews tried to stone Him and then others tried to seize Him. Why were they so threatened by Jesus? Or what was making them so aggressive towards Him? How did He react?

Responding – IT IS AMAZING - You and I can have LIFE in His name. Simply by believing. **John 20:31**

The Father sent the Son because He loves you and me.

The Son of God came because He loves you and me.

The Holy Spirit dwells within to testify of these truths to our spirit.

Why don’t you write a “psalm” of praise, the words to a song, or a thank you note as your response!

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Lesson 8

THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

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“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?’” John 11: 25 - 26

What’s your viewpoint? We all look at life through the lens of our past experiences, our training, our age, and our present circumstances, don’t we? Most of us place a high priority on comfort, security, convenience, and the ability to be in control. What do you think most greatly influenced the viewpoint of Jesus as He lived as the “Son of Man”?

Preparing – As you come to Jesus, remind Him that He has promised to complete the good work that He has begun in you. Share together some ideas about what that may mean for you and for Him. (Philippians 1: 6)

Listening - Read John 11: 1 - 48. If this is a familiar story, try to read it with new eyes for the details and the nuances.

1. Jesus explains to his disciples why he delayed going to visit Lazarus even though he knew that his dear friend was so sick. What were His reasons and how did this delay affect this home?
2. Martha and Mary both greet Jesus with the same comment, “If only You . . .” What was His response to Martha and how did she react? What was His response to Mary?
3. This was the final miracle that is recorded for us before Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the events of that final week before His crucifixion. What did He want the people to believe about Him? Why would this be so important?
4. When Jesus tells Martha that “He is the resurrection and the life”, what was He explaining to her?
5. The theme of life and the gift eternal life is a major focus in John and in all of Scripture. It is the hope of every Christian – everyone who believes in Jesus. What do these verses tell you about it?

Romans 5: 20 - 21	Titus 1: 1 - 3
Romans 6: 22 – 23	Titus 3: 3 – 7
Ephesians 1: 18 - 21	I Peter 1: 3 - 9
I Timothy 1: 15 - 16	I John 5: 11 - 13
I Timothy 6: 11 - 12	Jude 1: 20 – 21

Pondering –

1. This is a news story if there ever was one!
Write a “Head-line” article for the Jerusalem Daily News.
Now write an editorial from some one’s personal point of view.
2. Many of the Jews believed at this time, while others reported the event to the religious leaders. What was their greatest concern? What is there for us to learn from their attitudes?

Responding – Jesus returned to the home of His friends just before the Passover – John 12: 1 – 3.

He was honored. He was served. And Mary anointed His head, an act of honor, and His feet, a display of devotion. How do you express your honor and glory and praise to The Son of God?

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LESSON 9

TEACHER and LORD

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Jesus said, “You call Me ‘Teacher’ & ‘Lord’, & rightly so for that is what I AM.”

John 13:13

It was true then and it is still true today. Some people choose to believe the claims of Jesus, while others choose, probably for a variety of reasons, to disregard or to deny them. How much does “loving the praise of men more than the praise from God” (John 12: 43) influence the choice that people make in both having faith and then confessing their faith before other people? How much does it affect you?

Preparing – How do you know that someone loves you? Isn’t it through the way that they treat you? How has God shown His love to you? Read Romans 5: 8 and let that truth reach in to your heart and mind.

Listening - Read John 13: 1 - 35. All four Gospels describe the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. While the other authors tell us about various events leading up to the celebration of the Passover, John goes immediately to that important and intimate evening with His disciples.

1. What was it like for Jesus that evening as He realized that “His time had come”? What did He understand and know?
John 12: 23 – 36
John 13: 1
John 17: 1 – 5
2. Why did Jesus want to wash the feet of His disciples that evening? What did He accomplish?
3. How was Jesus different from the rabbis who would have been called both “Teacher” and “Lord” in those days? What was the implication of each of these titles at that time? Did this change after the resurrection?
4. What indication do you have that Jesus really loved Judas even though He knew what was in his heart and what he was planning to do? How and when do you think Judas’ betrayal began?

Pondering –

1. Jesus often talked about His relationship with His Father. Why was this so important to Him? How would understanding this relationship help His disciples?
2. At the same time that Jesus is informing the disciples about some things that are about to happen to Him, He is telling them about how they are to live. What are His instructions to them?

Responding – As you think about Jesus’ words to His disciples about serving and loving, what do you think He would like you to understand? Does “the full extent of His love” motivate and strengthen you?

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Lesson 10

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE

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“Jesus answered, ‘I Am THE WAY and THE TRUTH and THE LIFE’.

No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

John 14:6

There are often tender and intimate moments at the bedside of someone who is still alert and able to communicate but who knows that the end of their life is very close. The family gathers and there are precious and memorable words spoken. Each one wants to remember clearly the expressions of love and to respond to the heartfelt desires that might be expressed during those hours or days. In the best of circumstances, the family already knows this information, but the impact of those final words can have a lifelong impact on the ones who will experience the loss. What memories does this bring to your mind?

Preparing – Can you hear Jesus calling you, “my child”? He is. He called His disciples “My children” on that final night and He continues to think of us as one of His own – John 1: 12 – 13. He is waiting for you to sit quietly with Him so that you can ask Him some questions and listen.

Listening - Read John 13: 31 - 14: 31 - Jesus wants to “share His heart” with His disciples. In chapters 13 - 17, John has recorded the last conversation and final prayer of Jesus before His arrest. It is a solemn time, a sacred time and an intimate time. Jesus has just finished washing the disciples’ feet and telling them about His coming betrayal. We are privileged to listen in on what is being said. Tiptoe in quietly and take some notes, so that you can remember clearly what you hear.

1. Make a list of the pertinent information that Jesus wants His disciples to remember about who He is.
2. What did Jesus want them to know about His future and theirs?
3. What did He teach them about the Holy Spirit? Who is He and why is He going to come to them?
4. How would these ideas be a comfort to the disciples as they try to figure out what Jesus means?
5. Look carefully at the dialogue between the disciples and Jesus – John 14: 4 – 6. Someone has said that Jesus is “the way – to get to God, the truth – to know God, and the life – to experience God”. How would you clarify what Jesus is saying about Himself?

Pondering –

1. Jesus told His disciples that those who have faith in Him will do even greater things than He has done because He will be with His Father. (John 14: 12 –14) What do you think He means by this promise?
2. Do you find comfort and peace through the promises that Jesus made to them and to us? How?

Responding – Here is His offer to you. Do you want to experience it?

If you need direction, He is THE WAY. If you need wisdom, He is THE TRUTH. If you need purpose, He is THE LIFE.

“Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone.

Because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives.”

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Lesson 11

THE TRUE VINE

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**“I AM the true vine and My Father is the gardener.
I AM the vine; you are the branches.”** John 15:1 & 5

Have you ever cared for a vineyard? It's hard work. Every winter, during the dormant season, a gardener has to spend hours using his pruning shears. "Pruning focuses the growth of the vine where you want it and determines how much fruit a vine will have. Each vineyard is different, with the variety of grape, location, fertility of the soil and climate all playing a role in the decision on how best to prune." (Steve Dutton of Dutton Ranch) The removal of deadwood and cutting back or removal of some branches to shape the plant will mean a healthy vine that produces the quality and quantity of grapes that will satisfy the gardener. Who is the gardener that decides what to prune in your life?

Preparing – As you quiet your mind, focus your attention, and turn your thoughts to God's Word, why don't you talk with Jesus about any concerns you have and give them over to Him, so that you can hear Him clearly.

Listening - Read **John 15: 1 - 16: 4** (Or go on to 16:33) There is so much that Jesus wants to share with His disciples. It is probably getting late now and soon they will be on their way to Gethsemane where Jesus will spend time praying to His Heavenly Father before He is betrayed by Judas and arrested. Jesus has already talked with them about what to expect and the coming of the Holy Spirit, but he goes on now . . .

1. What is the theme of verses 1 - 8?
What is the focus of verses 9 - 17?
What is Jesus teaching in verses 18 - 25?
What is He reviewing in verses 26 -27?
What is He preparing them for in chap. 16: 1 - 4
2. What do you think Jesus is explaining through His word picture of the vine and the branches?
3. The amazing concept that Christ actually lives in us, as believers, is a reality that takes a life time to experience. Jesus wanted to prepare His disciples for this reality. How do the epistles explain this reality?

John 14: 16 - 20	Philippians 2: 12 - 13
John 17: 20 - 23	Colossians 1: 25 - 28
Romans 8: 9 - 11	II Thessalonians 1: 11 - 12
I Corinthians 3: 16	I John 4: 4
I Corinthians 6: 19	
4. What do you believe is the fruit that the branches are to bear?

Matthew 12: 33 - 37	Philippians 1: 9 - 11
Romans 7: 4 - 6	Colossians 1: 9 - 14
Galatians 5: 22 - 25	James 3: 17
Ephesians 5: 8 - 11	

Pondering – Listen to the voice of Jesus as He tenderly tells you of His love, His destiny, and your future, by reading John 15 and 16 again. Read His words slowly and savor them. Absorb them. What is He telling YOU?

Responding – Jesus said, "If you remain in Me and My words remain in you..."
Jesus also said, "I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."
What do you want to say to The One who loves you?

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

A study of the Gospel of John

Lesson 12

JESUS OF NAZARETH

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**Jesus asked them, “Who is it you want?”
“Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied.
“I am He,” Jesus said.**

John 18:4-5 and 7-8

It happened at late at night, which was a predictable time for such a plan. They arrested Him without a formal charge, but then anger and excitement often drive a crowd to act without reason. Think about it. They wanted one man but they came armed with not only a detachment of soldiers but with some religious officials. Peter was ready to resist, but that was not Jesus' plan. What did He know that His disciples had not yet grasped?

Preparing – As you read John 17, join with Jesus' disciples as they listened to Him pray for Himself, for them and finally for all believers throughout the centuries, including you and me. What did Jesus ask His Father to do for them and for you?

Listening - Read John 18: 1 – 27 Try to imagine the scene. Where would you be standing? What would you be doing?

1. Why do you think they asked for “Jesus of Nazareth” rather than other titles or descriptions?
2. Now compare John 18: 1 - 12 with the similar passages that are in other 3 Gospels. What new information can you find?
Matthew 26: 30, 36 - 56
Mark 14: 26, 32 - 50
Luke 22: 39 - 53

As the Son of God and the Son of Man, why do you think that Jesus wanted to pray and to talk with His Father? What happened to the disciples during these hours?

3. The trial by Caiaphus and the council, as well as the indignities that Jesus suffered, are given in more detail in the other 3 Gospels. Read each account and try to picture Jesus in this situation. How did He respond?
Matthew 26: 57, 59 - 68
Mark 14: 53 - 65
Luke 22: 54, 63-65
John 18: 12 – 13, 22
4. Peter, dear Peter, who was so eager to prove His loyalty, made some very poor choices.
Matthew 26: 57 - 58, 69 - 75
Mark 14: 27 – 31 and 66 - 72
Luke 22: 54 - 62
John 18: 15 - 18, 25 - 27

What do you think about this quote: “Many think their being in grief and distress will excuse them if they are hasty or hot with those around them.” What do you think?

Pondering – Why was Jesus willing to come? To become “Jesus of Nazareth”? To do what His Father asked Him to do?

Responding – Jesus prayed that “the world would know that the Father sent His Son” and that His love would be visible through those who believe by their unity – John 17: 23 – 26. Let Him show you some ways that you can cooperate with His goals and desires for you.

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

A study of the Gospel of John

Lesson 13

A KING

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Jesus answered, "You are right in saying, I am a king."

John 18: 37

The Jews were not willing to be satisfied with simply a Jewish trial because Roman law did not allow them to impose capital punishment and they wanted execution! The Jewish method of execution would have been stoning, but Jesus had already predicted that His death would be by crucifixion. This was considered the most painful and degrading form of capital punishment in the Roman Empire. It was so horrible that it was used by the Romans only for slaves and the lowest types of criminals. What would make the Jewish leaders prefer to proclaim a heathen emperor as their king over Jesus?

Preparing – "He left His Father's throne above. So free, so infinite His grace!
Emptied Himself of all but love and bled for Adam's helpless race!
It is mercy all, immense and free, for, O my God, it found out me.
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, should die for me?" ("And Can It Be?" by Charles Wesley)

Listening - Read John 18: 28 - 19: 30 It is a story worth reading every day – morning and evening!

1. The parallel passages are found in Matthew 27: 11 - 56

Mark 15: 1 - 41

Luke 23: 1 - 49

What were the charges or accusations that the Jews were making against Jesus?

2. What do you notice about Pilate's reaction to the Jews and to Jesus? Do you think he was a weak or a strong leader? How would you describe Pilate as a person and as an official?

3. The "Kingdom of God" and the "Kingdom of heaven" are terms that Jesus often used. The Jews, based on the prophecies in the Old Testament, were looking for the Messiah to come and to release them from the rule of Rome. They expected One who would set up His Kingdom on earth, but what had Jesus been teaching them?

Matthew 3: 1 - 3

Matthew 4: 17

Matthew 9: 35

Matthew 12: 28

Matthew 13 (Parables)

Matthew 18: 1 - 5

Mark 1: 14 - 15

John 1: 41 and 49

3. Why do you think Pilate had "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS" written in 3 languages on the cross for all to see?

4. "It is finished." - John 19: 30 – What did Jesus mean? Write out your explanation of this sentence based on your study of what Jesus had been teaching and demonstrating to the crowds and to His disciples.

Pondering – If this was the end of the story, life then and life now would be meaningless. If you can, enter into a conversation with the 3 women who stood near the cross or with John. Where do you think the other disciples have gone? What would they be talking about and doing do you suppose?

Responding - What does the term "King of My Life, I Crown Thee Now" mean to you?

Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

A study of the Gospel of John

Lesson 14

THE RISEN CHRIST

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“Then Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. “

Luke 24: 45 – 47

How long is a sleepless night? It’s a very long time, isn’t it? It feels much longer than six or eight hours. How many of the disciples slept that Saturday night, do you think? They had falling asleep in the garden while Jesus prayed and now going to sleep probably seemed impossible. How many of the women slept? Maybe for a few restless hours, but as soon as that first light began to appear, we know that they were on their way to the tomb. What a big surprise was in store for them!

Preparing – You already know the rest of the story - THE RESURRECTION. The world’s greatest miracle took place that morning. How has it impacted your life? Make a list, a long list, and give God your praise.

Listening - As you read through the Scriptural accounts of that great morning when victory over sin and death was accomplished, let God’s love for you be absorbed into your mind and heart.

John 19: 31 - 20: 31

Matthew 27: 57 - 28: 20

Mark 15: 42 - 16: 20

Luke 23: 50 - 24: 53

Pondering - Finish the following sentence with as many possibilities as you can.

BECAUSE HE LIVES, I . . .

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Responding – The Risen Christ

Today some people believe.

Today some people believe and go to tell their friends.

Today some people are still wondering.

Today some people meet Christ on the road of life, their hearts burn within and they come to understand.

Today some people need proof. They are doubters.

Today some people still have never heard.

And sadly, today, some people still deny the reality or chose to walk away from truth – and He forces no one.

Which sentence describes you and why?

These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. John 20: 31