

Term 1, 2024

Name:

BELIEVE & HAVE LIFE

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 20:30-31



city on a hill

EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Term Overview

Sunday of that week	Bible Passage	Big Idea	Mission Heat
4 th February	John 1:1-18	Jesus is the light of the world and for those who receive and believe in Him will be Children of God.	Mission minute: prayer
11 th February	John 1:19-50	People who meet Jesus point others to Jesus.	Mission minute: heart for the lost
18 th February	John 2:1-12	Jesus came to offer life in abundance with God.	Mission minute: pond, fish, hook
25 th February	John 2:13-25	As God's messiah, Jesus has authority to judge false worship of God	Mission minute: merge circles
3 rd March	John 3:1-21	Whoever believes in Jesus has been born of the Spirit and will receive eternal life and escape condemnation.	Hold Connection event with non-christian friends
10 th March	John 3:22-36	Gods wrath remains on	Mission minute: asking

		those who reject Jesus - but whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life.	questions & listening
17 th March	John 4:1-42	Jesus is the Christ, the true Messiah, God gives eternal life through him. God seeks true worship that is focussed on him.	Mission minute: coffee, dinner, gospel
24 th March	John 4:43-54	Jesus wants us to trust his word and believe he is who he says he is.	Mission minute: what do you love about Jesus – stories...
31 st March	Easter		
7 th April	End of Term Social		

The Gospel of John Overview

John explicitly tells us why he wrote his Gospel: “so 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). John’s Gospel is about Jesus’ identity (“Christ, the Son of God”), the appropriate response to his identity (“believing”), and its result (“life”).

Among the four biblical biographies of Jesus, John is unique. Matthew, Mark and Luke start their accounts on the banks of the Jordan River (Mark), with two surprised expectant mothers (Luke), and with a list of ‘great-great-to-the-power-of-25’-grandparents (Matthew). These are often called the ‘synoptic Gospels’ because their similarities allow them to be easily compared.

But John’s Gospel is different. For one thing, the events of John’s first four chapters aren’t recorded in the synoptic Gospels at all. Even more importantly, John opens his Gospel by taking us way back before humans existed, before the dinosaurs, before sun, moon, and stars—in fact, before anything was created. In the beginning there was God and there was ‘the Word’.

The synoptics give us an account of Jesus ‘from below’, providing a human perspective on the identity and acts of Jesus and showing us Jesus the man as he revealed himself by his words and deeds (ultimately revealing, of course, that Jesus is much more than just a man). By contrast, John gives us a perspective ‘from above’, leaving nothing in doubt from the

very start and giving us the divine, top-down declaration about who Jesus is and what he came to do.

John's Gospel is rich with majestic and profound statements about the identity of Jesus, and his very first verse is the most profound of them all. With elegant simplicity, the apostle John unambiguously declares that this Word is God himself.

After the prologue of chapter 1, chapters 2-4 begins John's Book of Signs (ch2-10). Here the signs are to prove John's purpose that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. In these chapters (2-4), Jesus comes up against four Jewish institutions, each time showing who he is and what life in his name looks like.

Study 1: John 1:1-18

Getting started

What's your favourite childhood memory and why?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Read John 1:1-18

1. John draws a lot of parallels from the creation in Genesis.
Read Genesis 1:1-5 and compare what the passages say about:
 - The Word

 - The Light

2. Who was John and what was the role of John in vs 6?

3. We see 2 responses to Jesus being the light to the world.
What are these responses and outcomes of each of them?

Digging Deeper

4. What do we learn about Jesus from these verses?

5. What do you think it means when it says, “Out of His fullness we have received grace in place of grace already given”? (vs 16) what might that look like?

To Finish

6. How can knowing that we are Children of God help adjust the way we live?

7. Going forward how can we be like John and be “a witness to the light”?

What's something I'd love to remember

What's something I'd love prayer for

Study 2: John 1:19-51

Getting started

Who was the first person who introduced you to Jesus?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Context question

Brainstorm what you already know about John the Baptist

Read John 1:19-34

- 1. Based on their traditions and sacred writings (our Old Testament), the Jewish leaders had expectations of certain people who were to come and do particular things.
What do the Jewish leaders expect from: the Messiah; Elijah; the Prophet?

Person/role	Helpful references	What did the Jewish leaders expect from them?
The Messiah / Christ	Isaiah 11:1-5 Jeremiah 23:5-6	

Elijah	1 Kings 18:21-24, 30-40 Malachi 4:5-6	
The Prophet	Deuteronomy 18:15-19	

2. What does John the Baptist clarify his role is? (see also John 1:7) How does the passage from Isaiah help our understanding?

3. Picture yourself as an investigator, preparing a report to be used in a court of law. What statements about Jesus would you take from John the Baptist in verses 29-34? What claims does he make about Jesus?

4. What supporting evidence for these claims does John the Baptist give?

Jewish people in John's day practiced baptism, but only for Gentiles who wanted to become Jews. John's baptism likely followed the same pattern – renouncing of sins, complete immersion in the water, and then recloning as a member of the Jewish community.

5. What is the point of John’s baptism? What was its limit (what can’t it do)?

6. It was common at the time that an older person (“who was before”) was more respected than a younger. What is strange about John the Baptist’s statement in verse 30?

7. How does John the Baptist demonstrate humility?

Read John 1:35-51

8. In this passage we have several examples of evangelism, where people are brought and invited to meet and follow Jesus. Fill out the table below about these meetings with Jesus.

People	Who invited them to meet Jesus?	What did the inviter tell them about Jesus? What did the invitee learn about Jesus?	How did they respond?
2 of John’s disciples			
Simon / Peter			
Philip			

Study 3: John 2:1-12

Getting started

What's the best wedding or party you've ever been to?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

1. Vs 1 says "on the third day..". What has happened in the days preceding this event?
2. What was the problem?
3. Why do you think Jesus speaks to Mary the way that he does?
4. Compare John 2:4 with John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1. What is Jesus referring to when he talks about "his hour"? How should this influence our understanding of what Jesus does here in John 2:1-11?

5. How did Jesus solve the problem?
6. What does this say about what kind of Messiah he will be? What does it say about His kingdom? (See Joel 2:19; Joel 3:18)
7. Why do you think Jesus chose this as the first occasion to reveal his glory?
8. Many people today think God is the ultimate kill-joy. They feel that if they were to “become religious,” it would take away everything that is fun and brings fullness to their lives. Why do you think this is such a popular notion? To what extent do you think it is true or un-true?

To finish

9. Where do you go to be satisfied?

10. How does life with Jesus give you full satisfaction or fulfillment?

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Study 4: John 2:13-25

Getting started

What makes you really angry?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Read John 2:13-25 once and then again with 3 people taking on the roles of Narrator, The Jews and the disciples.

- 1. What scene does Jesus walk into? What could he see, hear, smell?
- 2. How does Jesus respond? Why does this scene provoke him to such anger?
- 3. Contrast the responses of the Jews and the disciples to Jesus' clearing of the temple courts.

	The Jews	The Disciples
What did they say/do?		

What heart attitude do their actions reveal?		
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4. What is the sign Jesus speaks of in v19? What does this sign tell us?

5. What is the significance of Jesus' body being a temple (v21)?

6. Why does Jesus decide not to entrust himself to people (v24-5)? What is meant by this?

7. Expressions of anger can leave us feeling uncomfortable and people respond in different ways to them. What is your response to Jesus' actions in this passage? Is it more like the Jews or the disciples?

To finish

8. Jesus' anger is really an expression of zeal for his Father to be worshipped properly.

- a. How zealous are you for this? (Give yourself a number out of 10)
- b. To what extent should we emulate Jesus' actions here?
- c. What would it look like to express this zeal appropriately in our day and age?

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Study 5: John 3:1-21

Getting started

Why do you think people reject Jesus today?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Read John 3:1-21

1. What are the requirements for entering the Kingdom of God?
2. Read Ezekiel 36:24-28. How does this help us to understand what Jesus meant by this?
3. In what ways is Jesus shown to be a more qualified 'teacher of Israel' than Nicodemus?
4. What lesson does Jesus teach Nicodemus by his reference to Moses and the snake? Refer to Numbers 21:8-9

5. For what reasons did God send his Son into the world (v14-21)? Was it necessary for him to do so?

6. Summarise the different responses people can have to God’s Son in this table. What is your response to him?

What responses might people have to the Son?	What consequence does this have?	Why do people respond in this way?

To finish

7. How might this teaching have been offensive to Nicodemus / remain offensive to people today?

8. What implications does this passage have for evangelism?

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Study 6: John 3:22-36

Getting started

Who is the most humble person you know – and what makes them so humble?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Read John 3:22-36

1. What was John's response to the reports of the popularity of the new teacher and his followers baptizing in his vicinity?
2. John the Baptist's reply in v27-30 is one of the great examples of godly humility in the Bible. How do you define godly humility – and what are some ways you could display it in your life?
3. What emotion do we see it cause in v29? How could thinking of yourself less produce joy?

4. It is unclear whether John 3:31-36 is a quote from John the Baptist or a comment from John the Evangelist (i.e. the apostle and Gospel writer). Regardless of this: what do these verses teach us about Jesus?
5. What are the consequences of believing in Jesus? What are the consequences of failing to obey Jesus?
6. God's wrath is a hard topic. Why? What happens if we don't hold firm to John's teaching that God's wrath and hell are real?

To finish

7. How can you apply John the Baptist's attitude that "a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven" (3:27) to your current situation?
8. V36 makes it clear that the punishment for rejecting Jesus is the wrath of God. How should that fuel our evangelism and heart for those we love who continue to reject Jesus?

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Study 7: John 4:1-42

Getting started

Have you ever been in a situation where you felt honoured to be spoken to by someone or included in an event or situation that you otherwise would not?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Background Context – Who are the Samaritans?

Samaritans are a people group whom the Jews of the day shunned and even hated due to the pervading view that they were a mixed race who practiced a half pagan religion. The Samaritans saw themselves as the true descendants of Israel from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, they had their own version of the first five books of the Bible (Pentateuch) and believed that the true place to worship God was on Mount Gerizim and considered the Jerusalem temple and Levitical priesthood a departure from the true religion.

In contrast the Jews during New Testament times saw them as mixed race (because they believe that during the capture of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians they inter married with the Assyrians producing half-Jewish, half-Gentile Samaritan race). They also saw them as messing with the Jewish faith and practicing a semi pagan religion with their revised version of the Pentateuch and temple on Mount Gerizim.

Read John 4:1-26

1. Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan follows shortly after His meeting with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). What are the

similarities and striking differences between these two encounters? Break into two groups, one looking at the similarities and the other the differences, compare and discuss.

	Similarities	Main/striking Differences
Nicodemus		
Samaritan Woman		

- 2. How is Jesus’ heart seen in his interactions with the woman?
- 3. What is the ‘new thing’ that is being taught here? What are we taught about eternal life?
- 4. What does God seek, and what do we learn about true worship? How are His purposes fulfilled in Jesus?

5. Read Ezekial 36: 24-27, 37:20-23. Considering the promises outlined in Ezekial, what therefore is the main point of verse 1-26 in John Chapter 4?

Read John 4:27-42

6. How is the disciples' understanding of Jesus' identity and God's purposes challenged and changed by verses 31 - 38?
7. In what ways do the woman and the villagers show that they have a growing understanding of who Jesus is?

To finish

8. From today's passage what would you say a right response to Jesus looks like?
9. Why do you think John included this section with its distinctly Samaritan focus at this stage of the book?

What's something I'd love to remember

What's something I'd love prayer for

Study 8: John 4:43-54

Getting started

What would you say to someone who says – I just need a sign from God and then I'll believe?

Pray that God would transform you by his word.

Read John 4:43-54

1. What is the significance of the location where these incidents happen? (v 43-46, see also 2:1)
2. What reception does Jesus receive from the Galileans, and why (vv. 45-47)? What is Jesus' assessment of this reception (vv. 44-48; see also 2:23-25)?
3. What does the official want Jesus to do?
4. How did Jesus respond to the official's desperate request?

5. How do the official and his family respond to Jesus and the sign? What can we learn from this response?
6. How does this response fit with the purpose of John's Gospel (20:30-31)?
7. In what ways does this second sign reveal Jesus' glory (2:11)?

Saved with a word – Matt Oliffe

Jesus has no need to see his patient to heal him. He has no need for magic words or waving a wand. Just as he did at the beginning, in the creation (John 1:13), Jesus brings life simply by speaking a word. He simply says, "your son will live" (v. 50), and reality and human history conform to his command. That is real power: he speaks, and it happens.

Whether or not the official started out as someone who would only believe if he saw signs and wonders—the kind of person whose faith Jesus seemed to regard as illegitimate—he now responds to Jesus with real faith. He believed when Jesus spoke to him (v. 50), and he believed when he realized that the time of his son's healing was the same time that Jesus spoke (v. 53)

8. From these four chapters, what stands out to you about who Jesus is? What stands out to you about what Jesus does?

To finish

9. Are you prepared to trust Jesus' word when you hear it, or do you need signs? What will trusting Jesus' word look like in practice for you?

10. What circumstances or events in your life can you look at as times when God has demonstrated his faithfulness—to strengthen your belief in Jesus' word?

What's something I'd love to remember

What's something I'd love prayer for