



Come and See

Sermon Series Study Guide



Join us in reading through the Gospel throughout this season of Lent using the following reading guide.

JOHN

Come and See

Week 1

Day 1	John 1:1-9
Day 2	John 1:10-18
Day 3	John 1:19-28
Day 4	John 1:29-34

Week 2

Day 1	John 1:35-51
Day 2	John 2:1-11
Day 3	John 4:43-54
Day 4	John 6:1-15

Week 3

Day 1	John 3:1-14
Day 2	John 8:12-20
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Week 4

Day 1	John 7:53 - 8:11
Day 2	John 15:1-8
Day 3	John 15:9-17
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Day 5	John 16:12-22

Week 5

Day 1	John 16:23-33
Day 2	John 17:1-5
Day 3	John 17:6-19
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Week 6

Day 1	John 11:1-16
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Day 3	John 12:1-8
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Week 7

Day 1	Matthew 21:12-17
Day 2	Mark 14:1-9
Day 3	Luke 22:1-6
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Day 4	Matthew 26:17-30
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Week 8

Day 1	John 20:10-18
Day 2	John 20:19-23
Day 3	John 20:24-30
Day 4	John 21:1-14
Day 5	John 21:15-19

March 5, 2025 Session 1 | Ash Wednesday

As We Begin This Lenten Series consider joining us as we explore the Gospel of John by following the reading plan on the inside cover and in the bookmarks available at the church.



Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

Ash Wednesday is the official start of the liturgical season of Lent. So, as Christians, what makes Lent different or special? A quick search provides the following:

- The Google AI Overview states: “Lent is a 40-day period of reflection and repentance observed by many Christians before Easter.”
- Wikipedia tells us: “Lent is the solemn Christian religious observance in the liturgical year commemorating the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert and enduring temptation by Satan”.

“Ash Wednesday . . . gives us a great opportunity to examine our desire towards God.”

Bishop Mark J. Webb

In [An Ash Wednesday Invitation: Examining Our Desire Toward God](#) Bishop Mark J. Webb of the Global Methodist Church, writes:

“Ash Wednesday and the whole of the Lenten season gives us a great opportunity to examine our desire towards God. To refocus and refine that desire we were created with and for. A desire to know the grace, truth, and nature of God more completely. A desire to experience the fullness of life in Christ.”

And in practical terms, Lent is an opportunity to give up one thing to focus on another.

The world has always been a place of conflict between light and darkness. The very first verses of the Bible tell us that God gave us light, and “*separated the light from the darkness.*” And John opens his Gospel by telling us that Jesus “*was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*” As Christians we are to shine the light of Christ into the world around us, to be a shining city on a hill for all to see.

*“The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not
overcome it.”*

John 1:5

What are you going to do during this season of Lent to dispel the darkness around you and to better shine the light of Christ to your family, workplace and community?

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-4, John 1:1-9

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passages aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?

2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Throughout this sermon series, we are using the Gospel of John to guide us. Why was the Gospel of John written? Refer to John 20:30-31.

2. Genesis 1:4 states, “God saw that the light was good” and John 1:5 states “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” Are these verses both referring to the same light? Explain.

3. Compare John 1:1 to Genesis 1:1. What is common in these two passages? Why do you think John opened his Gospel this way?

4. When you read the opening verses of the Gospel of John, what are your thoughts on “the Word”?

5. 2 Corinthians 4:6 reads, “*For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of the darkness,’ made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.*” What is your understanding of this verse?

6. 1 John 2:9 reads, “*Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in darkness.*” Why is this true?

Questions for Application:

1. For many of us, “the Word of God” has been used to describe the Bible. In this week’s Scripture from John, “the Word” is used to describe Jesus. Do you see this as a conflict? Explain.

2. Where are you in “the Word”; close by His side, know of Him, seeking to know more?

3. In the Background, Global Methodist Bishop Mark J. Webb is quoted as saying, “Ash Wednesday and the whole of the Lenten season gives us a great opportunity to examine our desire towards God.” What is your desire towards God? What do you think is God’s desire for you? Are these desires in sync?

4. In the Background, we are reminded to shine the light of Christ into the world. In Luke 11:35, Jesus put it this way, “*See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness.*” What does Jesus’ tone tell you about the importance of this to Him? Are you a source of His light in your world? What bit of darkness can you focus on eliminating?

5. John 1:5 tells us that Jesus is the light that “*shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*” How is Jesus the light in your life?

6. How can you share the revelation that Jesus “*gives light to everyone*” (John 1:9) with someone who doesn’t have that light in their life?

Dig Deeper: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Explore the Gospel of John by following the reading plan on the inside cover and in the bookmarks available at the church.

The Light Shines in the Darkness, 31-day reading plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/28189-the-light-shines-in-the-darkness>



The Light Shines in the Darkness

The Light Shineth in Darkness, 3-day reading plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/16885-and-the-light-shineth-in-darkness>



The Light Shineth in Darkness

Come And See: An invitation to Meet Jesus, 5-day reading plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/25897-come-and-see-an-invitation-to-meet-jesus>



Come and See

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

If you are not in the habit of observing Lent, seriously consider giving up something and/or adding a spiritual discipline for this season of Lent.

NOTES

March 9, 2025
Session 1 | The Move



As We Begin This Lenten Series consider joining us as we explore the Gospel of John by following the reading plan on the inside cover and in the bookmarks available at the church.

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

John begins his Gospel by telling us specific details about “the Word”:

- the Word is eternal – “*In the beginning was the Word*” (1:1)
- the Word is God – “*and the Word was God*” (1:1)
- the Word is a person – “*He was with God*” (1:2)
- the Word is integral to creation – “*Through Him all things were made*” (1:3)
- the Word is life and light– “*In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.*” (1:4)
- the Word is Jesus – “*The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.*” (1:14)
- Jesus is the Son of God – “*the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*” (1:14)

“The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.”

John 1:14a

John gives us this introduction to Jesus so that we will know that Jesus is the Word, the Son of God, and the life and light of the world. John makes it clear that Jesus left Heaven to come and live among us. John’s Gospel is an invitation to “Come and See” the promised Messiah, the Savior of the world, to meet the One who came to show us the grace and truth of God.

“...the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:14b

As we explore the Gospel of John during this season of Lent, look for the signs that Jesus is not just a teacher, or a Rabbi, or a Prophet but so much more. He is the Word, the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Savior of the world and He wants you to know Him personally.

Scripture: John 1:1-5, 14

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. What was John telling us when he wrote "*The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.*" (John 1:14a) What does this passage mean to you?
2. In 1 John 4:2 we read, "*This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.*". Does your spirit tell you that Jesus came from heaven to live among His people as a man?
3. John 1:14 tells us that "*The word became flesh...*" This belief is called the Doctrine of Incarnation and is a central part of the Christian faith. Why is Incarnation important to us as Christians? What other religion is based on the Doctrine of Incarnation?
4. What aspects of Jesus' life and character do you find most captivating? Do you aspire to any of these characteristics because of Jesus' example? Why?
5. Write a list of the names and words used to identify Jesus? Which of these names do you most identify with and why? If you have your own name for Jesus, please share it, and its meaning to you?

Questions for Application:

1. In John 1:14 we read that, “*We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son...*” How would you describe this glory to a non-believer?
2. John 1:14 ends with, “*...the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*” What does “*full of grace and truth*” mean to you?
3. We can discern in John 1:14 that Jesus became human, lived among us, revealed His glory to us, and offers us grace and truth. What comfort does this provide you during hardships in your life? How does this truth change how you look at everything?
4. John 8:31-32 reads, “*To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’*” What is the truth that has set you free?
5. When you consider that Jesus left heaven to move in with us on earth, what questions come to mind?
6. When you consider the world today, as opposed to the world Jesus lived in, what do you think He would find to be similar? Do you think He would find it easier or harder to reach us with the love of the Father?

Dig Deeper: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Explore the Gospel of John by following the reading plan on the inside cover and in the bookmarks available at the church.

The Word Became Flesh, 3-day audio meditation: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/13656-the-word-became-flesh>



The Word Became Flesh

Come And See: An invitation to Meet Jesus, 5-day reading plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/25897-come-and-see-an-invitation-to-meet-jesus>



Come and See

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?
2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship – prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

During this season of Lent there will be many opportunities to invite others to “Come and See”. Make it your priority to invite someone to meet the Word, the Messiah, the Savior of the World.

NOTES

March 16, 2025
Session 3 | Best Till Now



Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

In the Book of John we are presented with seven of Jesus' miracles. These miracles cover the gamut from turning water into wine¹; to long distance healing²; healing of crippling disease³; feeding the masses⁴; walking on water⁵; healing the blind⁶; and raising the dead⁷. While the Book of John conveys the details of each of these seven miracles, the miracles serve an overarching purpose; John is sharing with us his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He wants us to "Come and See" that Jesus is Sovereign and in control, and that He is to be trusted for salvation and life, and to meet our needs.

Our Scripture verses for this lesson are found at John 2:1-11; they tell the story of Jesus' first public miracle, turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana. This miracle occurs after about half of Jesus' disciples have been recruited, when Jesus and the disciples are attending a wedding feast. When the wine runs out, Jesus' mother encourages Him to "do" something. In response, Jesus turns the contents of six stone water jars into superior quality wine. (It is estimated that this would have been the equivalent of 500-800 bottles of wine!) Jesus saved the day for the groom and his family, and demonstrated to His disciples that He was not one of them, "*and His disciples put their faith in Him.*"⁸

*"Do whatever He tells
you."*

John 2:5b

It is important to note that when there was a need Mary turned to Jesus, and instructed the servants to "*Do whatever He tells you.*" This remains sound advice for us as Jesus' disciples. When we have a need, we should take it to Jesus. After we have asked, we want to, "*Do whatever He tells (us)*"; remembering that Jesus "*is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.*"⁹

In the Old Testament, God repeatedly used miracles and signs to demonstrate to His people, the Israelites, that He was sovereign and in control. Jesus also knew people would need to "see" in order to believe, even stating at John 4:48, "*Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders...you will never believe.*" To this end, the New Testament is filled with miracles. In fact, John ends his Book by saying, "*Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.*"¹⁰

Jesus continues to work in the world today. Perhaps you have experienced a miracle, or know of one that has happened to someone close to you. Share this miracle with others. People need to know that Jesus is still at work in the world today. Your miracle may be just the thing that encourages someone else to "Come and See" who Jesus is, and to learn about what He has to offer them.

*"Jesus did many other things as well.
If every one of them were written
down, I suppose that even the
whole world would not have room
for the books that would be written."*

John 21:25

¹John 2:1-11; ²4:46-54; ³5:1-15; ⁴6:5-14; ⁵6:16-24; ⁶9:1-12; ⁷11:38-44; ⁸2:11b; ⁹Ephesians 6:20; ¹⁰John 21:25

Scripture: John 2:1-11

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Where did this wedding take place? Why was Jesus there with His mother and disciples?
2. In the day, why was running out of wine a problem?
3. In verse 2:5, Jesus tells His mother, "*My time has not yet come.*" What do you think He meant by saying this? Why do you think Jesus chose to get involved?

4. John 2:10 states, “*everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.*” What is significant about the statement that this wine was “the best”?

5. John 4:46-54 is one of the miracles recorded in the Gospel of John. What is significant about this miracle and what does it tell us about Jesus?

6. In Jesus’ day, people witnessed many of His miracles, yet many still refused to believe He was who He said He was. Why do you think it was hard for people to believe Jesus, despite witnessing the miracles? Why do you think it is hard for people to believe in Jesus today?

7. John 5:1-15 tells us that Jesus healed a man who had been an invalid for 38 years. Before He performed the miracle Jesus asked him, “*Do you want to get well?*” Why did Jesus ask this?

8. In John 9:1-12 we learn that Jesus healed a man who had been blind since birth. Before He performed this miracle, the disciples asked Jesus what the man’s parents had done wrong that caused the blindness. What was Jesus’ response?

Questions for Application:

1. Where in your life are you “running out of wine” or feeling empty?

2. What can we learn from Mary's faith in Jesus? Is there an area in your life that you can bring to Jesus with persistence and trust?

3. When Jesus turned water into wine, He showed us that He is not only able to meet our needs but exceed them. When have you experienced Jesus exceeding your needs? Please share.

4. In John 5:1-15, Jesus tells the man waiting by the pool of Bethesda to "*Pick up your mat and walk.*" Jesus healed this man, who had been an invalid for 38 years, without touching him or asking if he believed Jesus could heal him. What hope/confidence does this give you?

5. In John's account of feeding the 5,000, Jesus tests Phillip by asking, "*Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?*" (John 6:5) Phillip responds in v 6, "*Eight months' wages would not buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!*" When faced with a monumental task, do you tend to rely on yourself and your own efforts, or turn to God and ask Him to help you? Why?

6. In John 6:16-24 the disciples are caught in a boat on the lake during a storm, and Jesus approached them by walking on the water. Has there been a time in your life when Jesus has rescued you? Share what happened as you feel comfortable.

7. We read in John 11 how Lazarus became ill and died. His sisters, Mary and Martha, loved Jesus and believed that He could heal their brother, but Lazarus was dead and buried four days before Jesus arrived. Miraculously, Jesus raised him from the dead. Has there been a time in your life when you have asked the Lord for assistance, but have become impatient waiting for Him to reply? Share what happened as you feel comfortable.
8. The Gospel of John only records seven miracles of Jesus, but as John ends his Gospel, he tells us, “*Jesus did many other things as well.*” What does this tell you about the significance of the miracles that are recorded?

Dig Deeper: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Signs and Miracles of Jesus in the Book of John – 5-Day Plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/39893-signs-and-miracles-of-jesus-in-the-book-of-john>



Signs & Miracles of Jesus

The Miracles of Jesus – 5-Day Plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/22278-the-miracles-of-jesus>



The Miracles of Jesus

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?
2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Dr. David Jeremiah has said, “Prayer should be our first reaction, not our last resort.” When faced with a challenge, before tackling it yourself, resolve to take it to God in prayer. We worship the God of miracles.

NOTES

March 23, 2025
Session 4 | The Great "I Am"



Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

In this week's scripture Jesus told the Jews, "Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58). In the Exodus passage God told Moses to tell the Israelites that, "I AM has sent you." (Exodus 3:14) The Jews would have known exactly what Jesus was saying, because of the Exodus passage. Jesus was telling the Jews who He was. God in the flesh.

"God has entrusted us with his most precious treasure - people. He asks us to shepherd and mold them into strong disciples, with brave faith and good character."

John Ortberg

In the Book of John there are a total of seven I am statements made by Jesus. *I am the bread of life:* John 6:35. *I am the light of the world:* John 8:12. *I am the gate:* John 10:7. *I am the good shepherd:* John 10:11, 14. *I am the resurrection and the life:* John 11:25. *I am the way, the truth, and the life:* John 14:6. *I am the true vine:* John 15:1. All of these I Am statements give us glimpses of who God is. He is the bread of life. He satisfies our souls. We need nothing else. He is the light of the world. He lights our path to him and darkness (evil) cannot be present. He is the gate,

the only gate. No one can come to the Father than through Jesus. He is the good Shepherd. He knows what is best for us and protects us. He is the resurrection and the life. He and only He has conquered death. He is the way, the truth, and the life. He only speaks truth.

God said to Moses, "I AM who I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Exodus 3:14

Next week we will take a closer look into I am the true vine.

Scripture: John 8:56-59, Exodus 3:13-14

Have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Why did the Jews pick up rocks?
2. Why do you think that the Israelites might ask Moses God's name? (read Psalms 9:10) What is the significance of God referring to Himself as "I AM"?
3. In John 8:58, Jesus says, "*Very truly I tell you, ...before Abraham was born, I am!*" How do the words of Jesus relate to God's instructions to Moses in Exodus 3:15?
4. Why do you think that the Jewish religious leaders had such a hard time with Jesus' I AM statements?
5. In John 6:35, Jesus tells the people, "*I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty.*" With whom is Jesus speaking? (What happened to open this chapter?) Read John 6:26-35. Why does Jesus tell those assembled that, "I am the bread of Life"? What is He trying to help them understand?

6. How does Jesus as the Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14) compare to what we learn in the Old Testament about what the Lord expects of shepherds? Refer to Ezekiel 34:1-16.

7. In John 8:1-12 Jesus tells a woman accused of adultery *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”* What was Jesus telling her with this analogy?

Questions for Application:

1. What does *“I AM WHO I AM”* mean to you?

2. What did Jesus mean in verse 56? What is *“My day”* and how did Abraham see it?

3. If Jesus were to ask you to describe Himself and who He is to you, how would you answer?

4. Choose two of the seven I AM statements which resonate with you. How do you experience Jesus in these ways? Do any of these statements give you comfort or challenge you?

5. John 14:6 tells us, “*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” Has there been a time in your life when you had to choose between God’s way and your way? How did you work through the situation?

6. In John 10 Jesus tells us “*I am the door*” and that we need to follow His voice but beware of the voice of strangers. How do we know the difference between God’s voice and what the world is telling us?

7. In John 8:12b, Jesus says, “*Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness.*” What do these words mean to you?

Dig Deeper: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

I Am- 7-day reading plan in the Book of John-7-day reading plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/26728-i-am>

Finding I Am-7-day reading plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/12105-finding-i-am>

I AM; a study of the seven “I AM” statements of Jesus -7-day devotional: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/37396-i-am>



I Am



Finding I Am



I AM

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship – prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Do you know God? Look and listen for Him this week in all that you do. Ask Him to be with you and light your path, guide you by still waters, satisfy your soul, and learn more about Him as you feed on His word.

NOTES

March 30, 2025
Session 5 | Produce with Purpose



Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

“Remember, you are not a tree, that can live or stand alone. You are only a branch. And it is only while you abide in Christ, as the branch in the vine, that you will flourish or even live.”

Robert Murray M’Cheyne

Both God and Jesus used vines and vineyards in the Bible. Sometimes it is used in a harsh way (such as in Jeremiah 2:21, Psalm 80:8-18 and Matthew 21:33-44), telling God’s chosen people how they have turned away from God and disobeyed Him. There was even a golden vine in front of the temple to remind the Jews that Israel was God’s vine.

In John 15:1-13 Jesus tells us that He is the true vine. We must be rooted in Him not Israel. We must **choose** to be rooted in Jesus. We are not born into the faith. John 15:2 “*He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every*

branch that does bear fruit, He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

We must be connected to the vine to produce good fruit. God is more than willing to help us produce fruit. How connected are you? Are you willing to be pruned so that God may work through you?

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.”

John 15:5

Scripture: John 15:1-13

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. What/Who is a “vinedresser” (John 15:1)? What does he do?
2. Do you notice how many references to “remain” are mentioned in verses 1-13? Do you think this is important? Why or why not?
3. John 10:14b tells us, ‘*No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.*’ What does this tell us regarding our faith?
4. Jesus uses vines and vineyards in both His parables and His teachings. Why do you think these were common themes? If Jesus were addressing a present-day crowd, what examples might He use to convey His message?
5. Read John 15:1-4. How would you explain this passage in your own words?
6. What does it mean when Jesus tells us to “remain in Me.”?
7. When Jesus tells us He is the true vine, what is He telling us the vine does for the branches?

Questions for Application:

1. Do you accept/reject God's pruning even though it may be harsh?
2. What steps can you take to help you obey Jesus by abiding in Him?
3. What does it mean to you when Jesus says, "*every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful*"? Are you fruitful? Refer to 2 Peter 1:3-9. What can you do to become more fruitful?
4. What sorts of things should Christians do to assure they remain a part of the vine?
5. John 15:9 reads, "*As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love.*" What does it mean to "*remain in My love*"?
6. In John 15:8 Jesus says, "This is my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples." What fruit are you bearing that is bringing glory to the Father?
7. If you remain in Christ, does that mean that Christ remains in you? How can you tell if Christ is in you?

Dig Deeper: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Biblical Success - Running Our Race - the "D" Vine Strategy -5-day: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/30673-the-d-vine-strategy>



Biblical Success

I Am The Vine-3-day devotional: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/29920-i-am-the-vine>



I am the Vine

When Your Way Isn't Working-5-day devotional: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/38601-when-your-way-isnt-working>



When Your Way Isn't Working

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

This week look for ways to stay connected to the Vine. Be doers of the Word, not just readers of the Word.

NOTES

April 6, 2025

Session 6 | Jesus Prays for Us

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

Chapter 17 in the Book of John is a series of prayers offered by Jesus. It is the longest of His prayers recorded in the Gospels. In this prayer, Jesus prays for Himself, for His disciples, and for all believers who will come to faith having heard the message of the disciples. The central theme of this prayer is unity.



"(I pray. . .) that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in Me and I am in you. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that you have sent Me." --Jesus

John 17:21

Because Jesus and the Father are one, and Jesus is omniscient as the Father is omniscient, He would have known that when the trio of prayers was finished, He would be arrested. With the cross looming, Jesus chose to leave His disciples—present and future—with final words emphasizing the importance of unity.

The Merriam-Webster definition of unity includes:

1. The quality or state of not being multiple: oneness
2. A condition of harmony: accord
3. The quality or state of being made one: unification
4. A totality of related parts: an entity that is a complex or systematic whole

Today's Scripture focus is verses 20-26, Jesus' prayer for all believers. Jesus is praying an intercessory prayer, which is a prayer offered on behalf of another person or group. In this case, Jesus is praying to the Father on behalf of everyone ever who would come to saving faith in Him. His main focus, as He prayed for us, was that we be brought to complete unity, "so the world may believe that you have sent me." (v21b) Did you catch that? Unity is so important to Jesus, He implies the world's ability to believe He was sent by God may actually hinge upon it. Jesus' prayer continues and He asks the Father that "they may be one as we are one." (v22) Jesus' desire is that the people of God would be united so that, just as He and the Father are one, we as believers would also be one. When this love is expressed as Christian unity, "then" Jesus says, "the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (v23)

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!"

Psalms 133:1

The Message translation of this passage reads:

"The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, so that they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me. The same glory you gave me, I gave them, so they'll be as unified and together as we are—I in them and you in me. Then they'll be mature in this oneness, and give the godless world evidence that you've sent me and loved them in the same way you've loved me."

When the world overhears us, the people of God, speaking and saying many of the same things that the world says to one another, when, as Christians, we have professed to love, then our words are "only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal." (1 Corinthians 13:1b) We must live in a way that will "give the godless world evidence" that His love abides in us, because the world desperately needs to believe in Him and in His great love.

Scripture: John 17:20-26

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. The Background includes this week's Scripture as it appears in The Message translation. Did reading this version of Jesus' prayer clarify or complicate your understanding of this prayer? Explain.
2. Which phrases in today's Scripture passage tell about Jesus' unique relationship with God the Father?
3. What kind of relationship does Jesus want to have with us?
4. In today's Scripture, Jesus prays to the Father that we would see His (Jesus') glory. What is He referring to?

5. In verse 26 Jesus says, “*I have made You known to them and will continue to make You known in order that the love You have for Me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.*” Why is it important that, through Jesus, we know God the Father?

6. Read Romans 12:18. How does this verse pertain to living in Christian unity? What does it mean to be a peacekeeper? What doesn't it mean? Does peacekeeping come naturally to you?

7. In John 17:23 Jesus prays to the Father that the world will know He (the Father) loves us. How do we know that God loves us?

Questions for Application:

1. What do you think happens to a Christian's witness when they say and do the same sorts of things the world does?

2. What is the difference between unity and uniformity? How does this help you to understand what it is that Jesus prayed for?

3. How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus prayed to the Father on your behalf?

4. What would “complete unity” (v23) look like in your eyes? Why do you think unity is hard, even for the people of God? What are you doing to cultivate unity with other believers?

5. How would “complete unity” impact our world?

6. In verse 20, Jesus prays not only for His disciples, but also “*for those who will believe in Me through their message*”. What are you doing to share the love of Jesus so that others will come to know Him?

7. What are three things we can do at Marion Methodist to promote the unity that Jesus was praying for?

Dig Deeper: Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic

Uniting in Love – 6-Day Plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/38800-uniting-in-love>

Learning to Pray the Jesus Way – 5-Day Plan: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/26481-learning-to-pray-the-jesus-way>



Uniting in Love



Learning to Pray

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

Make it your daily goal to live as a Romans 12:18 peacekeeper. “*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*”

NOTES

April 13, 2025

Session 7 | A King for All Seasons

Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.



Have you heard? Jerusalem is all a buzz. Our King is here. Can you believe it? Jesus made His triumphal entry through the East Gate, riding on a donkey. Hundreds of people were waving palm branches (a symbol of victory) and laying down their cloaks to create a path for Him (a symbol of submission according to 2 Kings 9:13). They shouted “Hosanna to the Son of David,” which means “save us, Son of David.”

The crowds that went ahead of Him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”
Matthew 21:9a

It is a little puzzling. Everyone expected Him to be a military leader and a conquering King, but instead He has come as a Prince of Peace. What kind of a leader is that? But it must be the one that was foretold five hundred years ago in Zechariah 9:9, “*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*” Surely, Jesus must be divine, since not only is He our King, but He is also our Savior!

And now it is Thursday. Did you hear that earlier tonight Jesus and His disciples shared supper in an upper room? Our King washed the disciples’ feet as a servant would. He told them the bread was His body, and the wine was His blood. Afterward, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane where soldiers arrested Him and talked as if they are going to kill Him! Can you believe all this has happened?

It is hard to believe that in only a few days, the shouts of “Hosanna” have changed to “Crucify Him!”

... in only a few days, the shouts of “Hosanna” have changed to “Crucify Him!”

Scripture: John 12:12-16, 23-28a

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passages aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?
3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. The story of Christ's entry into Jerusalem that we know as Palm Sunday is recorded in all four Gospels: Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-44, and John 12:12-19. What does that tell you regarding the importance of this event?
2. Why is it important that Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey?
3. In the background we learned that Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem was foretold hundreds of years earlier in Zechariah 9:9. Why is fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies significant?
4. During Jesus' triumphal entry, why would the crowds have shouted, "*Hosanna to the Son of David!*"? What does Hosanna mean?
5. In Luke 19:39-40, during the triumphal entry some Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke His followers, and Jesus said "*I tell you, ...if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.*" What does this statement teach you about Jesus?
6. In biblical times, it was customary at the Passover feast for a servant, or the person of lowest stature present, to wash the feet of the others. Why was it important that Jesus washed the disciples' feet in the upper room?
7. Read John 12:24-25. What is Jesus saying to the disciples in this passage?

Questions for Application:

1. What aspect of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is the most significant for you?
2. When you praise Jesus, are you as excited as the crowd on Palm Sunday? What hinders your exuberance?
3. What do you think might have led to the rapid change in the people's perception of Jesus? What lessons, if any, can we learn from this?
4. How would you explain Jesus' Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem to someone seeking to know Jesus?
5. Jesus was demonstrating humble service to others when He washed the disciples' feet on Maundy Thursday. What humble service can you perform for others? Hint: it doesn't necessarily need to involve feet washing.
6. As God, we know that Jesus is omniscient – that He knows everything; He has always known the end from the beginning. Consider the events of Holy Week. What do you think Jesus, as a man, would have found hardest to know beforehand and still complete God's redemption plan for mankind?
7. For Christ to purposefully make His way back toward Jerusalem was, essentially, to walk toward His death. Describe a time when you intentionally moved toward a difficult or dangerous situation in your life. What thoughts or emotions did you experience at that time?

8. What are your thoughts knowing that Jesus could have saved Himself, but instead chose to go to the cross for you, and for everyone ever who would believe in Him?

Dig Deeper: *Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic*

Holy Week: A Journey with Jesus from Palm Sunday to Easter – 8 day reading plan: www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/44483



A Journey with Jesus

Holy Week – 8 day reading plan: www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/24919



Holy Week

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

What can you do this week to honor the triumphant King about whom they shouted “Hosanna to the Son of David!”?

NOTES

April 20, 2025

Session 8 | I Have Seen



Background:

This will help set the context of the session if someone from your group reads this aloud.

It was an eventful week, full of highs and lows, leading up to Easter morning. It started with the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem with shouts of “Hosanna!” and concluded with shouts of “Crucify Him!” and the crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary. The world of those closest to Jesus was turned upside down. The body of their King now laid in a tomb. What would happen next?

Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early on the third day and found that the stone had been rolled away. She feared someone had moved the body of Jesus, so she ran to Simon Peter and the other disciples with the news. They immediately returned to the tomb with Mary Magdalene and found the empty tomb. They were confused because they didn’t remember Psalm 16:10 that says “...you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay.” Matthew 16:21 tells us, “From that time on Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.” Jesus tells the disciples in Matthew 17:22-23, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill Him, and on the third day He will be raised to life.” And yet again in Matthew 20:18-19 He tells them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day He will be raised to life!” After all of this, the disciples still didn’t understand why the tomb was empty and they returned home.

“On the third day He will be raised to life!”
Matthew 20:19b

Mary Magdalene remained at the tomb and cried. As she entered the tomb she saw two angels. She turned and saw a man that she did not recognize, until he spoke her name. With that simple greeting, her heart filled with joy! She recognized that He was indeed Jesus. She then returned to the disciples and exclaimed “I have seen the Lord!”

“I have seen the Lord”
John 20:18

Are you looking for the signs? Are you listening to what He has told you? Have you recognized His voice when He calls your name?

Scripture: John 20:10-18

Before engaging in the questions, have someone in your group read the Scripture passage aloud.

Sermon Reflection:

1. What was something you want to make sure you remember that came from the sermon this week?
2. What challenged you about this sermon?

3. What do you think Jesus is trying to teach you through this sermon? How will this affect your daily life?

Questions from the Bible:

1. Why do you think Mary Magdalene visited the tomb early on the third day? Refer to Mark 16:1-4. Have you visited the graves of loved ones? If so, why?
2. In John 20:1-9, you'll note that Peter and John were also present at the empty tomb. Why do you think Jesus chose to reveal Himself to Mary first? What does this say about Jesus' character?
3. What do you think was going through the minds of Peter and John as they saw the empty tomb? Why do you think they immediately returned home?
4. What thoughts do you have about the fact that Mary didn't recognize Jesus and thought He was a gardener when she first saw him?
5. What did Jesus say that allowed Mary to recognize Him? What makes this act both significant and personal? What helps you recognize His voice when He speaks to you?
6. In John 20:17 Jesus tells Mary to go to "*my brothers and tell them...*" Why do you think that Jesus called the disciples brothers instead of friends?

Questions for Application:

1. How has Jesus revealed Himself to you? How have you responded?
2. We often replace the question “Whom do you seek?” with “What do you seek?” What are some things that people often seek now in order to find satisfaction or meaning in their life?
3. As you celebrate Easter, who do you need to share the Good News with?
4. If you knew that your message would be well received by everyone who heard it, how would you complete the following: “Come and See my Jesus who: _____”
5. Why is it important that we believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus? Refer to 1 Corinthians 15:12-19.
6. In today’s world of sports, it’s not unusual for an individual to go from G.O.A.T. to goat, or to paraphrase Charlie Brown, Sydney to the bush. How could you use that to explain what Jesus experienced in His last week in Jerusalem?
7. John ends his Gospel by telling us, “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 20:31) Has this Lenten survey of the Gospel of John made it easier for you to believe that?

Dig Deeper: *Consider starting one of these Bible reading plans to go deeper on this topic*

The First Easter: A Journey to the Empty Tomb – 8 day reading plan: www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/30379



The First Easter

Journey Through Holy Week – 7 day reading plan: www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/30807



Journey Through Holy Week

Questions for Discussion:

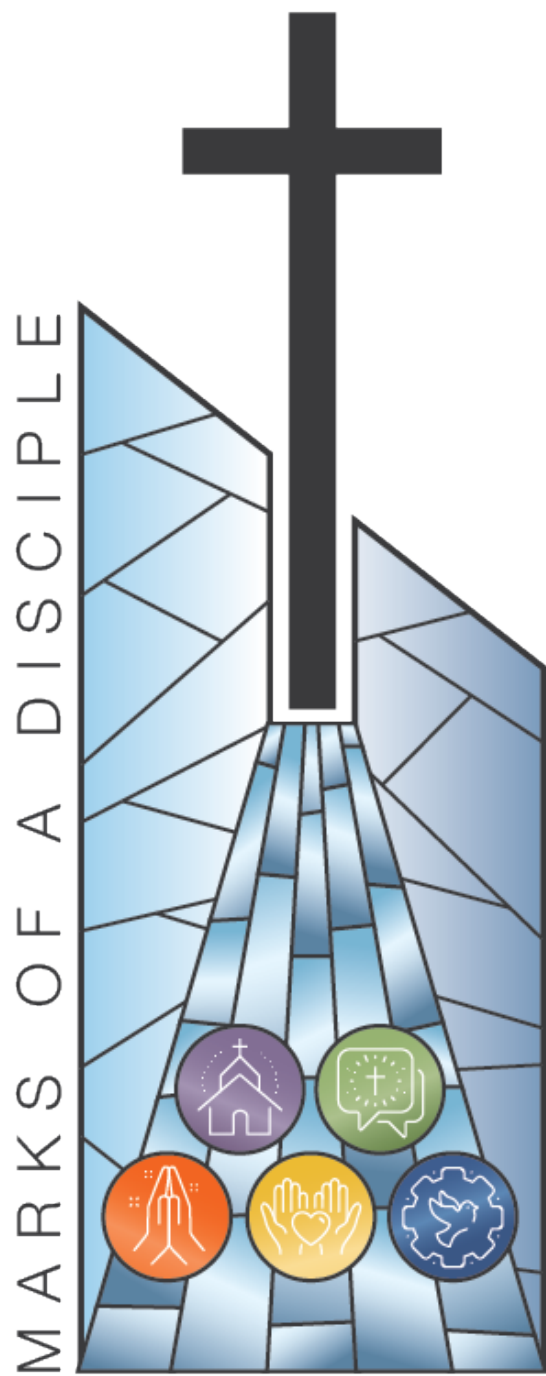
1. What are you reading in the Word this week?

2. How is your reading growing you in the Marks of Discipleship - prayers, presence, gifts, witness, service?

Growth Challenge:

With the resurrection fresh in your memory, what are you going to do to spread the Good News?

NOTES



MARKS OF A DISCIPLE



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