

Week 1 - Reading the Gospel of John

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

- Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30, MSG)

The invitation of Jesus is to come and walk with him. To follow him, to adopt his way of living. As we begin this season of Lent, our desire is to see Jesus, to see the way he lived. One way we do that is by reading the eye-witness accounts of those who walked with him. This week’s spiritual discipline is **scripture reading**, specifically reading the Gospel of John. Why the Gospel of John? It gives a unique perspective on Jesus’ relationship with God the Father, which is helpful for us to see!

This week, we invite you to set aside time to read the entire Gospel of John. A few suggestions and tips for reading:

- If possible, set aside an hour or so and try to read through the whole Gospel in one sitting. We don’t often do this. We usually stick to devotional reading—reading short passages for meditation or reflection. But by reading the whole book in a short period of time, we get to experience the complete *story*. I like to call this type of reading, “story reading,” where we simply read the Bible as if it were...well, a story! Even if you run across a verse that you don’t quite understand, keep reading. Maybe it’ll make sense as you read more of the story. You can pause and jot down a note or question here and there, but try to let yourself get caught up in the flow of the narrative. For example, if you were watching a movie, you wouldn’t pause it every few minutes to look up questions you had...you just keep watching to find out what happens!
- If reading the whole Gospel in one sitting doesn’t work for your schedule or seems a bit daunting, try breaking it up into 3 or 4 sections of 5-7 chapters each. Each section should take no more than 20 minutes to read. The whole Gospel is 21 chapters.
- As you read, it might be helpful to listen to an audio version as you follow along. The YouVersion Bible App has audio versions. **Tip: I like to listen to it at 1.5x speed! It’s a more natural speaking pace and easier to listen to.
- After you read, take some time for reflection on the story of Jesus. Below are some questions for reflection.

Questions for Reflection

1. What was your favorite story or passage from the Gospel?
2. What stood out to you about Jesus and how he lived? How he interacted with people? His relationship with God the Father?