



***Becoming Fully Devoted Followers
by Studying the Followers Before Us***

WEEK 41

JOHN

OCTOBER 8-12, 2007

DAY	<i>THROUGH THE BIBLE</i>	ABBREVIATED STUDY
Monday	Luke 1-2, Psalm 51	John 1:1-5, Psalm 51
Tuesday	Luke 3-5, Psalm 52	1 John 1:1-10, Psalm 52
Wednesday	Luke 6-7, Psalm 53	2 John 1-13, Psalm 53
Thursday	Luke 8-10, Psalm 54	3 John 1-15, Psalm 54
Friday	Luke 11-12, Psalm 55	Revelation 22:1-18, Psalm 55

Walk Through The Bible Readings
MONTH AT A GLANCE

October 8-12 – Week 41

Monday	Luke 1-2	Psalm 51
Tuesday	Luke 3-5	Psalm 52
Wednesday	Luke 6-7	Psalm 53
Thursday	Luke 8-10	Psalm 54
Friday	Luke 11-12	Psalm 55

October 15-19 – Week 42

Monday	Luke 13-14	Psalm 56
Tuesday	Luke 15-17	Psalm 57
Wednesday	Luke 18-20	Psalm 58
Thursday	Luke 21-22	Psalm 59
Friday	Luke 23-24	Psalm 60

October 22-26 – Week 43

Monday	John 1-2	Psalm 61
Tuesday	John 3-4	Psalm 62
Wednesday	John 5-6	Psalm 63
Thursday	John 7-8	Psalm 64
Friday	John 9-10	Psalm 65

PRAYER JOURNAL

This week I am praying for . . .

. . . Meredith Carlson serving with World Impact in Los Angeles. Meredith is the daughter of members Steve and Cheryl Carlson, attends our Center Service, and has been a leader in Glenkirk’s AWANA program. She teaches second grade at Los Angeles Christian School.

. . . the Lay Counselors at Glenkirk, that God would bless them with wisdom and insight as they use their gifts to help others.

And . . .

READ

John 1:1-5

Psalms 51

REFLECT

Five books – that’s what John wrote in his lifetime. Think about the significance of each of these books, let alone the significance of the five together. The books are the only writings that span the full story of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, from the beginning of time in Genesis until the end of time in Revelation. John was probably the last living Apostle before he died after completing The Gospel According to John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Revelation. The best historians have concluded that John was 100 years old, considered by most historians to be the “beloved Disciple,” “the one Jesus loved” and the Apostle that tells us what Jesus said and, more importantly as led by the Holy Spirit, what Jesus meant by what He said.

When we read John 1:1-5, what do we think of and what is John telling us? Note that John is the Gospel that does not give us the genealogy or lineage of Jesus and His early family. John does not tell us of the birth of Jesus and the great celebrations and anguish that occur at that time; rather John goes right to the heart of the matter and tells us who Jesus is: the Son of God, God Incarnate, God on earth as man and God the Creator.

Why would John take this approach instead of following the pattern of the other Gospels? Remember, John is writing about 70 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. He is writing to a world that did not know, firsthand, the Jesus that John knew and loved. He is also writing to a mostly Greek world where logic and reason, need to know, desire to

understand and a craving for firsthand knowledge of history is vital. John was able to give that kind of information and he does by drawing the world into the story they were longing to hear, but wanted to hear in the context of their current learning and understanding of the world.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.” This simple, yet profound statement, is the very essence and basis of our belief and our faith. Our faith would be nothing without our belief that Jesus Christ, the Son and God, the Father are one, and that Jesus became a man so that we could see God.

RESPOND

As we reflect on the significance of Jesus Christ being God, being with God and being man, we are overwhelmed with the grace of God for each of us. How can the God of the universe love us so much that He would join us on earth as a man so that we might see Him and begin to understand His love for us? Give us the wisdom to see what Jesus means, for each of us, when He speaks to us individually and collectively in this fourth Gospel.

PRAY

Gracious and loving God, hear our prayers, both spoken and unspoken, so that we might see Your love for us, feel Your presence and know Your comfort. Give us understanding of Your Word so that we might be Your disciples. Amen

- G.E.

READ

1 John 1:1-10

Psalms 52

REFLECT

John the Apostle was a disciple of John the Baptist before meeting Christ. Interestingly, John was a half-cousin to Jesus since his mother Salome was Mary's sister. John and his brother had traveled about 75 miles to hear about the messianic kingdom that John the Baptist was preaching, indicating that John already had an interest in things to come before he met Jesus. John and his brother earned the nickname *Boanerges* (meaning The Sons of Thunder) from Jesus because of their ambition and intolerant natures.

The writings of John reveal the nature of his character: strong, ambitious, demanding, servant, gracious, loving, forgiving and faithful. Who but John could have written about Jesus with the understanding and wisdom that was required 70 years after Christ walked the earth? Who else walked with Jesus, wept with Jesus, served Jesus, preached at Pentecost, wrote about Jesus with understanding, confronted the issues facing the people at end of the first century and did it all with a servant's heart, listening to God for every word, every explanation, every thought and every meaning?

When John writes 1 John he is speaking directly to issues of the day when there was a denial of Jesus as the Messiah and a denial of the incarnation of Jesus, and he confronts these thoughts directly, but with compassion and love. One of the major dissenters were the Gnostics who believed that Jesus came by water, but not by water and blood, when they denied that the divine Spirit of Jesus was still in His body at His death on the cross.

To meet these radical departures from the true spirit of God, John makes several important points: One, God is light and in Him there is no darkness. (Note the common theme in the first verses of 1 John to the Gospel of John.) Two, God is love and He loved us before we could love Him. Three, our joy can be complete in Jesus; and Four, even though we may sin, our sins will be forgiven by the grace of God. John reminds us of God's love, His faithfulness and His grace in just a few sentences and then he repeats these themes to add emphasis to their importance and relevance in our lives.

Note that John speaks to all of us in 2:12-14 as he reminds children, fathers, mothers and young people that our sins are forgiven, Jesus is from the beginning and He has conquered the evil one. But shortly thereafter John warns that our time is short and we need to be watching for the antichrists who will deny the existence and faithfulness of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the last verses of Chapter 3 we see John restating the great commandment – to love God, love one another and obey his commandments.

RESPOND

As we reflect on the word John is speaking to the people of the first century, we need to ask ourselves if we are guilty of the same thoughts and same efforts to define Jesus Christ on our terms instead of looking Christ as He really is – God, Messiah, Son, Savior, friend, companion and advocate. Help us to look for Jesus Christ the Son of God, not a person that we create with our own imagination.

PRAY

Dear God, hear our prayer, hear us as we seek find out who You are in our lives and help us to accept Your gracious and loving gift of life.
Amen.

- G.E.

READ

2 John 1-13

Psalms 53

REFLECT

As we read this book, the whole book of 2 John, we are immediately struck by the thoughtful and caring way that John speaks to the church. There are several different interpretations as to whether or not John is speaking to one person or to a church, but the general conclusion is that he is speaking to the church, in the feminine Greek. Why was the church addressed in feminine terms when the church is made up of both women and men? The general conclusion is because the church is the bride of Christ.

We can read this letter as if it were addressed to us personally, or as if it were addressed to the church. If the letter is addressed to us there are several things that we need to consider. What are some of our children doing that John would consider good, and what are our other children doing that John feels needs correction?

Look at the stress on love that John mentions, love for each of us personally and love for others. John says I am not writing you a new commandment, “but one we had from the beginning, let us love one another.” Interesting that John starts with love for others and then speaks to our personal walk in love. Then John describes what he means by our walk in love: “And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments;...”

As we think about what John is saying to us, he is preparing us for the challenges of life, the challenges of the evil one, the distractions that would lead us away from our faith in Jesus Christ who told us to love one

another as we love ourselves. Christ further told us to go and make disciples of all the world. As we look at verses 7 and 8, John reminds us to stand strong in our faith, believing that Christ died for us on a cross, was resurrected by God the Father, and that Jesus Christ really did live on earth as God and man.

As you read verse 12 think of how much you want to say the same thing to those to whom you write a letter – how much more you would like to be sitting in the same room, looking them in the eye, seeing their emotions, seeing their love and showing your love for them. What a great reminder of our need to personally share love with others.

RESPOND

When was the last time you took the time to tell someone how much you cared for them, how much you loved them, how much God loves them? We all need to take more time to share our love of Jesus Christ with others, especially our family and close friends. Can we really be their loving friend, loving companion, loving father, mother, brother or sister if we fail to share the story of the love of God for them?

PRAY

Dear loving and heavenly Father, help us to sense Your presence in every conversation we have with family and friends. Help us to have the courage to share the love we have for You in such a way that they will see You. Help us to remember that the Holy Spirit will do the work; all You ask us to do is be there. Grant us peace, patience and comfort, knowing Your love for us. Amen.

- G.E.

READ

3 John 1-15

Psalms 54

REFLECT

This short book is full of surprises and contrasts. As we start to read we are reminded of how much John cares about the people he writes for. Look at John praying for the health of the body as well as the health of the soul, which he says is well. Notice how John confirms that he knows about the people to whom he is writing when he relates the reports he has received from others. How much would we like to be remembered as one who walks in the truth and is faithful to the truth?

We see John speaking to his friends about their gift of hospitality. How often have we wished that we had the gift of hospitality so that we could help and support those in need and always know how to welcome people into our homes and into our lives?

John warns us to remember our roots, the roots of our faith, so that we do not lose everything that we have worked to learn about our faith. He reminds us that not everyone knows or abides in the teaching of Christ – as he reminds us that others do not abide in the teaching of Christ we hear him reminding us that we need to spend more time in learning, understanding and applying our faith in our daily lives.

John also reminds us to be wary of false leaders, those whose apparent leadership is really a self centered desire to receive personal gain, often at the cost of friendships, relationships and faith. He tells us to imitate what is good for whatever is good is from God.

It is amazing that John can give us a plan of life in such a small book, a plan that emphasizes our relationship to Christ and our

responsibilities to ourselves and to others. He reminds us that we are to love ourselves, but that we are to love others as ourselves. John also reminds us that when we testify about someone else, we testify to the truth and truthfully.

Note, again, how John closes his letter; wishing that he could visit with the people personally and not by mail? How often have we wished that we could be visiting in person rather than by mail, or phone or through a third party?

RESPOND

As we look at this letter, this book, written by John and containing only 15 verses, we are reminded again that we do not have to use a lot of words to express truth and express it so that all can see the love of God. As we remember who are family and friends, consider making a list of family and friends that you have not taken the time to speak with and set a goal of contacting each one so that you can share your love.

PRAY

God, please grant us the strength and wisdom to reach out to our family and friends so that we can share our love and Your love with them. Give us the courage to call those we have not talked to for too long and to express our desire to be a better father, mother, brother, sister or child. Help us, Father, to remember Your love as we reach out to others.
Amen

- G.E.

READ

Revelation 22:1-18

Psalms 55

REFLECT

On Monday we looked at the first verses of the Gospel According to John and found ourselves looking at the creation story so many years ago. Now we are going to the last chapter of the Bible, Revelation 22. It is really interesting that John, one of the Apostles, would be the only Apostle who would write about the beginning and the end and do so starting in his first book and ending in his last book. The five books that John wrote were all written over a relatively short period of time when he was about 100 years old, which is a reminder to all of us that age is not a deterrent to good deeds and major contributions to family, friends and the world.

The promise of God, God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit, in whom we believe and have our faith, is summed up in this one chapter. John reminds us to focus our faith on Jesus Christ, who is coming again for us so that we might enjoy eternal life with Him.

Note that John has been a part of the life of Jesus from the beginning to the end, but that he did not write about Jesus and His story until he had nearly 70 years to think and pray about the meaning of everything that Jesus said and did. From this thoughtful position comes the writings of an Apostle, inspired by Jesus, guided by the Holy Spirit and listening to God so that we might better understand the ministry of Jesus some 2000 years ago.

John says “I am the one who heard and saw these things.” It is clear as he speaks that he is talking about his immediate experiences as he

writes the Book of Revelation, but it is also just as clear that he is the one who heard and saw Jesus, personally. John is the one who placed his head on the chest of Jesus to ask who was the betrayer, John is the one who was at the cross, John is the one who entered the tomb and understood, John is the one who tells the story. John is the one who says “In the beginning was the Word.” John is the one who quotes Jesus saying “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

John is the Apostle that puts the whole story together from the beginning to the end.

RESPOND

As we reflect on the story that John tells us in these five books, we need to understand how these stories can be our own story. We each have a beginning and an end and we can make the most of our story or we can just let things happen. We have choices, we can follow our Lord Jesus Christ, love others as ourselves, or we can walk away – God gives us that choice. For me and my house, I will serve the Lord with all my heart, soul, spirit and being.

PRAY

Gracious and loving God, give us the courage to always look to You, to always focus on You in everything we say and do and the comfort to know that Your love is greater than anything we can say or imagine. Grant us peace, grant us understanding, grant us Your love and lead us to do Your will. May we have the faith of a mustard seed! Amen

- George Eastman