



WEEKLY STUDY

Week One

We kicked off a prolonged look at the gospel of John. Over the course of the next several months, we will be exploring the story of the good news of Jesus as recorded by John. The reason for his writing was so that we might come to believe in Jesus and have life in him.

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

*O God, you were pleased to have your fullness dwell in Jesus Christ,
And you are pleased to have him dwell in me.
May I follow the path to life laid out by him—the firstborn from the dead.
I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah.
I want to have life in his name. Amen*

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: JOHN 1.1-4

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

- These opening words from John seem to contain all of eternity. The Word—Jesus Christ—was in the beginning. He was not just a bystander to what God the Creator was doing, he was an active part of the creation. The life that we pursue now, the heartbeat, the breath, the passion, the potential was already present. We tend to like our stories to be linear and our characters to have neat entry points onto the scene. But what John is saying is that the moment that Jesus put on flesh to dwell with us was nowhere near the beginning of the story of salvation.
- *God I feel small when I think about the expanse of time since creation, yet I feel known by you who gives me life.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 1.14-18

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ *(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’”)* ¹⁶ *Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.* ¹⁷ *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* ¹⁸ *No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.*

- *No one has ever seen God.* This was a central reality for God’s people for generations. People believed in God without seeing Him. But God put on flesh and “came into our neighborhood”—meaning that we can know God in an intimate way. Jesus allows us to see the glory of God. Everything has shifted. We are not alone, and the grace of God is available to us.
- *God, thank you for the gift of incarnation. It’s more than a concept or possibility, it is my reality!*

WEDNESDAY: COLOSSIANS 1.15-20

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ *For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.* ¹⁷ *He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.* ¹⁸ *And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.* ¹⁹ *For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,* ²⁰ *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*

- Paul echoed what John was saying in his writing. In many ways we are still finding words to express who Jesus is. The history of the Christian movement is full of attempts to describe the indescribable gift of God. The fullness of who God is dwells in Jesus. And being God yet one of us, Jesus was able to bridge our broken and scattered lives by bridging heaven and earth.
- Jesus, you are the firstborn among the dead. You have defeated death so that I might have life. Be the bridge to the life God has for me.

THURSDAY: PHILIPPIANS 2.5-8

have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ *Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*

⁷ *rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.*

⁸ *And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!*

- God gave us the most complete image of selfless love by taking on the form of a servant. We are invited to take on that very mindset of humility and service. How are we doing? The life of laying down our lives for others pushes against the pull of everything else around us.
- God, today I choose to take a step towards selfless love. Remind me of the posture of Christ.

FRIDAY: 1 TIMOTHY 3.16

Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

*He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory.*

- Paul writes that the possibility of godly living comes from the truth of who Jesus was. Focusing on this truth keeps our focus on what and who really matters. Find your own words to speak about who Jesus was and is.
- *Jesus, I believe that you appeared in the flesh, in the presence of the Spirit, that you preached Good News, and that you dwell with God the Father.*

SATURDAY: REVELATION 21.3

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

- This image from Revelation gives us the perspective that was present at creation. When we look to the beginning, Jesus was there. When we look to the full redemption of creation, Jesus is there.
- Thank you God for the promise of eternal life with you. Your Word brings me comfort. No more death, no more pain—I long for the new things of your new creation.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob shared about the process of writing a book. In order to have a publisher commit to publishing your book, you have to write a proposal. The proposal describes what you are setting out to accomplish and how you plan to accomplish it. John declared his purpose in writing his book by saying, “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 20.31)

Think about books you have read recently or movies you have seen. Does it make a difference when you know what the author or filmmaker is trying to accomplish? Can you tell when they don't have a compelling vision for their work? As you read through the book of John this year you may begin to notice how his writing is connected with his desire that others would come to believe in Jesus. What would your life look like if you were driven by that same vision in every aspect of your life?