



WEEKLY STUDY

Week 5

Have you ever been confused by Jesus' words or actions? If so, you are not alone. This week, Pastor Regina helped us think through how to respond when the story gets confusing. Instead of running away and dismissing Jesus, we are invited to receive living water and allow Jesus to restore order and peace to our chaotic and confusing story. May you receive that from Jesus this week.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship 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.

*God of creation,
You have created me in order to worship you.
You have placed me in this world that also contains chaos and confusion.
In your mercy, help me to stop running in response to the confusion, let me be still as you guide me to the living water of Jesus.
Amen.*

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: JOHN 7.32-36

The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

³³ Jesus said, "I am with you for only a short time, and then I am going to the one who sent me. ³⁴ You will look for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."

³⁵ The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we cannot find him? Will he go where our people live scattered among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?" ³⁶ What did he mean when he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not find me,' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?"

- The beauty in Jesus' way of talking and teaching is that He is forming His listener with His words. When you think you have it all figured out and that your relationship with God comes down to

rules and checklists, you may be surprised to hear the story expanding to allow for God to send His Son to earth. It may seem confusing to hear Jesus speak of “going to the one who sent” Him. Many people turned away from Jesus because of this. Those who follow Jesus must be willing to have their ideas and their hearts stretched.

- *Jesus, sometimes Your words are confusing. Help me to sit with them and learn from You.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 7.37-41

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.”³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

⁴⁰ *On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”*

⁴¹ *Others said, “He is the Messiah.”*

- Such a bold proclamation from Jesus causes us to consider who He really is. In His book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis wrote, “You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse.” When Jesus says that belief in Him will cause rivers of living water to flow within us—that thirsty people can come to Him and thirst no more—He is making a statement about His identity. Who do you say Jesus is?
- *Jesus, I believe in you. As I receive your living water, may the Spirit dwell in me and give me peace.*

WEDNESDAY: JOHN 7.41-44

“How can the Messiah come from Galilee?”⁴² Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David’s descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?”⁴³ Thus the people were divided because of Jesus.⁴⁴ Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

- If this conversation was taking place in our day, we would want to ask questions as well. Jesus was making big claims—stirring up a lot of confusion for the crowds. Of course, the crowds around Jesus didn’t know the whole story. They didn’t know that Jesus was from the line of David and that He had been born in Bethlehem. They were trying to figure it out, and the confusion made many of them uncomfortable. We have to be willing to hear the whole story. And even then, we may have to be ok with (as yet) unanswered questions and mystery.
- *Jesus, teach me to live in Your story of redemption. You are my Savior and my only true source of hope.*

THURSDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 14.33

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people.

- This verse written by Paul may seem at odds with the rest of this study. However, it points to the truth that God desires peace for us. He created order out of chaos in Genesis. He still does that today. He has made a way through the confusion of this world. Jesus is the Way!
- *God, will You order my day today so that my steps, words, and actions will reveal your peace.*

FRIDAY: ROMANS 8.28-30

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he

might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

- Romans 8.28 is a popular verse for good reason. It is more than a platitude. A God who desires good things for us is very different from a god who is trying to trip us up and punish us. Paul teaches that it has always been God's desire that we would experience good things according to His purpose. We have made choices along the way that do not align with God's purposes and so we experience confusion. Yet still, God is working for our good, and we will see it when we turn our hearts to Him.
- *Jesus, I give You my life today. May I be conformed into your image.*

SATURDAY: DEUTERONOMY 28.1-6

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth.² All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God:

³ *You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.*

⁴ *The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.*

⁵ *Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.*

⁶ *You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.*

- This promise made to God's people was a reminder. They had heard it before with other words, but sometimes their day-to-day lives became so consuming and confusing that they forgot this promise. At big moments in their story they would renew the covenant—not to remind God, but in order that they themselves would return to it. The promise of blessings born out of obedience can be the North star for people who find themselves living stories of confusion. Do you see confusion around you today? How can the promises of God motivate and inspire you as you navigate the chaos?
- *God, thank you for your faithfulness. You are kind and generous with your blessings. Give me focus today. Allow me to live into your promises.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Regina said,

“Our God is not a God of chaos and confusion, but of peace and restoration. When we truly live into that, the world will be confused because it’s counter to the structures around us...but, there will be others who will feel drawn to the water...who will be confused but will want a taste...there will be a few who will grab a glass super fast...when we drink living water, we’re postured to continue drawing more and more to the water. More and more to the restorative and renewing love that no rule book can give...it’s only Jesus.”

How do you experience chaos and confusion in the world today?

How do you experience God’s peace and restoration?

How has your journey of following Jesus given you the opportunity to draw living water for other thirsty people?