

*Daily Devotional Guide to
the Book of John*

Introduction

Gaile Thulson

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A Daily Devotional Study Of The Gospel Of John

You will need a Bible of your own to do this devotional study. Reading the Bible with an open heart and mind brings us into God's presence, and getting to know God is accomplished by spending time with him on a daily basis. This study is designed to develop or maintain the habit of meeting daily with God, sometimes referred to as a devotional time with God. It doesn't have to take a large chunk of time, but it needs to be focused on the Scriptures (the Bible). It doesn't have to cover a lot of material or content every day, it just needs to be understood and applied to our lives.

The study days are numbered so that you can do them any day of the week, preferably one each day. However, if you miss a day, it won't matter because the days are not assigned a date or day of the week.

I designed this study to be completed over several months because it is intended to guide a daily time with God rather than to complete a study of John as quickly as possible. At any time, you may also want to read the entire book of John on your own to gain more of an overview. If you don't have time to do that, it is always a good idea to take a quick look at previous entries to put the upcoming day in context.

My approach to the study is a verse by verse exploration and application of God's Word to our lives. This is an *inductive* study, which means that we derive meaning from the Biblical text itself rather than from outside sources. The passages for each day are short, to enable you to focus more in depth on a few verses at a time. I frequently bring additional Scripture into the discussion in an effort to ensure accurate interpretation of the day's topics.

Please note that I have rounded the dates of people and events for simplicity and convenience, to make them easier to remember: Abraham lived, approximately, at 2,000 B.C.; Moses at approximately 1,500 B.C.; King David at approximately 1,000 B.C., and the prophet Daniel just before 500 B.C.

I thank God for all that John wrote about Jesus, and hope that God uses it for good in your life, as he has in mine.

Gaile Thulson

How This Devotional Study Works

1. In your Bible, look up and read the verses for the day.
2. Write the first verse for the day in the top left space under *What it Says* (Row 1, Column 1).
3. Working left to right, read the comments in the *Meanings/Principles* space (Row 1, Column 2).
4. Then, write your answers to the questions to clarify *What it Means to Me* (Row 1, Column 3).
5. Continue by writing the next verse in Row 2, Column 1, reading Row 2 Column 2, and writing answers to questions in Row 2, Column 3.
6. Continue working left to right as you go down the page.

To summarize, first read through the verses in John for the day. Then write exactly what the first verse says in the first column. (*Write each verse word for word, exactly as it appears in the Bible in column one.*) After you write out each verse, read the second column that clarifies the important information given in that verse and then answer the questions in column three related to the verse. (*Work left to right. It is important to answer each question based on the verse and its meaning in column two.*)

Please take the time to look up the other relevant Scripture in columns two and three. They help to clarify the meaning and will deepen your understanding. It is always a good idea to check and adjust our thinking by looking at related Scripture. As you answer the questions, my hope is that you will find yourself hearing *from* God and talking *to* God. In the process, our hearts are humbled before God and changed. This is how we know we are applying Scripture to our lives.

At the bottom of the chart for each day, you have the opportunity of recording what you want to say to God, based on your thoughts about the reading of the day. If God seems to be telling you something through his Word, it is a good idea to write it down so that you can continue to pray about it and check it against other Scripture for clarity and affirmation over time. You will then have a record of your responses, a record of what you have learned from your time with God each day. My prayer is that your study of the Gospel of John will bring you closer to God.

You may choose to either 1) print pages and write in the spaces provided or 2) enter your responses on your computer. If you use your computer you can save your work, then come back and print at any time. If your response exceeds the space allowed you can scroll the text area to see the complete text; but if you print, some of the text may be hidden.

The Gospel Of John

The author of the Book of John is sometimes called Saint John and was one of the apostles who followed Jesus. He and his brother James were two of the twelve apostles whom you would see in a painting of the Last Supper.

This apostle named John, the author of this book in the Bible, witnessed Jesus' life, his death on the cross, and the resurrected, living Jesus. John walked, lived, and ate with Jesus while Jesus was on earth preaching, healing, and teaching people about God, his Father. John was fully equipped to write about Jesus and chose to do so because he was convinced Jesus really is God's Son: Jesus is both the Chosen Anointed One (the Messiah, the Christ) for whom all of the Jewish people had been waiting and the Savior of the entire world.

In the first chapter of this book, the Apostle John called Jesus "the Word" so that everyone, both Jews and everyone else, would know that Jesus is God's Son and is eternal.

The Apostle John didn't talk about himself in the book he wrote because his goal was to tell us about Jesus. The author just includes himself in the events as an unnamed apostle!

However, the author did write about another man named John, sometimes called John "the Baptist," because he had been sent by God for the purpose of telling everyone to repent and get ready for the Messiah by turning from their sins and being baptized (see the first chapter of Luke for information on John the Baptist's birth and calling). So, the man named John in this book is not referring to the author.

Jesus was born to a Jewish mother: he was and still is Jewish. Also note that the Apostle John is Jewish (present tense because all of these people still exist in God's presence), as are most of the authors of Biblical books. All twelve apostles are almost certainly Jewish. During Jesus' time on earth, some Jewish people believed that Jesus is the Messiah and some didn't, just as today. Jesus evidently experienced the most opposition from the ruling class of priests, Sadducees, Pharisees, scribes, and teachers of Jewish law. Sometimes in his writing, the Apostle John lumps this opposition all together and refers to them as "the Jews" but he also makes it quite clear that Jesus intentionally gave his life *for* the Jewish people first and also for everyone else. John explains that Jesus willingly died *because of the sins of the whole world* and because of God's love for all people (John 3:16).

The book John the Apostle wrote is sometimes called The Gospel of John because the word "gospel" means "good news" and John wanted everyone to know the good news about Jesus. This good news of forgiveness and peace with God is for people of every race and every nation.

Acknowledgements

I owe a great debt, first, to my parents, who taught me the Scriptures and how to accurately apply them to my life; to the many preachers and teachers I heard while growing up, who worked hard to rightly explain the Scriptures; to college and seminary professors of Greek and Hebrew who taught me true academic hermeneutics (the desire and attempt to accurately determine the meaning of Scripture in order to accurately apply it to my life), to Anne Graham Lotz, whose workbook *The Vision of His Glory* showed me a practical approach to inductive Bible study that resulted in my spiritual growth; and to all who work so hard on Bible translation and editing in an effort to produce accurate interpretations of God's Word. So:

*Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but
only God, who makes things grow.*

I Corinthians 3:7