

*Daily Devotional Guide to
the Book of John*

John Chapter 1

Days 1 - 12

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.

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.

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.*)

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.

Day 1

Read John 1:1-5

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:1</p>	<p>Jesus (the Word) is God himself. Jesus said that he and the Father are one and the same. (John 10:30)</p>	<p>Do I believe that Jesus is God? Why/why not?</p>
<p>John 1:2</p>	<p>Jesus was with God at the beginning of all created things.</p>	<p>If Jesus has always been with God since the beginning and <i>is</i> God, what does that matter to me?</p>
<p>John 1:3</p>	<p>Jesus <i>is</i> the Creator. He made all that we see around us. He made everything that enables life as we know it, whether seen or unseen by the human eye. He made the universe (the earth and all of the “heavens” of Genesis 1:1)</p>	<p>If Jesus has the power to create the world and everything that exists, and is God himself, how should I treat Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:4</p>	<p>Jesus offers life that gives us light. He gives us a life that shows us the right way to go.</p>	<p>Do I try to do the right thing? Where do I usually turn for help with that?</p> <p>Have I asked Jesus to give me his kind of life and to show me the right way to live?</p>

Day 1

Read John 1:1-5

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:5</p> <div data-bbox="100 281 428 762" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 229px;"></div>	<p>The light or truth of Jesus shines in the world, but the world is full of darkness and people don't understand that Jesus offers a life full of good.</p>	<p>How much do I understand about Jesus? This is what I know for sure about Jesus at this point in my life:</p> <div data-bbox="789 310 1524 558" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 118px;"></div> <p>Based on John 1:1-5, how do I think life with Jesus should be different from life without him?</p> <div data-bbox="789 625 1524 762" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 65px;"></div>

Is there anything I would like to say to God?

Day 2

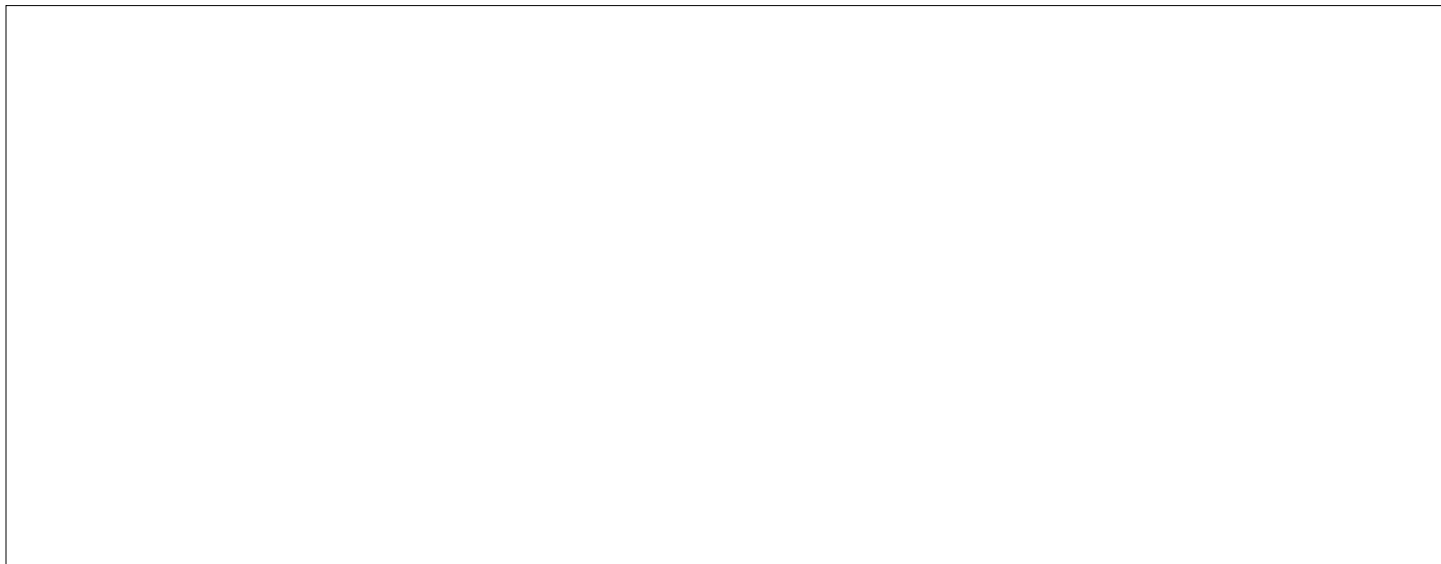
Read John 1:6-8

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:6</p>	<p>John the Baptist was only a man but he was sent from God. God sends people to do particular jobs on earth.</p>	<p>Is there anyone in my life that God sent to point me to Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:7</p>	<p>God sent John to point to Jesus as our light so we would believe in Jesus.</p>	<p>Based on John 1:1-7, what things did St. John (the apostle) and John the Baptist want people to know and believe about Jesus?</p> <p>Do I believe John the Baptist?</p> <p>Do I believe those whom God has placed in my life to point to Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:8</p>	<p>We should not be confused about other people being God. Jesus is the only God/man ever. (John 3:16)</p>	<p>Do I try to be God?</p> <p>Do I try to put someone else in place of God?</p> <p>Do I understand the uniqueness of who Jesus Christ is?</p>

Day 2

Read John 1:6-8

Is there anything I would like to say to God?

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Day 3

Read John 1:9-13

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:9</p>	<p>What kind of preparation did God consider necessary for the arrival of his Son? See verse 7. It says that God wanted people to believe who Jesus is.</p> <p>So what did God have John the Baptist actually do? He preached repentance to prepare people for God's coming among them. He didn't build a ministry or an empire. He didn't prepare a palace for Jesus to be born or to live in. He didn't lead a revolt.</p> <p>The only thing God considered important was to prepare people's hearts to hear and believe and be saved from their sins and from the subsequent eternal condemnation from God.</p>	<p>Have I repented of my sins and opened my heart to Jesus?</p> <p>Would I like to be saved from my sins and God's condemnation and judgment?</p> <p>Is there someone else I would like to experience the same salvation? Who?</p>
<p>John 1:10</p>	<p>Jesus walked around among people who did not recognize that he was God, their own creator, the one who made them.</p>	<p>Do I recognize Jesus for who he truly is?</p>
<p>John 1:11</p>	<p>People, who were all made by God, did not accept that Jesus was his Son. Many of the people rejected Jesus. Many people still reject Jesus and don't understand who he is.</p>	<p>Do I recognize that God made <i>me</i>, that I belong to him, and that he sent his very own Son so that I could receive him?</p>

Day 3

Read John 1:9-13

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:12</p>	<p>God gave the power to Jesus to make those who received him and believed him, become children of God. Those who believe and accept Jesus in each generation become God's children because God gave that authority to Jesus. Our gift from Jesus when we believe in him, is eternal life with him.</p>	<p>What is the one, simple criterion for becoming a child of God? (How do I become a child of God?)</p> <p>Based on what I've read so far in the Gospel of John, what do I believe about Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:13</p>	<p>Becoming a child of God has nothing to do with other people, this physical world, or our goals for life here. Becoming a child of God is a spiritual event. A child of God can only become one because it is what God wants, and God wants <i>everyone</i> to be saved from his wrath. (II Peter 3:9)</p>	<p>Do I become a child of God through becoming a good person, through trying, through being nice, through any effort of my own?</p> <p>Based on John 1:12, am I a child of God?</p>

Is there anything I would like to say to God?

Day 4

Read John 1:14-18

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:14</p>	<p>God sent his word in the form of his Son to take on flesh and blood like us. Jesus came to live with us, as one of us, but he was unique and reflected God's glory because he was perfect.</p> <p>Those, like the author of this book of the Bible, who knew Jesus saw the glory in him that came from being the one and only Son of God. They experienced the grace (undeserved favor) and truth of God when they listened to Jesus.</p>	<p>What does it mean that Jesus was full of truth?</p> <p>How can I experience the grace and truth of God?</p>
<p>John 1:15</p>	<p>John the Baptist was sent from God, knowing only that he was preparing the way for someone much greater than himself, someone eternal. He didn't know who that was until God revealed that it was Jesus. As soon as John found out, he started telling people that Jesus was the one.</p>	<p>We know from Luke 1:36 that baby John the Baptist was born before baby Jesus. What did John mean? How does Jesus coming before John, make Jesus greater than John?</p> <p>What difference does it make to me that Jesus is eternal and was in the beginning with God and was God?</p>
<p>John 1:16</p>	<p>Grace is often defined as undeserved favor. Jesus extends God's grace to people.</p> <p>The author of this book and others who knew Jesus experienced continual blessings from being in his presence and experiencing his grace.</p> <p>Jesus, because he is sinless and is God, is a fit vehicle and uniquely qualified to show God's love and favor to all of us.</p>	<p>How can I experience continual blessings?</p> <p>What blessings have I experienced through Jesus Christ?</p>

Day 4

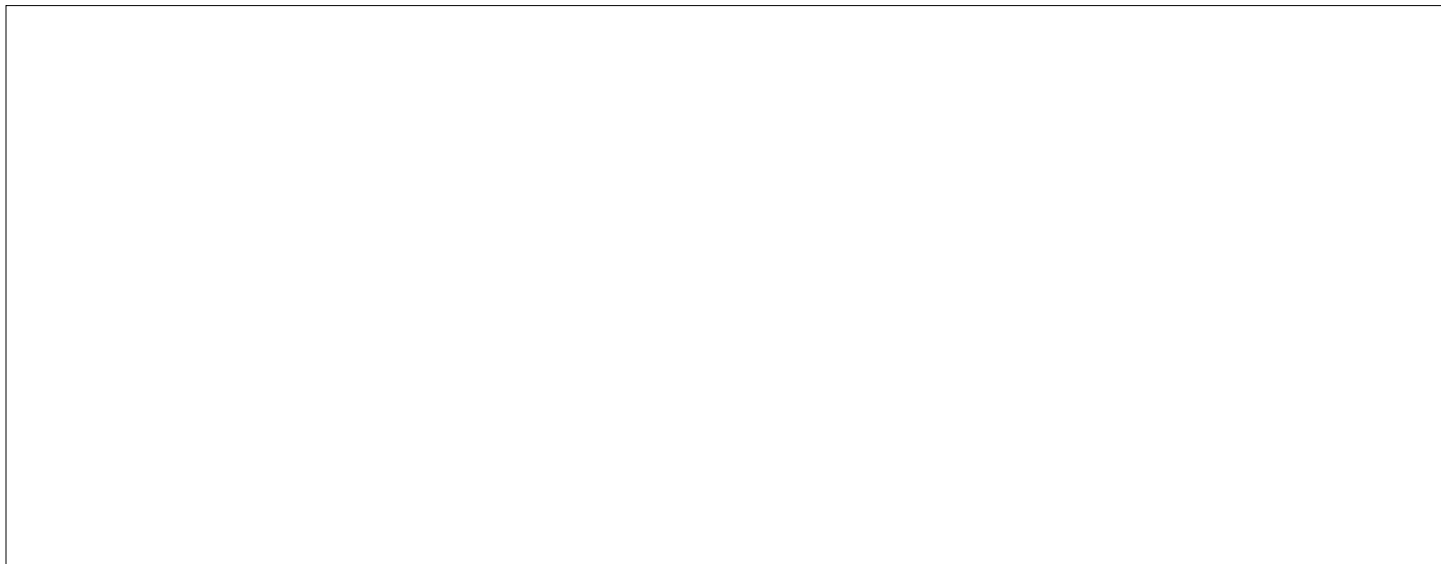
Read John 1:14-18

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:17</p> <div data-bbox="100 281 428 917" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 303px;"></div>	<p>God gave a set of laws to be followed to show the Jewish people how holy he is. Moses gave this Law to the people and knew how hard it was for them to keep it.</p> <p>God is holy but he is also forgiving and he sent Jesus to show us grace, a way to make us acceptable to God even though there is no way for us to keep the Law perfectly.</p> <p>The truth of who God is, is that he is holy and righteous and just, but that he also loves us and has provided a way for us to be holy in his sight even though we aren't. (Galatians 3:10-14)</p>	<p>Have I ever sinned (broken any one of the laws of God in any way)?</p> <div data-bbox="794 310 1508 569" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 123px;"></div> <p>Would I rather try to earn my way to heaven by trying to keep each one of God's laws perfectly all my life, or would I rather accept the truth about Jesus, God's way of grace?</p> <div data-bbox="794 667 1508 926" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 123px;"></div>
<p>John 1:18</p> <div data-bbox="100 976 428 1327" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 167px;"></div>	<p>Jesus is the only one who has truly seen and been with God the Father.</p> <p>Jesus is now seated in heaven in the place of authority beside God the Father.</p> <p>While on earth, Jesus showed us what God, his Father is like.</p>	<p>What questions do I have about what God is really like?</p> <div data-bbox="794 976 1508 1327" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 167px;"></div>

Day 4

Read John 1:14-18

Is there anything I would like to say to God?

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Day 5

Read John 1:19-23

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:19</p>	<p>This is what John the Baptist said when people with authority asked who he was.</p>	<p>Based on John 1:15, what was John the Baptist's job here on earth?</p>
<p>John 1:20</p>	<p>John the Baptist knew he was not the Messiah and he did not want anyone to think that he was. The truth was important to John the Baptist.</p>	<p>Do I respect God's authority and truth more than the opinions of people?</p>
<p>John 1:21</p>	<p>The <i>NIV Study Bible</i> note explains that Elijah was taken to heaven without dying, and there was a belief that Elijah would come back when the end of the world was coming. They wanted to know if John was Elijah, announcing the end of the world. John the Baptist knew that was not his purpose. Jesus later said (Luke 1:17) that John was the <i>fulfillment</i> of Elijah coming because he fulfilled Malachi 4:5. John the Baptist was to prepare people for the coming of the Righteous One (Jesus) by turning their hearts back to one another, and back to righteousness and to God. They also wanted to know if John the Baptist was the Moses-like prophet God promised in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. John said he was not. <i>Jesus</i> is this promised prophet, actually much greater than Moses.</p>	<p>People often have misconceptions and beliefs that are wrong. God's true intentions are for people to repent and turn to him so that they are ready to receive his Son, Jesus, before the end of the world comes! What do I think the end of the world will be like? How do I know?</p> <p>God gave many prophets to the Jewish people, over many centuries, so they could write about the Messiah who would come. Jesus is the one they all pointed to, not to themselves. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus also. Do I take credit and glory that belongs to Jesus, or do I point people to Jesus?</p>

Day 5

Read John 1:19-23

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
John 1:22 	The spiritual rulers of Israel wanted to know why John the Baptist was doing the things he was doing, and why people were listening. They wanted to know who John the Baptist was.	Have I listened to what John the Baptist said about Jesus?
John 1:23 	John the Baptist said that he was, according to Isaiah 40:3, the one who was preparing the way for the Lord by calling the people to repentance.	Have I prepared my heart to receive Jesus by repenting of and turning away from my sins? What can I do to turn my own heart and the hearts of others toward God in repentance?

What would I like to say to Jesus?

Day 6

Read John 1:24-28

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:24-25</p>	<p>The leaders in Jerusalem sent religious experts to try to figure out who John was. They did not understand John's baptism was for people who wanted to repent of their sins and prepare their hearts for Jesus, the Messiah.</p>	<p>Is my heart truly prepared for Jesus? Do I repent of my sins? (Romans 3:23)</p>
<p>John 1:26</p>	<p>John's baptism was for a certain purpose, to prepare the way for someone else. John knew the person was already there, but not yet revealed to them.</p>	<p>How is repentance related to Jesus being revealed to us?</p>
<p>John 1:27</p>	<p>John acknowledged the greatness of this one he was preparing people for. Students of rabbis in those days would do many things for the rabbis, but losing a sandal was the job of only a slave. (NIV Study Bible note) That is how John viewed his relationship to the one who would come, Jesus.</p>	<p>What is my relationship to Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:28</p>	<p>These events really happened at a particular time in history, in a particular place.</p>	<p>How important is it that these events really happened?</p>

Day 6

Read John 1:24-28

Is there anything I would like to say to Jesus?

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Day 7

Read John 1:29-34

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:29</p>	<p>God had revealed to John the Baptist that it was Jesus who would take our sins away by offering himself as a sacrifice. Jesus was like the lambs the Jews killed according to God's Law to take away sin in Old Testament times and up until the time of these events.</p>	<p>Do I believe that Jesus died to take away my sins? Have I told Jesus that I believe him?</p>
<p>John 1:30</p>	<p>Eventually (see the next verse), John the Baptist knew and was telling people that it was Jesus he had been preparing the people for. It was Jesus who was greater than himself because Jesus is eternal and was with God before John existed.</p>	<p>Is Jesus greater than me? Why?</p>
<p>John 1:31</p>	<p>John the Baptist didn't know who he was preparing the way for, until he baptized Jesus and God showed him clearly that it was Jesus for whom he had been preparing the people of Israel. See Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:4-11, and Luke 3:21-22.</p>	<p>How did I find out the truth about Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:32</p>	<p>John the Baptist told everyone what happened when Jesus was baptized. God's spirit came down from heaven and stayed on Jesus. It reminded John of a dove flying down and resting on him.</p>	<p>Why should I believe what John the Baptist said about Jesus?</p>

Day 7

Read John 1:29-34

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:33</p> <div data-bbox="100 281 428 764"></div>	<p>God had told John the Baptist to watch for that particular sign because the man on whom God's spirit descended and remained would be the one he was waiting and preparing the way for. This man would baptize with more than water. He would baptize people with God's Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Have I received John's baptism of repentance and has Jesus baptized me with God's Holy Spirit?</p> <div data-bbox="792 310 1508 764"></div>
<p>John 1:34</p> <div data-bbox="100 821 428 1451"></div>	<p>John the Baptist now knew that Jesus was the one he had prepared people's hearts for by offering repentance; that Jesus was the one God had sent to be a sinless sacrifice for others' sins, just like a lamb; that Jesus was the man who was eternal and therefore greater than John; that Jesus was the one John was supposed to tell people about; that Jesus was the one on whom God sent his Spirit as a sign that Jesus would baptize people with God's Spirit, not just water. All of this is because Jesus is the unique, one and only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16)</p>	<p>Is there anyone else like Jesus? Why not?</p> <div data-bbox="792 821 1508 1451"></div>

Day 7

Read John 1:29-34

What would I like to say to Jesus?

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Day 8

Read John 1: 35-39

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:35</p>	<p>People sought out and followed John the Baptist because they wanted to follow God.</p>	<p>Do I want to follow God?</p>
<p>John 1:36</p>	<p>Now that John knew who Jesus was, he began to point people to him, because that was what his calling from God was.</p>	<p>How can I tell if someone is truly concerned about me and truly knows God? Who will that person point me to?</p>
<p>John 1:37</p>	<p>John knew that Jesus was the one they should really follow if they wanted to follow God.</p>	<p>Who should I follow if I want to please God?</p>
<p>John 1:38</p>	<p>They showed respect by calling Jesus "Rabbi". They wanted to follow him and spend as much time with him as possible.</p>	<p>What in my life is evidence that I am following Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:39</p>	<p>Jesus invites people to follow him. The first of the twelve apostles found much to learn from him.</p>	<p>Based on what I've read in John so far, what kinds of things would they have learned from Jesus? (i.e. What can I learn from Jesus?)</p>

Day 8

Read John 1: 35-39

What would I like to say to Jesus?

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Day 9

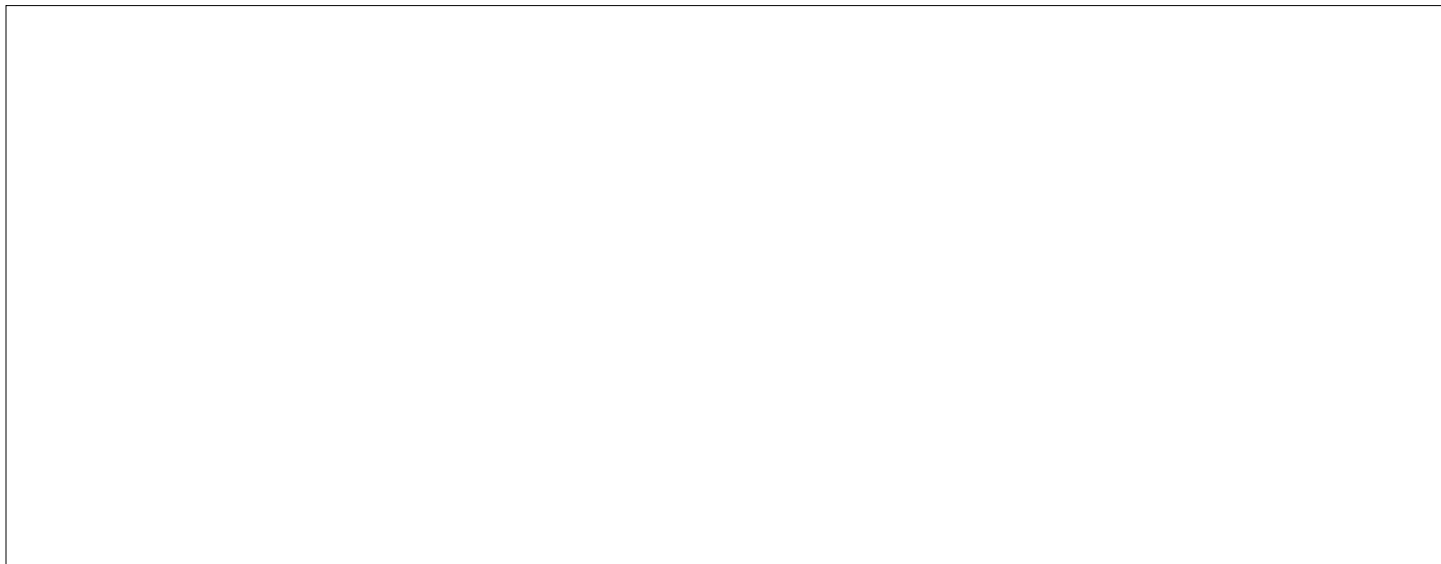
Read John 1: 40-42

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:40</p>	<p>Andrew believed what John said about Jesus and became one of the twelve apostles.</p>	<p>How do I think Andrew's belief impacted the world?</p>
<p>John 1:41</p>	<p>As soon as Andrew realized who Jesus was, he wanted to tell his brother, Simon. Jesus is the "Messiah" in Hebrew, the "Christ" in Greek. Both mean the One Anointed and Chosen by God.</p>	<p>What difference did it make to them that Jesus was chosen and anointed by God?</p>
<p>John 1:42</p>	<p>Andrew went and brought the person closest to him, to Jesus. Jesus knew all about Simon. Now that Simon belonged to Jesus, Jesus gave him a new name and a new life. Simon, the impulsive, outspoken, aggressive young man, was now on his way to becoming Peter, meaning "rock." Jesus would make him a new person on whom Christ's followers (the future Christian church) could depend.</p>	<p>Who is the person who is closest to me? Does he/she know who Jesus really is?</p> <p>How can I bring that person or others to Jesus like Andrew did?</p> <p>Am I becoming a new person? How do I know?</p> <p>Who would Jesus like to make me?</p>

Day 9

Read John 1: 40-42

What would I like to say to Jesus?

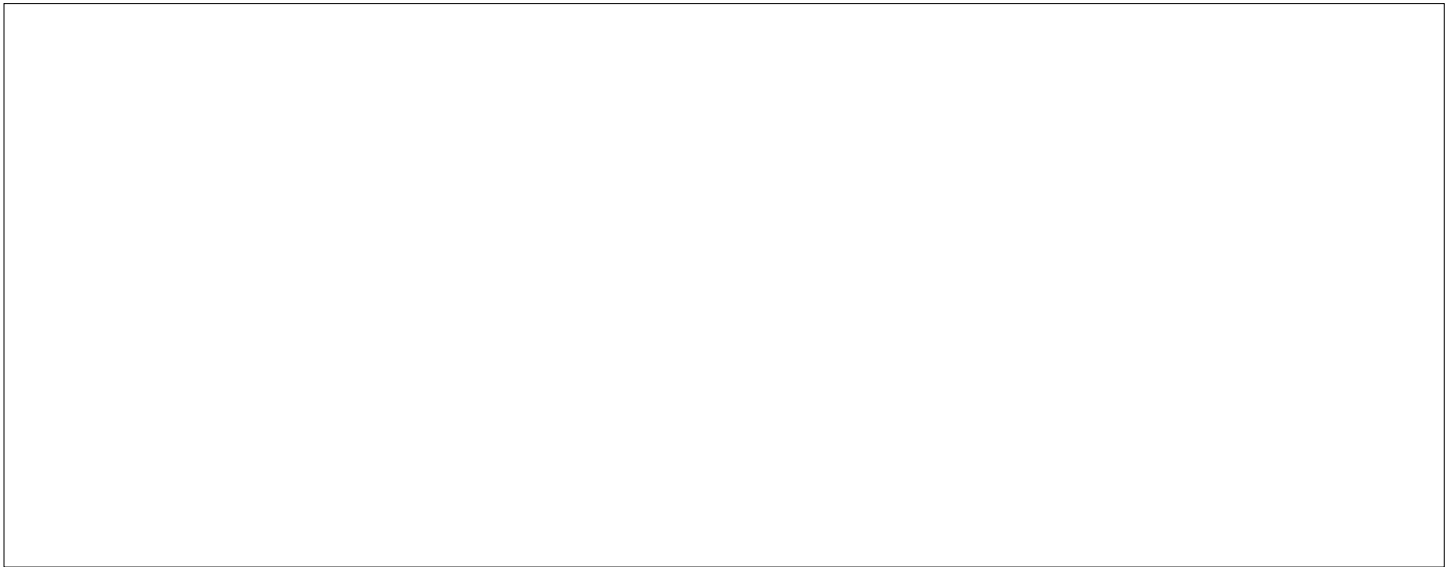
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What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:43</p>	<p>Jesus seeks out followers and wants us to follow him.</p>	<p>How do I know Jesus wants <i>me</i> to follow him?</p>
<p>John 1:44</p>	<p>Perhaps Andrew and Peter had told Philip about Jesus, but Philip had not come to Jesus yet. Jesus went to him. Jesus seeks out those who need him and reveals himself to them.</p>	<p>Do I need Jesus to reveal to me more about who he is?</p> <p>Is there someone I am praying for who does not know Jesus? Have I told that person about Jesus and prayed for Jesus to reveal himself to that person?</p>
<p>John 1:45</p>	<p>Then Philip went and found someone he was close to, to tell about Jesus. This is what they were saying: Moses wrote about the Messiah in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It was Jesus that he was writing about nearly 1500 years before Jesus was born! Different prophets also wrote about the Messiah in many later books such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others. It was Jesus they were writing about! (Philip mistakenly thought at the beginning that Jesus was Joseph's son, because that's what everyone thought.)</p>	<p>Have I misunderstood who Jesus is?</p> <p>When I tell someone about Jesus, that person can tell others. What important information do I know now about Jesus that I could tell?</p>

Day 10

Read John 1: 43-45

What would I like to say to Jesus?

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What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:46</p>	<p>People who think Jesus is only of earthly origin are often skeptical of him. When he came to earth, Jesus was not of "noble" birth or wealth or fame or importance. Nazareth was looked down on by religious Jews as a small town of insignificance, isolated, but in the area of much coming and going of people who were ungodly and non-Jewish. People who didn't know Jesus assumed he had been born in Nazareth, but he had actually been born in Bethlehem in order to fulfill what the prophet Micah had written about the Messiah, God's chosen Ruler of Israel (Micah 5:2).</p>	<p>How have I, or how do I sometimes underestimate or misjudge Jesus?</p>
<p>John 1:47</p>	<p>Jesus knew Nathanael's heart in a way others didn't.</p>	<p>Is my heart pure? Is there anything false in my heart or life?</p> <p>Am I proud of my acts of righteousness, or humble in God's presence?</p>
<p>John 1:48</p>	<p>Jesus told Nathanael he saw his most private acts, perhaps of righteousness or of unrighteousness. Perhaps he was praying under a fig tree before Philip arrived. We don't know what Philip was doing, but perhaps he was praying for the Messiah to be revealed!</p>	<p>Have I thought I could hide my words, actions, or thoughts from Jesus?</p>

Day 11

Read John 1: 46-49

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:49</p> <div data-bbox="100 281 428 627" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 165px;"></div>	<p>Whatever Nathanael had been doing, it was clear that Jesus knew him only as God could know him. Jesus had knowledge of Nathanael that only God could have. Jesus proved to Nathanael he was both Messiah and God. Nathanael acknowledged Jesus as God and King of Israel.</p>	<p>If Jesus knows me as God knows me, each thought or deed of mine is known. What would I like to ask forgiveness for and be cleansed of right now?</p> <div data-bbox="789 344 1524 449" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 50px;"></div> <p>How are kings treated? Why?</p> <div data-bbox="789 487 1524 627" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 67px;"></div>

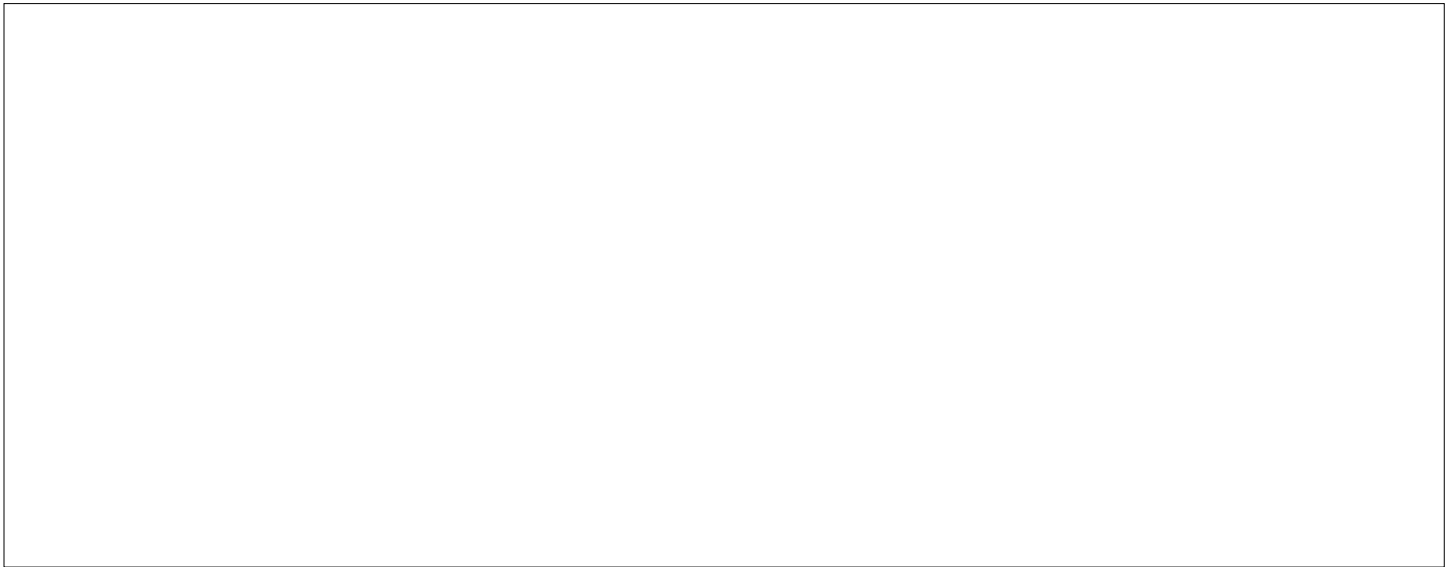
What would I like to say to Jesus now?

What It Says	Meaning/Principles	What It Means to Me
<p>John 1:50</p>	<p>Jesus had told Nathanael that he saw him before he came to be introduced to Jesus. This convinced Nathanael that Jesus was not an ordinary man. Jesus knew that Nathanael would witness what was ahead in Jesus' life. Nathanael and the other apostles would see great miracles.</p>	<p>What caused or could cause me to believe Jesus really is God's Son?</p> <p>Can I imagine Jesus doing great things in my life?</p> <p>What would I like Jesus to do in my life? Have I asked him?</p>
<p>John 1:51</p>	<p>This had special significance to Nathanael. The <i>NIV Study Bible</i> note explains that this statement put Jesus in the place of Jacob. Jacob had a dream described in Genesis 28: 12ff, in which angels were going up and down from heaven (commonly known as Jacob's ladder). God then promised to give Jacob's descendants the land of Israel. The Jewish people descended from Jacob and in Genesis 32:28 God renamed Jacob, Israel. Jacob, or Israel, was the first true Israelite. So Jesus was saying that he, himself, was really the first true Israelite.</p> <p>Jesus often called himself the "Son of Man" because prophecies in the book of Daniel described the Messiah as a being who looked like a son of man (human). God was going to give the Son of Man supreme authority, power, and rule over all people forever (Daniel 7:13-14).</p>	<p>Jesus is Lord of all, Lord over all, from the most Jewish Jew to the most non-Jewish person on earth. How can I show by my life that he is above all others, that he is the ultimate King?</p>

Day 12

Read John 1: 50-51

What would I like to say to Jesus?

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