

You Are Loved By Jesus

Studies in the Gospel of John 1-8

# You Are Loved !

John who was known as the disciple whom Jesus loved, wrote this account of Jesus life and ministry for YOU, so that YOU would know that Jesus not only loved John but that JESUS LOVES YOU !

This is a study guide to help you follow along. We are encouraging Life Groups to use this study guide. It is always better together. (Hebrews 10:25-27, Matthew 18:20)

## How to Use This Guide:

Begin each passage with prayer, reading, reflection

### 1. **PRAY** that:

God would reveal himself, his love, what he has done for you, for us!

### 2. **READ** and **REFLECT**:

Read the passage once. Read slowly. As the scripture is being read, have each small group member think about one thing that stands out to them. Perhaps a piece of dialogue, a word, a character, an interaction, a verse. Spend a couple minutes sharing these ideas. It's important to note that small group members don't need to explain the "why" behind their thought that will come later. Simply share what stood out to each other.

Read the passage a second time. As the scripture is being read, is there something that you as small group members notice that you didn't notice the first time? If so, talk about this. Take a few minutes to expand on question 1. Now is the time to share why you think that piece of dialogue was interesting or important for example. Or perhaps you could explain how that verse stood out to you and why? If small group members have questions regarding a word or a verse or a character within this scene, ask the group and dialogue about it together.

### 3. **GOING DEEPER**:

Thoughtfully work through the questions at the end of each section.

4. **PRAYER:**

Finish with prayer time...Each passage is different and requires a different response...

Possible prayers:

- a. Praise, Reflection and Meditation on who God/Jesus is, and what He has done.
- b. Ask for strength to apply / to believe the learning about God in your life. John 6:29 *“The work of God is this: to believe the one he has sent.”*

Begin to ask God to transform you

renew your mind

surrendering part of your life to Jesus

- c. Ask for courage to share with others what you have learned.

Who?

How? /opportunities

For God to direct your relationships

## **The Word Became Flesh**

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—<sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> (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.'") <sup>16</sup> Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> 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.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *Why might this gospel begin "in the beginning" rather than at Jesus' birth?*
2. *What facts about "the Word" can you find in verses 1-5? And 10-18?*
3. *From the image of "receiving" someone in vs. 12 how would you explain what faith is about? What is the result of this type of faith?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

## **John the Baptist Denies Being the Messiah**

<sup>19</sup> Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders<sup>64</sup> in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup> He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

<sup>22</sup> Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

<sup>24</sup> Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

<sup>26</sup> "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

<sup>28</sup> This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

## **John Testifies About Jesus**

<sup>29</sup> The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup> This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' <sup>31</sup> I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

<sup>32</sup> Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. <sup>33</sup> And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' <sup>34</sup> I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

## **GOING DEEPER**

1. What questions do the priests and Levites ask John? What do these questions reveal about who they

were?

2. *What is John's goal in life? (verses 22-23, 26-27 and Isaiah 40:3-5)?*
3. *Since baptism only applied to Gentile converts to Judaism, what is behind the Pharisees' cynical question in vs. 24-25? John's evasive answer in vs. 26-27?*
4. *How does John finally answer their question about his baptism (vs. 30-31)? What does he mean by calling Jesus "the Lamb of God" (Exodus 12:1-13 and Isaiah 53:7) and "the Son of God"? What proof does he have for these claims?*
5. *What is your goal in life? How would you compare your goals to a cooked steak: half cooked, rare, medium, well done?*
6. *Of the titles for Jesus given so far (the Word, the Light, the Christ, the Lamb of God and the Son of God), which means the most to you? Why?*

## **PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **John's Disciples Follow Jesus**

<sup>35</sup>The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

<sup>37</sup>When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup>Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"

<sup>39</sup>"Come," he replied, "and you will see."

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

<sup>40</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). <sup>42</sup>And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

## **Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael**

<sup>43</sup>The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.”

<sup>44</sup>Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. <sup>45</sup>Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote— Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

<sup>46</sup>“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” said Philip.

<sup>47</sup>When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”

<sup>48</sup>“How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

<sup>49</sup>Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”

<sup>50</sup>Jesus said, “You believe<sup>h3</sup> because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” <sup>51</sup>He then added, “Very truly I tell you,<sup>u</sup> you<sup>u</sup> will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *When you get some good news, who is the first person you want to share it with? Why?*
2. *What motivated the disciples of John to follow Jesus? What motivated Andrew to tell Simon about him?*
3. *What did Philip have in common with Andrew? What insight about Jesus excites Philip?*
4. *What type of person is Nathanael? Why might he find it hard to believe Philip’s statement? Why would Jesus call Philip and Nathanael in such different ways? How do you think Nathanael felt when Jesus spoke to him?*
5. *Of the five people in verses 35-48 to follow Jesus...*
  - a. *How was the contact made for each one?*
  - b. *How much did each one know about Jesus when he decided to follow him?*

6. Who was the Andrew in your life? How can you be Andrew for another?

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Jesus Changes Water Into Wine**

**2** On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, <sup>2</sup>and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup>When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

<sup>4</sup>"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

<sup>5</sup>His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

<sup>6</sup>Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

<sup>8</sup>Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, <sup>9</sup>and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside <sup>10</sup>and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

<sup>11</sup>What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

<sup>12</sup>After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. Given the importance of social customs, how would you feel as the host (vs. 3) ? As the servant (vs. 6-8)? As the groom?

2. *What part did the function and size of the jars play in this story?*

3. *Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17 “the old has gone, the new has come”. The old is the purification/sacrificial system. The new is the wine/celebration. What does each mean? What does this mean for you? Which one are you living? How is Jesus calling you to live? Jeremiah 31:12, Hosea 14:7, Amos 9:13-14, Isaiah 25:6 and Revelation 19:7-9*

4. *Celebrate...Where is the “wine” level (zest for life) in your life right now? Full? Half full? Empty? What is draining you? What area seems like stale water in an old jug? How might Jesus renew that?*

### **Jesus Clears the Temple Courts**

<sup>13</sup>When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. <sup>15</sup>So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup>The Jews then responded to him, “What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?”

<sup>19</sup>Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”

<sup>20</sup>They replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” <sup>21</sup>But the temple he had spoken of was his body. <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

<sup>23</sup>Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. <sup>24</sup>But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. <sup>25</sup>He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

**GOING DEEPER**

1. *Originally sellers and money changers were there to provide sacrificial animals for sale at the temple for those who had traveled long distances. How might this once-useful practice have deteriorated into a*

money-grabbing racket? Do you see this in your relationship with God? How? This practice also produced “lazy” worshippers/ “consumers”. How does this account for Jesus’ anger?

2. In the story, what does Jesus say about the temple? What, what is the temple? (Old and New) Where

3. If you compare your spiritual life to the rooms of house, which room in your life, might Jesus want to clean up.

## **PRAYER (Page 4)**

### **Jesus Teaches Nicodemus**

**3** Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. <sup>2</sup>He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

<sup>4</sup>“How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. <sup>7</sup>You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You<sup>6</sup> must be born again.’ <sup>8</sup>The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

<sup>9</sup>“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

<sup>10</sup>“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? <sup>11</sup>Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. <sup>12</sup>I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man.<sup>14</sup> <sup>14</sup>Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup>Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only

Son. <sup>19</sup>This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. ~~What does vs 19-21 say about Nicodemus in verses 1-2? What is significant about his coming to Jesus? Why did he come?~~
2. ~~New birth—What is it? Can you understand Nicodemus' confusion?~~
3. ~~What does Jesus claim about himself in vs 41-51? How does the snake in the desert illustrate this?~~
4. ~~Read vs 16-17 Who is it addressed to? What does God say to you? What did God do?~~

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **John Testifies Again About Jesus**

<sup>22</sup>After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. <sup>23</sup>Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. <sup>24</sup>(This was before John was put in prison.) <sup>25</sup>An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. <sup>26</sup>They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

<sup>27</sup>To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. <sup>28</sup>You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.' <sup>29</sup>The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. <sup>30</sup>He must become greater; I must become less."

<sup>31</sup>The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup>He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. <sup>33</sup>Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. <sup>34</sup>For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. <sup>36</sup>Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

**GOING DEEPER**

1. *Given the different ideas about baptisms, what do you think had happened at the river? What do you think the “certain Jew” had said? How would you have felt if you had been one of John’s disciples at this point?*
2. *How does John the Baptist respond? What is the point of the allegory or story about the bride and bridegroom? What does John’s response tell you about him?*
3. *How does the phrase “rejecting the Son” stand in contrast to what “belief” really means? What are the results of each response to him?*
4. *Other than the way John the Baptist did, how will you express the role and rank of Jesus in your life? What are some examples?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

**Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman**

**4** Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—<sup>2</sup> although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. <sup>3</sup> So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

<sup>4</sup> Now he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”

<sup>11</sup> “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?”

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,<sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I

give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

<sup>15</sup>The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup>He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

<sup>17</sup>“I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband.<sup>18</sup>The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

<sup>19</sup>“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup>Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

<sup>21</sup>“Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup>You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. <sup>23</sup>Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup>God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

<sup>25</sup>The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

<sup>26</sup>Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *As someone taught from birth to despise Samaritans, how would you feel when Jesus decided to go through Samaria instead of the long way home?*
2. *Since “nice” girls did not come to the water well at noon time (6th hour) why do you think Jesus risked his reputation to ask a favour of this woman?*
3. *Why does Jesus change the topic of conversation so abruptly to her personal life in verse 16? What strikes you about the way he responds to her claim not to have a husband?*
4. *Why do you think this woman changed the conversation to focus on a religious controversy? What is the significance of the temple? Where is the temple?*
5. *What social, ethnic or religious barriers are difficult for you to break through? How would Jesus relate to these people you find difficult?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

## **The Disciples Rejoin Jesus**

<sup>27</sup>Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

<sup>28</sup>Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, <sup>29</sup>“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” <sup>30</sup>They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

<sup>31</sup>Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

<sup>32</sup>But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

<sup>33</sup>Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?”

<sup>34</sup>“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. <sup>35</sup>Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. <sup>36</sup>Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup>Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. <sup>38</sup>I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

## **Many Samaritans Believe**

<sup>39</sup>Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” <sup>40</sup>So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. <sup>41</sup>And because of his words many more became believers.

<sup>42</sup>They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

***PRAY*** (Page 3)

***READ and REFLECT*** (Page 3)

### ***GOING DEEPER***

- 1. Why were the disciples surprised to find Jesus with this woman?*
- 2. How is Jesus’ figurative speech once again misunderstood? (John 2:19, 3:3 and 4:10) Why does he continue to speak like this? In what ways is God’s will like food for him?*
- 3. How does the parable of harvesting apply to the disciples?*
- 4. Considering your interest in spiritual things this week, have you been more like the disciples or*

*the woman? Why? What distracts you from spiritual things?*

5. *How does doing the will of God supply the same essentials in your life that food does?*

6. *What do you learn about being a witness from the woman? From the parable (vs. 35-38)?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Jesus Heals an Official's Son**

<sup>43</sup>After the two days he left for Galilee. <sup>44</sup>(Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.) <sup>45</sup>When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, for they also had been there.

<sup>46</sup>Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. <sup>47</sup>When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

<sup>48</sup>"Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."

<sup>49</sup>The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

<sup>50</sup>"Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live."

The man took Jesus at his word and departed. <sup>51</sup>While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. <sup>52</sup>When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him."

<sup>53</sup>Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and his whole household believed.

<sup>54</sup>This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

### **Examine and think**

**1. How do you account for the contrast between the crowd's welcome in verse 45 and Jesus'**

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *How do you account for the contrast between the crowd's welcome in verse 45 and Jesus' comments in verses 44 and 48? How are the Galileans like and unlike the Samaritans in verses 39-42? Why?*

2. *What motivates the royal official to travel so far? How would you have responded to what*

*Jesus told him to do? What was the result of his action?*

3. *What does this miraculous sign point to about Jesus? How does it add to what was demonstrated by his first sign (see 2:1-11)?*

4. *When have you taken God at his word (even though the circumstances were seemingly impossible) and discovered that God did exactly what he promised?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **The Healing at the Pool**

**5** Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. <sup>2</sup> Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. <sup>3</sup> Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. <sup>5</sup> One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

<sup>7</sup> “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

<sup>8</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” <sup>9</sup> At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, <sup>10</sup> and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”

<sup>11</sup> But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’ ”

<sup>12</sup> So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?”

<sup>13</sup> The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

<sup>14</sup> Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.” <sup>15</sup> The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *How do you picture the setting of this story? What is the smell? The Moses? The*

*atmosphere? How would you feel in a place like this?*

*2. How would you picture the invalid? What might Jesus mean by his question in verse 6? What did the invalid hope Jesus might do?*

*3. In what way do people today try to be healed spiritually outside of Christ? How would you respond to someone who said all sickness is a result sin? Why were the leaders so upset?*

*4. Has your joy in God ever been squashed by someone's concern over religious rituals and traditions? What did that do to you? Have you ever done it to someone else?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **The Authority of the Son**

<sup>16</sup>So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. <sup>17</sup>In his defense Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working."<sup>18</sup>For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

<sup>19</sup>Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. <sup>20</sup>For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. <sup>21</sup>For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. <sup>22</sup>Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup>that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

<sup>24</sup>"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. <sup>25</sup>Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. <sup>26</sup>For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. <sup>27</sup>And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

<sup>28</sup>"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice <sup>29</sup>and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. <sup>30</sup>By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

## **GOING DEEPER**

1. How did the way he answered the Jewish leaders only heighten their opposition? Why would
2. In what ways is Jesus equal to the Father? What terms are used to show the kind of
3. What claims does Jesus make about himself in verse 24? What is the promise?
4. How would you describe the relationship that God the Father and God the Son are in? What
5. In your own spiritual journey, when did you first understand this truth? How did it affect
6. If you had to explain to someone what verse 24 means in your own words, how would you put

## **PRAYER (Page 4)**

### **Testimonies About Jesus**

<sup>31</sup>“If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. <sup>32</sup>There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is true.

<sup>33</sup>“You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. <sup>34</sup>Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. <sup>35</sup>John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

<sup>36</sup>“I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me. <sup>37</sup>And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, <sup>38</sup>nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. <sup>39</sup>You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, <sup>40</sup>yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

<sup>41</sup>“I do not accept glory from human beings, <sup>42</sup>but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. <sup>43</sup>I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. <sup>44</sup>How can you believe since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

<sup>45</sup>

“But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. <sup>46</sup>If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. <sup>47</sup>But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?”

## **PRAY (Page 3)**

### **READ and REFLECT (Page 3)**

## **GOING DEEPER**

1. How does Jesus throw back at the religious leaders their own Scriptures? Since lack of information was not their problem, what was?
2. What “witnesses” have convinced you that Jesus is indeed the one who gives life?
3. How do you see these leaders’ attitudes and misuse of Scripture reflected today? How can you use the

*Scripture to cultivate the love of God in you?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand**

**6** Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), <sup>2</sup> and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. <sup>3</sup> Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. <sup>4</sup> The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” <sup>6</sup> He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

<sup>7</sup> Philip answered him, “It would take more than half a year’s wages<sup>Ⓜ</sup> to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!”

<sup>8</sup> Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, <sup>9</sup> “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there).<sup>11</sup> Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

<sup>12</sup> When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” <sup>13</sup> So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

<sup>14</sup> After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” <sup>15</sup> Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *Why did the crowd follow Jesus? What did they think about him?*
2. *How might the wedding at Cana (2:1-11) be a factor in this test?*
3. *What is the significance of the fact that there was more left over after the feeding that there was food to start with? What truths about Jesus does this miracle show?*

4. *What does Jesus' response indicate about his idea of his kingship?*
5. *When have you experienced God stretching your limited resources (physically or emotionally) far beyond what you could have imagined? How do you need to trust him to do so now?*
6. *In what ways are you like Philip and Andrew, failing to remember something about Jesus when you face a difficult situation?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Jesus Walks on the Water**

<sup>16</sup>When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, <sup>17</sup>where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. <sup>18</sup>A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. <sup>19</sup>When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. <sup>20</sup>But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid."<sup>21</sup>Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

<sup>22</sup>The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. <sup>23</sup>Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. <sup>24</sup>Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *How do you respond when storms whip up in your life? What difference does this story make as you face those times?*
2. *What does this sign say about who Jesus is? Gen1:1 and John 1.*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Jesus the Bread of Life**

<sup>25</sup>When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

<sup>26</sup>Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. <sup>27</sup>Do not work for food that spoils, but for

food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

<sup>28</sup> Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

<sup>30</sup> So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? <sup>31</sup> Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’<sup>[a]</sup>”

<sup>32</sup> Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

<sup>34</sup> “Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.<sup>36</sup> But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. <sup>37</sup> All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. <sup>38</sup> For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup> And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. <sup>40</sup> For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”

<sup>41</sup> At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” <sup>42</sup> They said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I came down from heaven’?”

<sup>43</sup> “Stop grumbling among yourselves,” Jesus answered. <sup>44</sup> “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. <sup>45</sup> It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’<sup>[a]</sup> Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from him comes to me. <sup>46</sup> No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. <sup>47</sup> Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. <sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. <sup>50</sup> But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

<sup>52</sup> Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

<sup>53</sup> Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. <sup>54</sup> Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will

raise them up at the last day. <sup>55</sup> For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.<sup>56</sup> Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. <sup>57</sup> Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup> This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” <sup>59</sup> He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

### **PRAY** (Page 3)

### **READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *How does Jesus' response to their question show the difference (vs. 26) between his interests and theirs?*
2. *How does Jesus use their interest in food to illustrate what he wants them to understand? What are the similarities and differences between manna and the “bread of life” in vs. 35?*
3. *What claims does Jesus make in verses 35-40? What do these claims emphasize about his being the “Bread of Life”? About the will of the Father?*
4. *What part is played by God and by the people in the process of coming to know Jesus ( vs. 44-45)? What promise is repeated three times for those who do come to him? Why the emphasis on this?*
5. *From the passage as a whole, what does Jesus mean by “eating his flesh” and “drinking his blood” (compare vs. 40 and 54)? How does the image of eating and drinking clarify what he means by believing in him?*
6. *In your culture, what is the main reason for following Jesus? What was your original motive?*
7. *How would you describe your daily spiritual diet: junk food, frozen food, baby food, microwave food, leftovers, meat and potatoes, pure bread and wine?*
8. *Has your familiarity with Jesus ( raised on SS stories, etc...) ever kept you from really seeing who he is? What can help remove the blinders?*

### **PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Many Disciples Desert Jesus**

<sup>60</sup> On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

<sup>61</sup>Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup>Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! <sup>63</sup>The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. <sup>64</sup>Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. <sup>65</sup>He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

<sup>66</sup>From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

<sup>67</sup>“You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

<sup>68</sup>Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup>We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

<sup>70</sup>Then Jesus replied, “Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!” <sup>71</sup>(He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

***PRAY*** (Page 3)

***READ and REFLECT*** (Page 3)

### ***GOING DEEPER***

- 1. What teaching do Jesus’ followers find so unacceptable (6:54-56)? How has their attitude changed since verses 14-15?*
- 2. Do you think they turned away because they did or did not really understand what he meant? Why?*
- 3. Why do you think Peter and the others decided to stay? How does this relate to verse 65?*
- 4. When times are hard, what keeps you from junking your faith and going on to something else?*
- 5. How do people today make Jesus into an “errand boy” to meet their own personal agendas? In what way have you been tempted to do so?*

***PRAYER*** (Page 4)

### **Jesus Goes to the Festival of Tabernacles**

**7** After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. <sup>2</sup>But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, <sup>3</sup>Jesus’ brothers said to him, “Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. <sup>4</sup>No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these

things, show yourself to the world.”<sup>5</sup> For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

<sup>6</sup>Therefore Jesus told them, “My time is not yet here; for you any time will do. <sup>7</sup>The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil. <sup>8</sup>You go to the festival. I am not going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come.”<sup>9</sup> After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee.

<sup>10</sup>However, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went also, not publicly, but in secret. <sup>11</sup>Now at the festival the Jewish leaders were watching for Jesus and asking, “Where is he?”

<sup>12</sup>Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, “He is a good man.”

Others replied, “No, he deceives the people.”<sup>13</sup> But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the leaders.

### ***PRAY (Page 3)***

### ***READ and REFLECT (Page 3)***

### ***GOING DEEPER***

- 1. Why did the religious leaders want of Jesus (vs 5:18)?*
- 2. What does Jesus say is the difference between him and his brothers? What does he realize about public reaction to him?*
- 3. Do you face any family opposition to or ridicule of your faith? How do you deal with it? How does Jesus’ situation help?*
- 4. How can we share our faith with family?*

### ***PRAYER (Page 4)***

### **Jesus teaches at the Feast**

<sup>14</sup>Not until halfway through the festival did Jesus go up to the temple courts and begin to teach. <sup>15</sup>The Jews there were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having been taught?”

<sup>16</sup>Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. <sup>17</sup>Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.<sup>18</sup> Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. <sup>19</sup>Has not Moses given you the

law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

<sup>20</sup>“You are demon-possessed,” the crowd answered. “Who is trying to kill you?”

<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them, “I did one miracle, and you are all amazed. <sup>22</sup>Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a boy on the Sabbath. <sup>23</sup>Now if a boy can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing a man’s whole body on the Sabbath? <sup>24</sup>Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.”

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *What do Jesus’ responses reveal about his authority? About their authority? Their objections to his healing? Their judgments?*
2. *Have you ever been really impressed with Jesus one moment, only to turn from him the next? Why does that happen?*
3. *When have you seen religious principles put ahead of love?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Division Over Who Jesus Is**

<sup>25</sup>At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, “Isn’t this the man they are trying to kill? <sup>26</sup>Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Messiah? <sup>27</sup>But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.”

<sup>28</sup>Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, “Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own authority, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, <sup>29</sup>but I know him because I am from him and he sent me.”

<sup>30</sup>At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. <sup>31</sup>Still, many in the crowd believed in him. They said, “When the Messiah comes, will he perform more signs than this man?”

<sup>32</sup>The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

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

<sup>35</sup> 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? <sup>36</sup> 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’?”

<sup>37</sup> 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. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” <sup>39</sup> 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.

<sup>40</sup> On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”

<sup>41</sup> Others said, “He is the Messiah.”

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

### **Unbelief of the Jewish Leaders**

<sup>45</sup> Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him in?”

<sup>46</sup> “No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards replied.

<sup>47</sup> “You mean he has deceived you also?” the Pharisees retorted. <sup>48</sup> “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? <sup>49</sup> No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them.”

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, <sup>51</sup> “Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he has been doing?”

<sup>52</sup> They replied, “Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee.”

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. Who is saying what about Jesus in this passage? What is causing the confusion?
2. Why does Jesus’ teaching in verses 14-29 provoke the response of verse 30? How do you account for the wide range of opinions about him (vs. 30-31)?

- God's 3. Given that every day at this feast water would be poured out as a symbol of thanks for provision, how is Jesus' statement in verses 37-38 especially powerful? Comparing verses 37-38 with 4:13-14, what are some ways that the Spirit's work is like water? How is the Spirit received?
4. What is the relationship for you between believing the promises of Christ and experiencing the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit?
5. What different opinions about Christ do you hear today? Why does this confusion exist?

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

**8** <sup>1</sup>but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

<sup>2</sup>At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. <sup>3</sup>The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group <sup>4</sup>and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. <sup>5</sup>In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" <sup>6</sup>They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. <sup>7</sup>When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." <sup>8</sup>Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

<sup>9</sup>At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. <sup>10</sup>Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

<sup>11</sup>"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

**GOING DEEPER**

1. How is this situation a trap for Jesus? What would the Pharisees accuse Jesus of if he told them to let her go? If he told them to stone her? How does he spring the trap?
2. How would the woman just caught in adultery have felt? What then would be the significance of Jesus

*'question in verse 10?*

3. *How does the way Jesus treats this woman help you face some of the sins you struggle with?*

4. *How does Jesus' acceptance of you "as you are" free you to change rather than simply reinforce your bad behaviour?*

5. *What can you learn from Jesus about helping a friend who has fallen?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Dispute Over Jesus' Testimony**

<sup>12</sup>When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

<sup>13</sup>The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

<sup>14</sup>Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. <sup>15</sup>You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. <sup>16</sup>But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. <sup>17</sup>In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true. <sup>18</sup>I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

<sup>19</sup>Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." <sup>20</sup>He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come.

Dispute Over Who Jesus Is

<sup>21</sup>Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come."

<sup>22</sup>This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I go, you cannot come'?"

<sup>23</sup>But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup>I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am he, you will indeed die in your sins."

<sup>25</sup>"Who are you?" they asked.

"Just what I have been telling you from the beginning," Jesus replied. <sup>26</sup>"I have much to say in judgment

of you. But he who sent me is trustworthy, and what I have heard from him I tell the world.”

<sup>27</sup>They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father.<sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. <sup>29</sup>The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.” <sup>30</sup>Even as he spoke, many believed in him.

**PRAY** (Page 3)

**READ and REFLECT** (Page 3)

### **GOING DEEPER**

1. *What is Jesus really claiming in verse 12? What is the promise? What does Jesus mean by “light” and “darkness”?*
2. *Compare verses 21-22 with 7:34-36: How are they misunderstanding Jesus now?*
3. *What is at stake in this whole discussion (vs 24)? Why does everything hinge on who Jesus really is (vs. 25 and who sent him (vs. 16,18, 26, 29)?*
4. *What does Jesus claim about his relationship with the Father in verses 27-29? What does he mean in verse 28? How will this show people he is the Christ?*
5. *How has following Jesus been like following someone with a light through a dark place for you?*
6. *How do people you know misunderstand Jesus? How does their life exemplify darkness? How can you be a light bearer to them?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

### **Dispute Over Whose Children Jesus’ Opponents Are**

<sup>31</sup>To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup>Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

<sup>33</sup>They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup>Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. <sup>36</sup>So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. <sup>37</sup>I know that you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word. <sup>38</sup>I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.<sup>39</sup>”

<sup>39</sup>“Abraham is our father,” they answered.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would<sup>40</sup> do what Abraham did. <sup>40</sup>As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not

do such things. <sup>41</sup>You are doing the works of your own father.”

“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”

<sup>42</sup>Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. <sup>43</sup>Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. <sup>44</sup>You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup>Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! <sup>46</sup>Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me? <sup>47</sup>Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”

### **Jesus’ Claims About Himself**

<sup>48</sup>The Jews answered him, “Aren’t we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?”

<sup>49</sup>“I am not possessed by a demon,” said Jesus, “but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. <sup>50</sup>I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. <sup>51</sup>Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.”

<sup>52</sup>At this they exclaimed, “Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that whoever obeys your word will never taste death. <sup>53</sup>Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?”

<sup>54</sup>Jesus replied, “If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. <sup>55</sup>Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word. <sup>56</sup>Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

<sup>57</sup>“You are not yet fifty years old,” they said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!”

<sup>58</sup>“Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” <sup>59</sup>At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

***PRAY*** (Page 3)

***READ and REFLECT*** (Page 3)

***GOING DEEPER***

1. *What does Jesus want to stress to the people who “believed” him? What does he mean by disciples? Truth? Freedom?*
2. *What false assumptions confuse the issue of spiritual freedom for Abraham’s descendants? How does Jesus undermine their base of confidence? What issues does he force them to confront (Vs.34-41)?*
3. *How does Jesus undermine their claim in verse 41? What does he say is the ultimate test of who “belongs to God” (Vs. 42-47)? How does he account for their misunderstanding of him (vs. 27, 43, 45, 47)?*
4. *What is the critical question raised by his claim in verse 51 (also vs. 24)? How is this issue central to the whole argument in 7:4-8:58? How does Jesus use their loyalty to Abraham against them? Why does Jesus’ final claim cause such an outrage (see Exodus 3:14)?*
5. *Of the four claims Jesus makes in this chapter (vs 12, 32, 51, 58), which means the most to you right now? Why?*
6. *From this passage, what might you do for someone who is honestly seeking God? What in your spiritual journey might help?*

**PRAYER** (Page 4)

