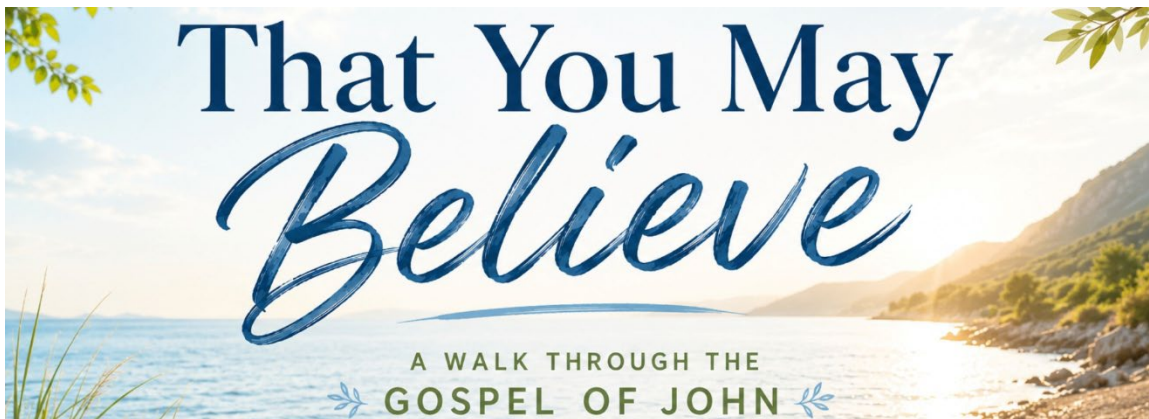




That You May Believe: A Walk Through the Gospel of John - Wk 16

(John 11)

Sunday, September 13, 2026

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Theme: "But Jesus — Finding God in the Face of Tragedy"

Day 1: Tragedy Does Not Catch God Off Guard

Reading: Psalm 46:1-3 — A passage declaring that God is a refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble, even when the earth gives way and mountains fall into the sea.

Devotional: Tragedy arrives without an invitation. No one marks it on the calendar. Yet the God who created you is never surprised by what blindsides you. When Lazarus fell ill, Jesus already knew. When the diagnosis came, when the relationship broke, when the job disappeared — God already knew. His awareness of your circumstances does not require your announcement of them. What he requires is your trust. Today, resist the urge to manage your crisis alone. Turn toward him first. That is always step one. Let the one who holds the universe hold your broken moment as well.

Reflection Questions:

What tragedy in your life have you been trying to navigate without fully surrendering it to God?

How does knowing that God is already aware of your circumstances change the way you approach him in prayer?

Practical Application: Write down one specific fear or burden you are carrying today. Pray over it by name, releasing it to God and acknowledging that he already sees it and is already at work within it.

Day 2: When God Seems Late

Reading: Isaiah 55:8-9 — A passage reminding us that God's thoughts and ways are higher than our own, as far as the heavens are above the earth.

Devotional: Mary and Martha sent for Jesus. Jesus waited two days. Lazarus died. From every human angle, Jesus was late. But Jesus was never operating on the sisters' timeline. He was operating on the Father's. When God does not move according to your expectations, it is not evidence of his absence or indifference. It is evidence that his plan reaches further than yours does. The healing of a sick man would have been remarkable. The resurrection of a dead man changed the trajectory of eternity for those who witnessed it. God's delays are not denials. They are often the distance between a good outcome and a glorious one.

Reflection Questions:

Where in your life are you currently waiting on God and growing impatient?

How might God's timing in that situation be serving a purpose greater than your immediate relief?

Practical Application: Identify one area where you have been frustrated by God's apparent silence or delay. Write a brief prayer of surrender, choosing to trust his timing over your own preferred outcome.

Day 3: Jesus Meets Us in Our Grief

Reading: John 11:33-35 — A passage in which Jesus, seeing Mary and those with her weeping, is deeply moved and troubled in spirit, and then weeps himself.

Devotional: The shortest verse in Scripture carries enormous weight. Jesus wept. He did not arrive at the tomb with detached divine composure. He arrived and was moved. He was angry at death, troubled by grief, and brought to tears by the pain of people he loved. This tells us something profound about the character of God. He does not observe your suffering from a distance with clinical disinterest. He enters it. He is moved by it. The brokenness of humanity breaks the heart of Christ. Whatever you are grieving today, you are not grieving alone. Jesus is present in your sorrow, and his presence in it changes everything.

Reflection Questions:

Have you ever felt that God was unmoved by your pain? How does this passage challenge that feeling?

What does it mean to you personally that Jesus wept alongside those who were mourning?

Practical Application: Take time today to sit quietly in prayer without asking for anything. Simply acknowledge your grief or pain to God, and allow yourself to receive his comfort rather than immediately seeking a solution.

Day 4: Resurrection Is the Answer, Not the Exception

Reading: John 11:25-26 — A passage in which Jesus declares himself to be the resurrection and the life, stating that anyone who believes in him will live even after dying, and that everyone who lives and believes in him will never truly die.

Devotional: Jesus did not treat the resurrection of Lazarus as a dramatic last resort. He treated it as simply the available answer. Resurrection was not a miracle he reluctantly performed. It was a tool he wielded with complete authority. This reframes how we approach our darkest moments. The question is not whether God is capable of bringing life out of what appears dead. The question is whether we believe he is. Dead dreams, broken relationships, failed seasons, lost hope — none of these are beyond the reach of the one who called a four-day-dead man out of a sealed tomb. Believe him.

Reflection Questions:

What area of your life have you quietly accepted as beyond recovery or redemption?

How does Jesus declaring himself to be the resurrection and the life speak directly to that area?

Practical Application: Speak a declaration of faith today over the thing you have considered dead or hopeless. Write it down. Return to it throughout the week as a reminder that resurrection is not the exception in the hands of Jesus. It is the answer.

Day 5: God's Glory Revealed Through Our Trials

Reading: Romans 8:28 — A passage affirming that God works all things together for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose.

Devotional: Jesus told his disciples that Lazarus's sickness would not end in death, but would result in the glory of God. He was not minimizing the pain of the family. He was revealing that the pain had a purpose. Many people who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus believed in Jesus that day. Your trial is not without purpose. Your suffering is not without an audience. God is not wasting a single moment of your difficulty. He is using it to reveal himself, to draw others to himself, and to deepen your own faith in ways that comfort never could. The glory of God often arrives through the very door we wished had never opened.

Reflection Questions:

Looking back at a past season of hardship, can you identify ways that God used it for good in your life or in the lives of others?

How does knowing that your current trial may carry a greater purpose change the way you walk through it today?

Practical Application: Share with one person this week something God has brought you through and what you learned about him in that season. Your testimony is a tool in the hands of God to build faith in someone else who may be standing at the entrance of their own dark valley.