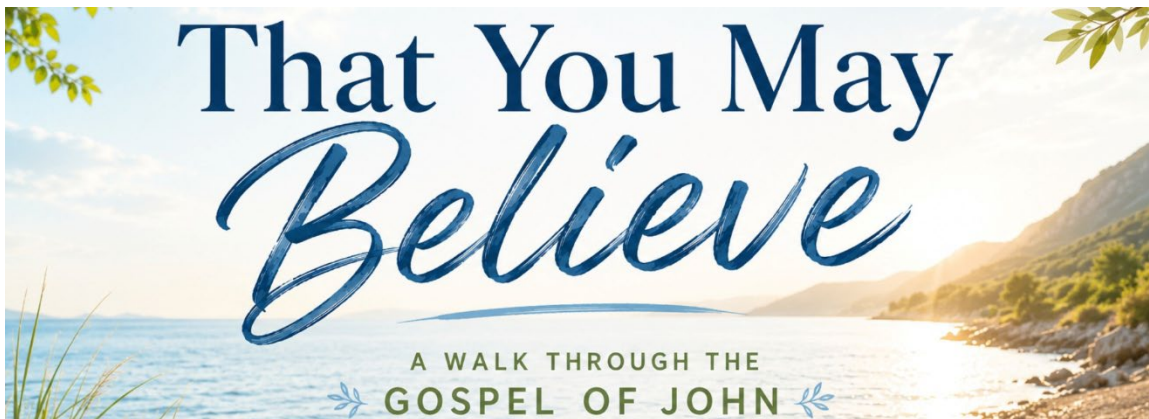




That You May Believe: A Walk Through the Gospel of John - Wk 17

(John 11:45-57)

Sunday, September 20, 2026

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Day 1: No Neutral Ground

Reading: Luke 11:14-23

Every encounter with Jesus demands a response. In today's reading, Jesus makes clear that there is no middle ground -- you are either with Him or against Him. The crowd witnessing Lazarus walk out of that tomb could not remain unmoved. Some believed. Others ran to the Pharisees. The miracle was the same for everyone present, yet the responses divided sharply. Your own life presents the same moment of decision. The question is not whether Jesus is real or whether His power is evident. The question is what you will do with what you have seen and heard. Choose Him.

Reflection: What area of your life have you kept neutral toward God, and what would it look like to fully surrender it today?

Practical Application: Write down one area where you have been sitting on the fence in your walk with God. Pray specifically over it and make a deliberate, concrete step toward surrender this week.

Day 2: God Uses the Unlikely

Reading: Numbers 22:21-38

Caiaphas had no intention of speaking truth. He was scheming, calculating, and working entirely in his own self-interest when he said it was better for one man to die than for the whole nation to perish. Yet God used those very words to announce the gospel. In today's reading, God speaks through a donkey to redirect a prophet who had wandered from His will. God is not limited to willing and polished

instruments. He will use whatever and whoever He chooses to accomplish His purposes. This should humble us and simultaneously fill us with hope that God can work through even our weakest and most imperfect moments.

Reflection: Have you ever looked back on a difficult or embarrassing season and recognized that God was speaking or working through it in ways you did not understand at the time?

Practical Application: Think of someone in your life who seems unlikely to be used by God. Pray for them by name this week, asking God to work through them in unexpected ways, and ask God to open your eyes to see His hand in unlikely places in your own story.

Day 3: The Shepherd Who Finds You

Reading: Luke 15:1-7

Jesus did not retreat to Ephraim because He was afraid or because His plan had been disrupted. He withdrew because the timing was not yet right, and He was in complete control of the narrative. That same shepherd who governs the timing of His own death is the one who leaves the ninety-nine to find the one lost sheep. God's will for your life is not a razor-thin tightrope over an abyss. It is a wide road with a faithful shepherd who calls you back when you stray toward the edges. You have not wandered too far. He is still calling your name.

Reflection: In what ways have you believed the lie that you have fallen too far from God's path to be brought back?

Practical Application: Memorize Psalm 23:3, which describes God restoring and guiding His people along right paths. Recite it each morning this week as a declaration that your shepherd is actively leading you, not watching from a distance as you try to find your own way.

Day 4: Victory Already Won

Reading: Romans 8:31-39

The religious leaders gathered in secret, plotted in urgency, and believed they were seizing control of the situation. They were not. The cross they were engineering was the very instrument of their own defeat and the salvation of the world. Today's reading reminds us that nothing -- not death, not rulers, not present troubles, not things yet to come -- can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. The battle you are facing today is one that Jesus has already won. You are not fighting toward an uncertain outcome. You are standing in the aftermath of a victory that was secured before you ever faced the enemy.

Reflection: What current struggle or fear has made you feel as though the outcome of your life is uncertain or beyond God's reach?

Practical Application: Make a list of three battles you are currently facing. Beside each one, write the words "already won." Place the list somewhere visible this week as a daily reminder that your position in Christ is one of victory, not desperation.

Day 5: Working for an Audience of One

Reading: Colossians 3:17-24

The sermon opened with Colossians 3:23, which teaches that everything we do should be done as if working for the Lord rather than for people. This is not a verse about career or productivity alone. It is a verse about orientation -- about who holds our attention, our energy, and our devotion. The Pharisees were working for the approval of Rome, for the preservation of their status, and for the opinions of the people around them. That misplaced devotion led them to plot the death of the very Messiah they were appointed to serve. When we work for God alone, our priorities align with His purposes and our lives begin to reflect His glory.

Reflection: Who or what has been your primary audience this week -- God, or the people and pressures around you?

Practical Application: Choose one ordinary task you perform each day, whether it is your work, parenting, a conversation with a neighbor, or a household responsibility. Before you begin it today, pause and dedicate it specifically to God. Do this each day this week, expanding to more areas of life as the habit takes root.