THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

John



SERIES 4 - THE HOUR HAS COME

A Period of Decision

LESSON STUDY GUIDES || *JOHN 11:1–12:50*

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Series 4: The Hour Has Come

Lesson Study Guides

This guide works for both individual and group study. Each lesson is built around the same text as that Sunday's sermon and will be discussed in Bible class that morning. This is not a review of the sermon; no prior knowledge is necessary.

HOW TO USE THESE STUDY GUIDES

It is recommended that you complete the lesson before you arrive. Familiarity with the text before class makes for better conversation and a more rewarding experience for everyone in the room.

This guide is designed for one purpose: to get you into the text.

The ***Questions from the Text*** keep you anchored to what the passage says. These questions are based on the New King James Version a have clear answers that come straight from the text.

The ***Thought-Provoking Questions*** are meant to be sat with. There are no right or wrong answers in this section (generally speaking). Additionally, there is rarely a clean one-sentence answer.

The ***Digging Deeper*** studies invite you to trace words, places, people, and Old Testament background at whatever level of depth your time allows.

PRACTICAL STUDY TIPS

Set aside consistent time. Fifteen minutes a day is more sustainable than two hours on Saturday. You will get out of it what you put in. Begin with prayer and ask God to grant you wisdom as you search the Scriptures.

Approach the text with an open mind. Do not fall into the trap of making the Bible say what you want it to say. Approach it from the standpoint of trying to understand what God said.

Read slowly and repeatedly. Return to the same passage multiple times and you will notice things you previously missed. Pay attention to repeated words, key phrases, and Old Testament quotations.

Ask basic questions of the text. Who is speaking? Who is present? What is happening? Where does this take place? These simple questions (who, what, where, why) will carry you a long way before you ever open a commentary.

Look things up. When a word, person, place, or custom is unfamiliar, stop and study it. A Bible dictionary, a concordance, or online resource like blueletterbible.org will answer most questions.

Share what you learn. Study has a way of coming alive when you know you are going to tell someone about it. Whether in class, a small group, or a conversation at the dinner table, passing along what you have discovered is the natural end of good Bible study.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The Bible Project, thebibleproject.com, Free videos, posters, and reading plans for the Gospel of John. An excellent starting point for understanding the structure and themes of the book.

Blue Letter Bible, blueletterbible.org, Free word studies, original language tools, and cross-references. Particularly useful for tracing key words like *believe*, *life*, *light*, *sign*, and *glory* through John.

The ESV Study Bible, Thorough notes, maps, and book introductions. One of the most useful single-volume study tools available in print or digital form.

Lumo Project, Gospel of John, A filmed visual reading of the gospel in a first-century setting. Available on YouTube by searching "Lumo Project John."

BIBLE MARKING GUIDE

Marking your Bible is one of the most effective ways to slow down and engage with the text. The colors below are tied to the major themes running through John's gospel. Use them consistently as you read and over time the structure of John will begin to speak for itself.

RED: FOR STOP *Negative References*	Sin, darkness, unbelief, judgment, Satan, rejection, hatred, persecution
ORANGE: FOR CHANGE *Time References*	Hour, day, feast, Passover, "the next day," "my time has not yet come," before, after
GREEN: FOR GO *Positive References*	Believe, faith, follow, receive, obey, abide, eternal life, discipleship
BLUE: FOR DIVINITY *References to God*	God, Jesus, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Word, Messiah, Christ, I AM
PURPLE: FOR ROYALTY *God's Rule & Authority*	Kingdom, king, authority, glory, throne, sent, witness, reign
BROWN: FOR EARTHLY *People, Places & Things*	Disciples, Pharisees, crowds, Jerusalem, Galilee, Bethany, Cana, water, bread
PINK: FOR PASSION *Love & Relationship*	Love, loved, friend, prayer, compassion, family, shepherd, sheep, abide
BLACK: FOR WRITING *Notes & References*	Cross-references, observations, outlines, questions, applications
YELLOW: FOR KEY WORDS *Repeated Words*	Believe, life, light, truth, witness, glory, world, sent, Father, Son

KEY WORDS TO WATCH THROUGHOUT JOHN

Believe • Life • Light • Truth • Love • Glory • Witness • World • Father • Son • Sent

These words appear repeatedly throughout John.

KEY A FEW PRACTICAL TIPS

Use a fine-tipped highlighter or colored pencil. Markers can bleed through thin Bible pages.

Mark a word or two. Avoid highlighting entire verses with one color. Mark with purpose.

Black is for pencil only. Cross-references, questions, definitions, and outlines should be written with a pencil in the margins.

Some words can carry more than one color. "Eternal life" might be green (positive) and blue (connected to Jesus). Use your judgment.

Don't feel pressured to mark everything at once. Read the chapter multiple times, each time looking for something different.

Gospel of John Scripture Journal These are excellent ways to mark in your Bible. They have the text on one page and a blank page on the other side The most popular is the ESV Scripture Journal.

Series: The Hour Has Come

LESSON 21

The Hour of Waiting

John 11:1–16 • October 25, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. What message did the sisters send to Jesus? (11:3)

2. What did Jesus say this sickness was for? (11:4)

3. How long did Jesus stay where He was after He heard the news? (11:6)

4. Why were the disciples troubled about going back to Judea? (11:8)

5. What did Thomas say to his fellow disciples? (11:16)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. Mary and Martha never ask Jesus to come. They never tell Him what to do. They simply state, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick" (11:3). How is that different from the way you usually pray? What would it look like to bring a need to Jesus and leave the answer with Him?

2. John is careful with the order here. First he tells us Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus (11:5). Then he tells us that when Jesus heard the news, He stayed two more days where He was (11:6). What do you think about the delay? Jesus loved them and still waited before leaving. What does this say about us when we do not think Jesus comes as quickly as we need Him to?

3. Jesus tells the disciples plainly, "Lazarus is dead." Then He adds, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe" (11:14–15). These men had already left everything to follow Him. Still, Jesus says there is more for them to believe. What does a hard season do for faith that an easy season cannot?

DIGGING DEEPER

The Family at Bethany

John writes as if his readers already know this family. He mentions Mary's anointing before he tells the story (11:2). Luke shows the sisters at home, one serving and one sitting at the feet of Jesus. Study each place this family appears.

Luke 10:38–42 • John 11:1–5 • John 11:20–32 • John 12:1–8

Question: *Jesus loved this family by name, and death still came to their house. What do you learn about each of them? What does that say to the idea that closeness to Jesus keeps trouble away?*

For the Glory of God

Jesus said the man was born blind so the works of God might be revealed in him (9:3). He says nearly the same about this sickness (11:4). Trace how He speaks of glory from here to the cross.

John 9:1–3 • John 11:4 • John 11:40 • John 12:23, 27–28 • John 17:1

Question: *In John, the glory of the Son leads straight to the cross. How does Jesus connect suffering with the glory of God? What does that mean for your own hardships?*

Walking in the Day

The disciples remind Jesus that people in Judea had just tried to stone Him (11:8). He answers with a picture of walking in daylight (11:9–10). Study how He uses light, day, and night in this gospel.

John 8:12 • John 9:4–5 • John 11:9–10 • John 12:35–36 • 1 John 1:5–7

Question: *Jesus had already called Himself the light of the world and said that night was coming. What does it mean to walk in the day? Why could He go back toward danger without fear?*

Sleep and Death

Jesus says, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (11:11). The disciples take Him at face value, so He says it plainly: "Lazarus is dead" (11:14). Daniel wrote of those who sleep in the dust and awake. Study how Scripture uses sleep for the death of God's people.

Daniel 12:1–2 • Mark 5:35–42 • John 11:11–14 • Acts 7:59–60 • 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14

Question: *People fall asleep expecting to wake up. Jesus chose that word for a man four days in a tomb. What does that tell you about how He sees death, and how a believer can face the grave?*

Series: The Hour Has Come

LESSON 22

The Hour of Resurrection

John 11:17–44 • November 1, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. How long had Lazarus been in the tomb when Jesus arrived? (11:17)

2. What did Martha say to Jesus when she met Him? (11:21)

3. What did Jesus say about Himself to Martha? (11:25)

4. How did Jesus respond when He saw Mary weeping? (11:33)

5. What did Jesus cry with a loud voice at the tomb? (11:43)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. Martha and Mary each greet Jesus with the same words: "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died" (11:21, 32). Jesus answers Martha with a promise about who He is. With Mary, He asks where the tomb is, and He weeps. Although both express grief and the same words, they each received different responses. What does the sister's response tell us about what they thought of Jesus? What does Jesus' response tell us about how He meets us in our sorrow?

2. Martha already believed in the resurrection. She says her brother "will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (11:24). Jesus does not correct her. He takes her further: "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25). Then He asks, "Do you believe this?" What is the difference between believing in a future event and trusting the One who offers resurrection and life today?

3. Jesus knew what He was about to do. He said so before He ever left for Bethany (11:11). Even so, when He saw Mary and the others weeping, "Jesus wept" (11:35). He did not skip the grief on His way to the miracle. What does that tell you about whether sorrow and faith can live in the same heart? What does this tell you about the emotions and compassion of Jesus?

DIGGING DEEPER

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

Many Jews in that day expected God to raise the dead at the end of the age. Martha shared that hope (11:24). Jesus does not point her to a day. He points her to Himself. Study what Jesus had already said about raising the dead.

John 5:21, 25–29 • John 6:39–40 • John 11:25–26 • 1 Corinthians 15:20–22

Question: *Jesus says the one who believes in Him will live even if he dies (11:25). What does He promise now, and what after death? How would you answer His question: "Do you believe this?"*

Martha's Confession

Luke remembers Martha as the sister distracted with much serving. John remembers her confession. Before the stone is moved, she says, "I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God" (11:27). Compare her words with the other confessions in John.

John 1:49 • John 6:68–69 • John 11:27 • John 20:28 • John 20:30–31

Question: *John wrote so that we may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (20:31). Martha says almost those exact words. What does it mean that she said them with her brother still in the tomb?*

Jesus Troubled

John says Jesus "groaned in the spirit and was troubled" (11:33). He groaned again at the tomb (11:38). John says He was troubled two more times before the cross. Study each one.

John 11:33–38 • John 12:27 • John 13:21 • Isaiah 53:3–4 • Hebrews 4:15

Question: *At Bethany it is a tomb. In chapter 12 it is His own hour. In chapter 13 it is a betrayer at the table. What does it teach you about Jesus that these things truly troubled Him?*

Others Raised from the Dead

Elijah and Elisha each raised a child. Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus and a widow's son at Nain. Each had only recently died. Lazarus had been in the tomb four days (11:39).

1 Kings 17:17–24 • 2 Kings 4:32–37 • Mark 5:35–42 • Luke 7:11–17 • John 11:38–44

Question: *Martha warns of the stench. Jesus calls Lazarus out with a single command. What sets this sign apart from the others? Why would John make it the last sign before the cross?*

Series: The Hour Has Come

LESSON 23

The Hour of Devotion

John 11:45–12:11 • November 8, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. What did the chief priests and Pharisees fear would happen if they let Jesus alone? (11:48)

2. What did Caiaphas say was expedient? (11:50)

3. What did Mary do with the costly oil of spikenard? (12:3)

4. What objection did Judas raise? (12:5)

5. Why did the chief priests plot to put Lazarus to death also? (12:10–11)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. Everyone at the tomb saw the same thing. John says many of them believed in Jesus (11:45). But some went away and told the Pharisees (11:46). No one in the story denies that the miracle happened. Why do people see the same evidence and walk away in opposite directions?

2. The council does not deny the signs. They say, "This Man works many signs" (11:47). Their worry is what it will cost them: "the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation" (11:48). They chose to protect what they had. What are you afraid of losing that could keep you from following Jesus all the way?

3. Mary pours out a pound of costly oil worth three hundred denarii, about a year's wages (12:3, 5). Judas calls it a waste and talks about the poor. Jesus says, "Let her alone" (12:7). The whole house was filled with the fragrance. What does devotion to Jesus look like today that others might say is too much? What holds you back from it?

DIGGING DEEPER

One Man for the People

The council feared what Rome would do (11:48). Caiaphas gave cold advice. Better for one man to die than for the whole nation to perish (11:50). John says he prophesied without knowing it (11:51). Study how Scripture speaks of one dying for many.

Isaiah 53:4–6, 8 • John 10:11, 15 • John 11:49–52 • John 18:14 • 1 John 2:2

Question: *Caiaphas meant to save the nation from Rome by getting rid of Jesus. God meant to save people from sin through that same death. How was Caiaphas right in a way he never intended?*

The Scattered Children of God

John adds his own comment to the words of Caiaphas. Jesus would die for the nation, and also to "gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad" (11:52). Jesus had already spoken of other sheep. Soon Greeks will ask to see Him. Trace this idea.

Isaiah 49:6 • John 10:16 • John 11:51–52 • John 12:20–21, 32 • Ephesians 2:13–16

Question: *The prophets spoke of God gathering His scattered people. John says the cross is how He does it. Who are the scattered children of God, and how does the death of Jesus make them one?*

The Anointing at Bethany

Matthew and Mark also tell of a woman anointing Jesus at Bethany, but they do not name her. John tells us it was Mary, and who led the complaint. Read all three and note what each adds.

Matthew 26:6–13 • Mark 14:3–9 • John 12:1–8

Question: *Jesus said she had kept this for the day of His burial (12:7). In Matthew and Mark, He adds a promise about her. What does His defense of Mary say about what He values?*

Judas Iscariot

Judas kept the money box and used to take what was put in it (12:6). His words about the poor sounded right, but John says he did not care for them. Study each place Judas appears in John.

John 6:70–71 • John 12:4–6 • John 13:2, 26–30 • John 17:12 • John 18:2–5

Question: *Judas heard the teaching, saw the signs, and sat at the table. What does John want you to know about him before the betrayal? What warning is there in a man that close to Jesus?*

Series: The Hour Has Come

LESSON 24

The Hour of the King

John 12:12–36 • November 15, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. What did the multitude cry out as Jesus came to Jerusalem? (12:13)

2. What did Jesus sit on as He entered the city? (12:14)

3. Who came to Philip asking to see Jesus? (12:20–21)

4. What did Jesus say must happen to a grain of wheat before it produces much grain? (12:24)

5. What did Jesus say would happen if He were lifted up from the earth? (12:32)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. The crowd took palm branches and cried, "Hosanna!" They called Jesus "the King of Israel" (12:13). Then Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it (12:14). A king riding to war would come on a horse. Jesus chose a donkey's colt. What kind of king were they hoping for and why do you think they missed Jesus, King of the Jews?

2. John is honest about the disciples. He says they "did not understand these things at first" (12:16). They were there. They saw it all. It was only after Jesus was glorified that they remembered what was written and put it together. Is there something you come to understand about Jesus by looking back at a certain time, place, or relationship? What does that say about the seasons you do not understand yet?

3. Jesus says a grain of wheat stays alone unless it falls into the ground and dies. If it dies, it produces much grain (12:24). Then He turns to us: "He who loves his life will lose it" (12:25). He describes His own death and our daily lives with the same picture. What does it look like in an ordinary week to hold your life with an open hand?

DIGGING DEEPER

The King on a Donkey

The crowd's words come from Psalm 118. John says the donkey fulfilled what Zechariah wrote. Zechariah's king is lowly and brings peace. Earlier, when a crowd tried to make Jesus king by force, He walked away (6:15). Read these passages in their setting.

Psalm 118:22–26 • Zechariah 9:9–10 • 1 Kings 1:32–40 • John 6:15 • John 12:12–15

Question: *Solomon rode David's mule to be crowned. Zechariah's king rides a donkey and speaks peace. What does the donkey say about how Jesus would rule, and how the crowd misread Him?*

The Hour Has Come

From the wedding at Cana on, John keeps telling us the hour had "not yet come." Now Greeks ask to see Jesus, and He says, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (12:23). Trace the phrase from start to finish.

John 2:4 • John 7:30 • John 8:20 • John 12:23, 27 • John 13:1 • John 17:1

Question: *The Pharisees had just said, "the world has gone after Him" (12:19). Then Greeks arrive. Why would that be the moment the hour comes? What will that hour involve (12:24, 27)?*

The Grain of Wheat

Jesus explains His death with a seed. Alone, it stays one grain. In the ground, it dies and produces much grain (12:24). Then He applies the same picture to His servants (12:25–26).

Mark 8:34–35 • John 12:24–26 • 1 Corinthians 15:36–38 • Galatians 2:20

Question: *His death produced a harvest of life for others. He asks His servants to follow on the same road. What does it mean to "hate" your life in this world and keep it for eternal life (12:25)?*

Lifted Up

Three times in John, Jesus says He will be "lifted up." The first time, He points back to Moses and the serpent. Here John says plainly that He meant His death (12:33). Study each one.

Numbers 21:4–9 • John 3:14–15 • John 8:28 • John 12:32–34 • Isaiah 52:13

Question: *Those who looked at the serpent lived. Jesus says that when He is lifted up, He will draw all peoples to Himself (12:32). Why describe His death with words Isaiah used for being exalted?*

Series: The Hour Has Come

LESSON 25

The Hour of Decision

John 12:37–50 • November 22, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. How did the people respond even though Jesus had done so many signs before them? (12:37)

2. Which prophet did John quote to explain their unbelief? (12:38)

3. Why did many of the rulers who believed not confess Him? (12:42)

4. What did they love more than the praise of God? (12:43)

5. What will judge the one who rejects Jesus in the last day? (12:48)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. John looks back over the public ministry of Jesus and gives a summary of the attitude of the people Jesus came to save: "Although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him" (12:37). Water became wine. A man born blind could see. Lazarus walked out of a tomb. If this wasn't enough, what does it take for a person to believe?

2. John says that even among the rulers many believed in Jesus. But they would not confess Him, "lest they should be put out of the synagogue" (12:42). Then he gives the reason underneath: "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (12:43). Fear of man caused many believers to stay quiet. Where does the approval of other people keep your faith quiet?

3. Jesus cried out, "I did not come to judge the world but to save the world" (12:47). Then He says the one who rejects Him still has a judge: "the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (12:48). He came to save, and His word still holds us accountable. How do those two statements fit together? What does that mean for how you hear His words now?

DIGGING DEEPER

Isaiah Saw His Glory

John quotes Isaiah twice. The first is from Isaiah 53. The second is from Isaiah 6, where the prophet saw the Lord high and lifted up and was sent to a people who would not listen. Then John says Isaiah "saw His glory and spoke of Him" (12:41). Read both passages.

Isaiah 6:1–10 • Isaiah 53:1 • John 12:37–41 • Acts 28:23–27

Question: *Isaiah was told his message would be refused. The same happened to Jesus. What had these people already seen and refused? Why does it matter that unbelief did not surprise God?*

Put Out of the Synagogue

To be put out of the synagogue was to lose your place among your own people. The blind man's parents feared it (9:22). Their son was cast out (9:34). Jesus warned His disciples it would come.

John 9:20–22, 34 • John 12:42 • John 16:1–2 • Luke 6:22–23

Question: *The man born blind lost his place and found Jesus. The rulers kept their place and kept quiet. What would a person lose by being put out? What does confessing Jesus cost you?*

The Praise of Men

The word John uses for "praise" here is the same word he uses for "glory." The rulers loved glory from men more than glory from God (12:43). Jesus had asked, "How can you believe, who receive honor from one another?" (5:44). Study whose approval we are told to seek.

Matthew 6:1–4 • John 5:41–44 • John 12:43 • Galatians 1:10

Question: *Two verses earlier, Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus (12:41). The rulers chose a smaller glory. How does seeking honor from people get in the way of believing? Whose honor do you seek?*

The One Who Sent Me

In His last public words in John, Jesus "cried out" (12:44). He says nothing new. To believe in Him is to believe in the One who sent Him. Trace how often He has said this.

John 5:23–24 • John 7:16 • John 8:28–29 • John 12:44–50 • John 14:9–10

Question: *Jesus says the Father gave Him what to say (12:49). If that is true, what is a person really deciding about when he decides about Jesus? Why can no one stay neutral toward Him?*

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN
Series Overview

Series 1 — Who Is This?
A PERIOD OF INTRODUCTION — John establishes who Jesus is before a single controversy begins. Word, Lamb, Messiah, Rabbi, Son of God, King of Israel. These titles and concepts surface in four lessons.

Series 2 — Crossing Every Border
A PERIOD OF DISRUPTION — Jesus moves through Jewish sacred spaces and shatters every expectation. The Temple, a Pharisee's roof, and an ancient Samaritan well. No boundaries exist when Jesus arrives.

Series 3 — Signs, Claims, and Controversy
A PERIOD OF CONFLICT — the I AM claims ignite opposition at every feast, and people begin to divide. Signs multiply. Arguments sharpen. By chapter 10, they are reaching for stones.

Series 4 — The Hour Has Come
A PERIOD OF DECISION — Lazarus walks out of a tomb, and the world must choose a side. The raising that should have ended all doubt becomes the trigger for the cross. Crazy responses happen.

Series 5 — The Upper Room
A PERIOD OF PREPARATION — Jesus spends his final hours forming the disciples for everything ahead. Feet washed. A new command given. The Spirit promised. A prayer offered for all who will believe.

Series 6 — It Is Finished
A PERIOD OF COMPLETION — the arrest, trials, crucifixion, and resurrection fulfill the gospel promise. One word from the cross. An empty tomb. A locked room. A pierced hand extended in invitation.

Series 7 — Do You Love Me?
A PERIOD OF RESTORATION — one conversation on a lakeshore closes every open wound the gospel left. Three questions answer three denials. A broken disciple is sent back into the mission.



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