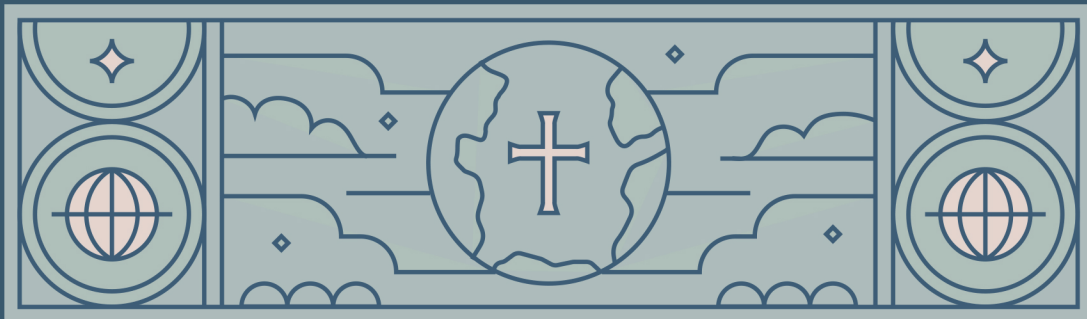


THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

John



SERIES 1 - WHO IS THIS?

A Period of Introduction

LESSON STUDY GUIDES || *JOHN 1:1 - 2:12*

Series 1 — Who Is This?

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

LESSON 1

The Word Who Became Flesh

John 1:1–18 • June 7, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. What three things does John say about the Word in verses 1–2?
2. What two things were found in Him according to verse 4?
3. How does John describe the relationship between light and darkness? (1:5)
4. How did people generally respond to the true Light when He came into the world? (1:10–11)
5. What happened to the Word in verse 14?

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. The opening of John's gospel tells us everything about who Jesus is before He ever speaks or performs a miracle. How does this differ from the other gospel accounts? Why do you think John begins this way rather than starting with Jesus' birth or baptism?
2. Verse 11 says Jesus came to His own and was rejected. Verse 12 says those who received Him were given the right to become children of God. What is the difference between those two responses, and what does it take to move from the first to the second?
3. John says the Word "became flesh." Not merely appeared to be flesh or temporarily inhabited a body but *became* flesh. Why does the full humanity of Jesus matter, not just His divinity?

DIGGING DEEPER

In the Beginning

John opens his gospel with the same three words that open the Bible: "In the beginning." This is not an accident. Study the connection between Genesis 1 and John 1 and share your findings.

[Genesis 1:1–3](#) • [Proverbs 8:22–31](#) • [Colossians 1:15–17](#) • [Hebrews 1:1–3](#) • [John 1:1–3](#)

Question: *What is John claiming about Jesus by opening his gospel this way, and how does it change the way you read the creation account?*

The Word — Logos

The title John gives Jesus — "the Word" (Logos) — carried deep meaning for both Jewish and Greek readers. Study this term and its background.

[Psalm 33:6](#) • [Psalm 107:20](#) • [Proverbs 8:22-31](#) • [Isaiah 55:10–11](#) • [John 1:1, 14](#)

Question: *What would a Jewish reader and a Greek reader each have understood by the word Logos, and what would have surprised each of them about John's use of it?*

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

John says the Word "dwelt among us" — a word that literally means tabernacled. Study the tabernacle as God's dwelling place and trace how it connects to Jesus.

[Exodus 25:8–9](#) • [Exodus 40:34–38](#) • [1 Kings 8:10–11](#) • [John 1:14](#) • [Revelation 21:3](#)

Question: *What did the tabernacle represent to Israel, and how does the Incarnation fulfill what the tabernacle only pointed toward?*

Only Begotten

The phrase "only begotten" appears twice in this passage (1:14, 18). The Greek word is monogenes — meaning unique, one of a kind. Study how this word is used in Scripture.

[Judges 11:34](#) • [Luke 7:12](#) • [Luke 8:42](#) • [Hebrews 11:17](#) • [John 1:14, 18; 3:16](#)

Question: *Based on how monogenes is used elsewhere, what does it communicate about the relationship between Jesus and the Father that the word "son" alone does not?*

Series—Who Is This?

LESSON 2

The Lamb Who Takes Away Sin

John 1:19–34 • June 14, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. Which three identities did John specifically deny being? (1:20–21)
2. How did John describe himself when asked who he was? (1:23)
3. How did John contrast his baptism with the One who was coming after him? (1:26–27)
4. What does John say the Lamb of God does? (1:29)
5. What conclusion did John publicly make about Jesus in verse 34?

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. John the Baptist is asked directly, "Who are you?" He responds by answering who he is *not*. What does it mean to define your identity by pointing away from yourself? Is that kind of humility natural, or does it have to be cultivated?
2. John says he came baptizing with water so that Jesus might "be revealed to Israel" (1:31). His entire ministry existed to introduce someone else. Is there someone in your life or community you are positioned to introduce to Jesus? What does that look like practically?
3. The crowd questioning John includes official religious delegates from Jerusalem. They are not hostile. They are simply doing their job. Yet they miss what is right in front of them. What makes it possible to be religiously serious and still not recognize Jesus?

DIGGING DEEPER

The Lamb

When John the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," every Jewish listener would have had a lifetime of lamb imagery to draw from. Trace the lamb through Scripture and share what you find.

[Genesis 22:7–8](#) • [Exodus 12:1–13](#) • [Isaiah 53:4–7](#) • [John 1:29](#) • [Revelation 5:6–9](#)

Question: *By the time you reach John 1:29, how much of the Old Testament story is being gathered into that single title?*

The Voice in the Wilderness

John identifies himself as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" — a direct quote from Isaiah 40. Read the Isaiah passage in its full context and consider what John is claiming about his own role.

[Isaiah 40:1–11](#) • [Malachi 3:1](#) • [Malachi 4:5–6](#) • [Luke 1:13–17](#) • [John 1:19–23](#)

Question: *Isaiah 40 was written to a people in exile waiting for God to return. What does it mean that John saw himself as the fulfillment of that announcement?*

Beyond the Jordan

John was baptizing at Bethabara — or Bethany beyond the Jordan — east of the river. Locate this region on a Bible map and study its history.

[Joshua 3:14–17](#) • [2 Kings 2:6–8](#) • [John 1:28](#)

Question: *The Jordan River and the region east of it carried significant memory for Israel. What associations might this location have stirred in the people coming out to hear John?*

The Spirit Descending

The Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove is the sign given to John to identify the Messiah. Study what the Spirit's coming upon a person meant in the Old Testament, and what it means here.

[Isaiah 11:1–2](#) • [Isaiah 61:1–2](#) • [Joel 2:28–29](#) • [John 1:32–34](#) • [Acts 10:37–38](#)

Question: *How does the Spirit's descent on Jesus signal that something new and greater than the Old Testament pattern has arrived?*

Series—Who Is This?

LESSON 3

The One We Read About

John 1:35–51 • June 21, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. What did the two disciples do after hearing John's testimony? (1:37)
2. What was the first question Jesus asked them? (1:38)
3. What invitation did Jesus extend to them? (1:39)
4. What title did Andrew use for Jesus when speaking to Simon? (1:41)
5. What promise did Jesus make to Nathanael at the end of the chapter? (1:51)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. Andrew's first instinct after meeting Jesus is to find his brother and bring him. He doesn't wait until he knows more. He doesn't get his theology sorted out first. He just says, "We have found the Messiah." What holds people back from that kind of immediate, unpolished witness?
2. Nathanael is skeptical — "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" — but he goes anyway. What is the difference between honest skepticism that is still willing to look, and cynicism that has already closed the door?
3. Jesus sees Nathanael "under the fig tree" before they ever meet (1:48), and Nathanael's response is immediate confession. Have you ever had an experience where you sensed that God already knew you? Do you think God knows us before we know Him?

DIGGING DEEPER

The Titles of Jesus

In just seventeen verses, Jesus is called Rabbi, Lamb of God, Messiah, Son of God, King of Israel, and Son of Man. Study what each of these titles meant to a first-century Jewish reader.

Daniel 7:13–14 • Psalm 2:6–7 • Deuteronomy 18:15–18 • John 1:35–51

Question: Which of these titles carries the boldest claim, and why would gathering all of them in a single chapter have been striking to John's original readers?

Jacob's Ladder

Jesus closes the chapter with a promise that sounds strange until you find its source. Study Genesis 28 and its connection to Jesus' words in John 1:51.

Genesis 28:10–17 • Genesis 35:9–15 • John 1:51

Question: Jacob named the place Bethel — house of God — after his vision. What is Jesus claiming about himself by echoing this scene, and what has changed between Jacob's dream and Jesus' promise?

God Changes a Name

Before Peter does anything worth noting, Jesus gives him a new name. Study other instances in Scripture where God renamed a person and consider what it signifies.

Genesis 17:3–5 • Genesis 32:27–28 • Isaiah 62:2–4 • John 1:42

Question: In each case, what does the name change reveal about how God sees the person — and what He intends to do with them?

Bethsaida and Galilee

Philip, Andrew, and Peter are all from Bethsaida (1:44). Locate Bethsaida on a Bible map. It sat on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum.

John 1:44 • Matthew 4:12–13 • Luke 10:13

Question: Consider why Nathanael's question — "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" — reflects real regional prejudice. What do the backgrounds of these first disciples suggest about who Jesus was calling?

Series—Who Is This?

LESSON 4

The One Full of Glory

John 2:1–12 • June 28, 2026

QUESTIONS FROM THE TEXT

1. Who was present at the wedding besides Jesus? (2:1–2)
2. What problem arose during the celebration? (2:3)
3. What did Jesus tell the servants to do with the waterpots? (2:7)
4. How did the master of the feast describe the quality of the wine? (2:10)
5. What effect did this sign have on Jesus' disciples? (2:11)

THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. Mary brings a practical, ordinary problem — they've run out of wine — to Jesus. She doesn't frame it as a theological request. She just tells him the need. What does that say about the kinds of things we can bring to Jesus?
2. The servants in this story filled the jars, drew the water, and carried it to the master of the feast. They are the only people who know exactly what happened and obeyed Jesus completely, without explanation. What are some areas of life where Jesus asks for obedience before understanding, and what makes that so difficult?
3. John says this sign "manifested His glory" and the disciples "believed in Him" (2:11). The miracle revealed something that was already true. What has God allowed you to witness that deepened, rather than created, your faith?

DIGGING DEEPER

Signs in John's Gospel

John never calls Jesus' miracles "miracles." He calls them signs — the Greek word semeion. Study how John uses this word and what distinguishes a sign from a mere wonder.

[John 2:11](#) • [John 4:54](#) • [John 20:30–31](#) • [Isaiah 7:14](#) • [Numbers 14:11](#)

Question: *What is the difference between a miracle that impresses and a sign that points? What is each sign in John designed to point toward?*

Wine and the Messianic Age

The sheer quantity of wine produced at Cana — up to 180 gallons — is difficult to read as incidental. Study the Old Testament promises about wine and abundance connected to the coming age of God's kingdom.

[Genesis 49:8-12](#) • [Isaiah 25:6](#) • [Amos 9:13–14](#) • [Joel 3:18](#) • [John 2:1–11](#)

Question: *What is John suggesting about who Jesus is and what age He is inaugurating by connecting this miracle to these promises?*

The Hour

Jesus says to Mary, "My hour has not yet come" (2:4). This is the first of seven references to "the hour" in John's gospel. Trace this phrase and note how it develops.

[John 2:4](#) • [John 7:30](#) • [John 8:20](#) • [John 12:23, 27](#) • [John 13:1](#) • [John 17:1](#)

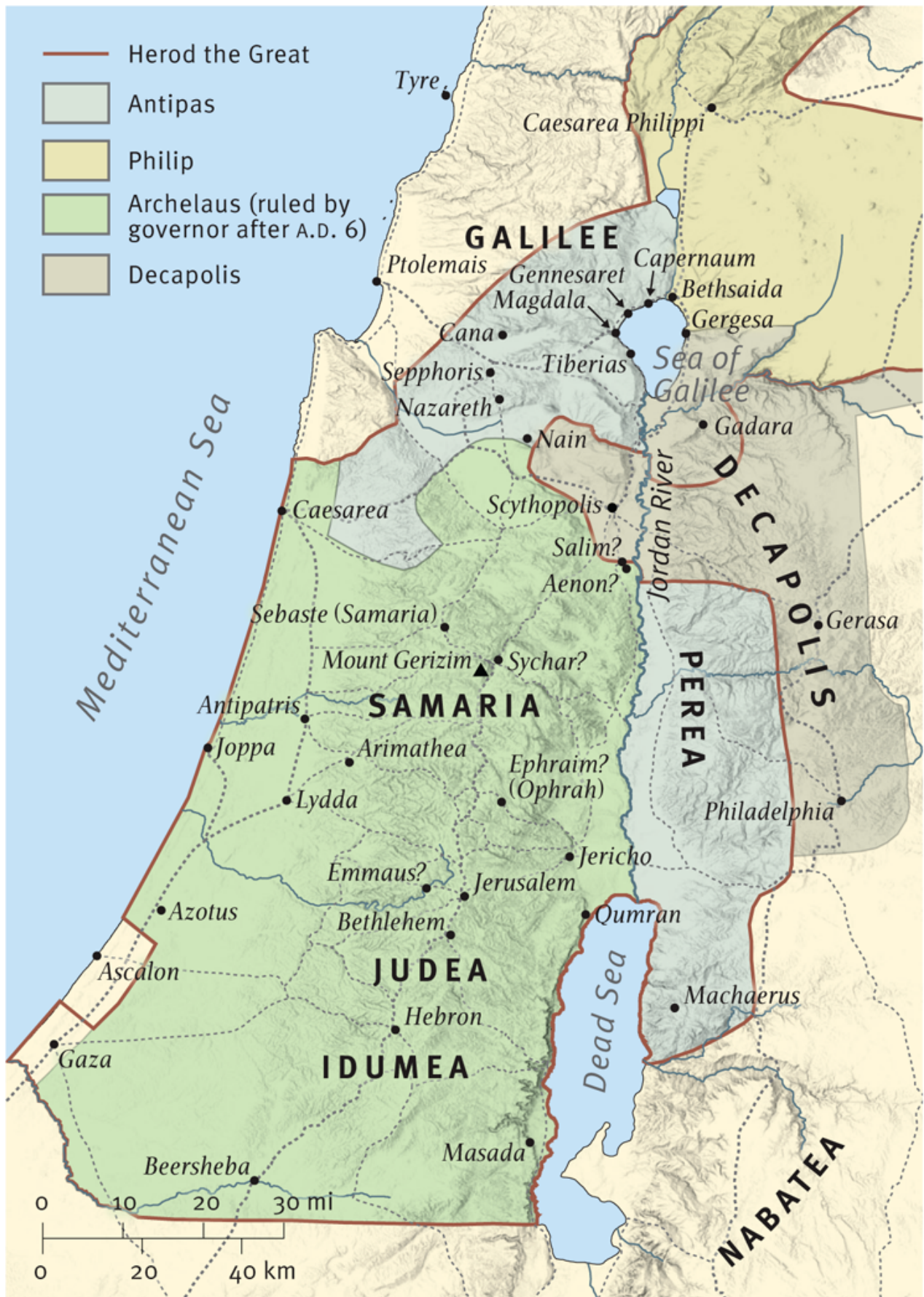
Question: *What is "the hour" that Jesus is moving toward throughout this gospel, and how does knowing it is coming shape the way you read every miracle and conversation before it arrives?*

Ceremonial Washing

The six stone water pots were used for Jewish purification — ritual washing before meals and religious observance. Study this practice and consider what it means that Jesus used these specific vessels.

[Leviticus 15:11](#) • [Mark 7:1–4](#) • [John 2:6](#) • [Hebrews 9:9–10, 13–14](#)

Question: *The water set apart for ritual cleansing became the finest wine at a celebration. What does this transformation suggest about what Jesus came to do with the old covenant system of purification?*



Currid, John D., and David P. Barrett. *Crossway ESV Bible Atlas*. Crossway, 2010.

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.

