

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL · PRINT EDITION

In The Beginning Was Jesus

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 01 · September 13, 2026

JOHN 1:1 (ESV)*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”***HOW THIS WORKS**

- Five days, Monday through Friday – about ten minutes each. Every day has a prayer to open, a short reading, something to think about, one action step, and a prayer to close.
- Keep a pen with it. The lines are part of the devotional – what you write on Monday you will come back to on Friday.
- Prefer your phone? The same devotional is online each week at thesummit.life → The Gospel of John → Reading Plan.

THIS WEEK

Sunday we opened the first five verses of John’s Gospel and asked one question: who is Jesus? John answers in four ways – He is eternal, He is God, He is Creator, and He is the light the darkness has never put out. This week you will take those four one day at a time, and on Friday you will get ready to keep going.

DAY 1 · MONDAY**He Was Before You**

JOHN 1:1A · GENESIS 1:1

Opening prayer

Lord, before I read anything about You this week, I admit I have opinions about You. Some of them I inherited. Some of them I built. Show me who You actually are. Amen.

Read John 1:1 and Genesis 1:1 one after the other, out loud if you can. John opens his Gospel with the opening words of the Bible – and then he adds something Genesis did not say. When the beginning began, Someone was already there.

This is not a claim that Jesus is very old. It is a claim that He never started. Everything else in the universe has a first moment. He does not. Which means your opinion of Him – however carefully you have built it, however long you have held it – is younger than He is.

Reflect

What is the version of Jesus you have been carrying around? Where did it come from – a parent, a church, a hurt, a book, a guess? Write it down honestly. Nobody is reading over your shoulder.

Today’s action step

Say this out loud once today: “I did not discover You. You were here first.” Then leave it alone and let it work on you.

Closing prayer

Father, I have spent years describing You. Today I want to stop describing and start listening. You were before me. Teach me what that means. Amen.

DAY 2 · TUESDAY

God, Said Out Loud

JOHN 1:1 · HEBREWS 1:1–3

Opening prayer

Lord, I have spent a lot of energy guessing what You are like. If You have spoken, help me hear it. Amen.

Nobody knows what you are thinking until you say it. Everything inside you stays inside you until it comes out in words. That is what John is doing when he calls Jesus “the Word” – he is saying that everything God is has come out where you can see it.

Then read the rest of verse 1 slowly. The Word was WITH God – face to face, a relationship older than time. And the Word WAS God – not a lesser copy, not a messenger, not a spokesman. Whatever God is, He is. Hebrews says the same thing another way: the exact imprint of His nature.

Here is what that means for you. He was not lonely. He did not make you because something was missing. He was complete, and He came anyway.

Reflect

If Jesus is God said out loud, then you never have to guess what God thinks of you – you can look. What have you been assuming about God’s attitude toward you that Jesus does not actually support?

Today’s action step

Read one chapter of John – any chapter – and watch only one thing: how Jesus treats people. That is how God feels about you.

Closing prayer

Father, thank You that You did not stay silent and leave me guessing. Thank You that Jesus is not a rumor about You. He is You, where I can see. Amen.

DAY 3 · WEDNESDAY

He Made You

JOHN 1:3 · COLOSSIANS 1:16–17

Opening prayer

Lord, there are parts of my life I would rather run myself. Before I read today, I admit that. Amen.

Verse 3 says it twice, once forward and once backward: all things were made through Him, and without Him not one thing was made that has been made. John closes the door and then locks it. There is no category of existing thing that falls outside this.

Including you. You were not an accident and you were not an afterthought. Before you were anyone’s child, you were His idea.

And that means His claim on your life is older than your opinion of Him. He is not waiting for a vote. He is inviting a return.

Reflect

What part of your life have you been managing as though it were entirely yours? Name it specifically – a relationship, a habit, money, a plan, a grudge.

Today's action step

Take the thing you just named and say it back to God out loud, in one sentence: "This is Yours. I have been holding it."

Closing prayer

Father, You made all of it, and You made me. I have been living like some of it is outside Your reach. Take it back. Amen.

DAY 4 · THURSDAY

Life Is in Him

JOHN 1:4 · JOHN 20:31

Opening prayer

Lord, I have looked for life in a lot of places. Show me today where it actually is. Amen.

Read verse 4 carefully: "In him was life." Not from Him. In Him. He does not hand life out the way a utility company delivers power to a house. He holds it, which means you cannot get it anywhere else and you cannot get it apart from Him.

This is why John tells us at the end of his Gospel that he wrote so that by believing you may have life in His name. Not information about Jesus. Life in Him.

Plenty of people have known about Jesus for decades and never received a thing from Him. Knowing about Him has never given anybody life.

Reflect

Be honest: is your faith right now mostly information about Jesus, or is it Him? What would be different this week if it were the second one?

Today's action step

Find one person who knew you before you knew Christ, or before this year got hard, and tell them one true sentence about where you actually are with God.

Closing prayer

Father, I have settled for knowing about You. I want You. Not the facts, not the routine – You. Amen.

DAY 5 · FRIDAY

The Light Is Still Shining

JOHN 1:5 · JOHN 1:1–5

Opening prayer

Lord, You know what I brought into this week. Shine on it. Amen.

Read verse 5, then read it again. “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” John does not say the light shined. He says it shines – present tense, right now, in a paragraph full of past-tense verbs. The tense is the point.

And the word he chose for “overcome” means two things at once: to understand, and to overpower. The darkness could not figure the light out, and it could not put the light out. Both failures. Both permanent.

Whatever you wrote down on Monday, whatever you named on Wednesday – the light is already shining in it. It has been tried. It did not go out.

Reflect

Go back and read what you wrote on Monday. Has anything shifted this week? What is the one dark thing you are ready to stop carrying alone?

Today’s action step

Read John 1:1–18 straight through today – the whole prologue – and ask God one more time: “Who do You say You are?” Then come Sunday ready for the next five verses.

Closing prayer

Father, thank You that the light does not negotiate with the dark. It shines, and the dark leaves. I am not going to manage You anymore. I am coming to You. Amen.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next Sunday: Week 2 · The Light of the World Rejected · John 1:6–13 · September 20, 2026. Memory verse this week: John 1:1.