

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL · PRINT EDITION

The Light of the World Rejected

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 02 · September 20, 2026

JOHN 1:12 (ESV)

“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of 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 watched the light walk into the world and most people refuse it — including the ones who had every reason to recognize Him. This week you will take that one day at a time: the man whose only job was to point, the light nobody actually missed, the night He came home and got locked out, and what happens to the person who opens the door.

DAY 1 · MONDAY

Not the LightJOHN 1:6–8 · MARK 1:4

Opening prayer

Lord, before I ask anything about other people this week, ask me. Show me where I have been standing near You without ever coming to You. Amen.

Read John 1:6–8. There was a man sent from God, and the first thing John tells you about him is his assignment: he came to bear witness. Not to be seen. To point.

Then verse 8 says something that sounds unnecessary until you know the history: he was not the light. John the Baptist drew crowds. Decades later, Paul still found people who had only ever heard of John's baptism. Somebody had made the witness into the thing he was pointing at, and the Gospel takes a whole verse to correct it.

It still happens. We do it with pastors, authors, podcasts, the person who first told us about Jesus. And we do it with ourselves — quietly taking on a job that was never ours, trying to be the light for a child, a spouse, a friend who won't come.

Reflect

Who are you currently trying to save? Write the name down. Then write what you have actually been able to change about them.

Today's action step

Say this out loud about the person you just named: "I am not the light. I am a witness." Then do the one thing a witness does — tell them something true about Jesus this week. Don't argue. Point.

Closing prayer

Father, I have been carrying a job that belongs to You. I hand it back. Make me a good witness and nothing more. Amen.

DAY 2 · TUESDAY

The Light Nobody MissedJOHN 1:9 · JOHN 1:10

Opening prayer*Lord, I have asked why people don't see You. Today, show me what the Bible actually says about that. Amen.*

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. Read that slowly, because it removes an excuse most of us keep in our back pocket. Nobody gets to say God was hiding.

The commentary puts it this way: the light shines on each person either in salvation or in showing him his sin and the judgment coming for it. That is unsettling and it is good news at the same time. It means no one stands in the light neutrally. The people you love who “aren’t interested” are not outside the reach of the light. They are standing in it, responding to it.

And verse 10 tells you why they still miss Him: He was in the world, the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. The problem was never a shortage of evidence. It was blindness, and more information has never once cured it.

Reflect

Name one person you have been trying to argue into faith. If information is not what they lack, what would it look like to pray for their eyes instead of their mind?

Today's action step

Pray for that person by name today, and change the request. Instead of asking God to convince them, ask Him to open their eyes.

Closing prayer*Father, I have been building arguments when what they need is sight. Give it to them. And keep giving it to me. Amen.*

DAY 3 · WEDNESDAY

He Came HomeJOHN 1:11

Opening prayer*Lord, before I read this verse, slow me down. I have heard it before and I want to actually feel it today. Amen.*

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. One sentence, and it is the lowest point in the whole prologue.

This is not a stranger being turned away at a door. The word is closer to his own home, his own things, his own people. He built the house. He wrote the promises they had been reading for centuries. He sent the prophets. He sent the man in the wilderness who stood there pointing and saying, He is coming. And when He finally walked in, they would not take Him in.

It is worth sitting with the fact that the people who missed Him were not the irreligious ones. They were the ones with the most advantages, the most Scripture, the most certainty that they already had Him. That should not make us feel superior to them. We have more than they did.

Reflect

Where has familiarity with Jesus quietly replaced actually coming to Him? Be specific — name a habit, a routine, a role you play at church.

Today's action step

Read John 1:11 out loud three times, slowly. Don't study it and don't fix it. Let it be sad for a minute. Then thank Him for coming anyway.

Closing prayer*Father, You came to Your own and they shut the door. I have done it too, in smaller ways, on ordinary days. Thank You that You did not stop coming. Amen.*

DAY 4 · THURSDAY

Open the DoorJOHN 1:12

Opening prayer*Lord, I want to answer honestly today, not correctly. Help me. Amen.*

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Receiving implies two things: a gift, and somebody giving it. And accepting a gift is not the same as agreeing that the gift exists. You can believe a present is real, admire the wrapping, tell other people about it, and never once take it off the table. Plenty of people have done exactly that with Jesus for forty years.

Believing in his name is not believing He existed. A name in Scripture stands for everything true about a person — so believing in His name means trusting all of who He is, not the parts of Him you find agreeable.

Notice what John does with the sentence. He puts us at the front so we cannot miss that this is for us. But God is the one doing the giving. We are just the ones holding out our hands.

Reflect

The honest question, and you do not have to show anybody the answer: have you received Him, or do you only know about Him? Write down what makes you say that.

Today's action step

If you know the answer and it is yes, tell one person today what changed when you received Him. If you do not know, tell one person that — a pastor, a group leader, a believing friend. Say it out loud to somebody this week.

Closing prayer*Father, I do not want to spend my life near the door. I am opening it. Come in and take what is Yours. Amen.*

DAY 5 · FRIDAY

Born of GodJOHN 1:13 · JOHN 3:3–8

Opening prayer*Lord, show me the parts of my standing with You that I have been trying to hold up myself. Amen.*

Verse 13 names three things that cannot make anyone a child of God, and every one of them is something people still count on. Not of blood — your family line does not do it, and neither does your last name or the church you grew up in. Not of the will of the flesh — no human being can want you into God's family, not even your mother. Not of the will of man — you cannot decide your way in or earn your way in.

Then the four words the whole passage has been walking toward: but of God. Jesus says the same thing to Nicodemus in chapter 3 — you must be born again, and the wind blows where it wishes. You did not manage your first birth. You will not manage this one either.

Which means, on the days you do not feel like His child, you still are. The birth was never yours to accomplish, and it is not yours to lose.

Reflect

Go back and read what you wrote on Monday and Thursday. What has shifted this week — and what are you ready to stop carrying alone?

Today's action step

Read John 1:6–13 straight through one more time. Then settle it — either thank God that you are His, or tell somebody this weekend that you want to be. Do not carry the question into another week.

Closing prayer*Father, I did not pick my first birth and I cannot pull off my second one either. Both are gifts. Thank You that You told me to receive You anyway — and that You did the rest. Amen.***LOOKING AHEAD**

Next Sunday: Week 3 · The Word Became Flesh · John 1:14–18 · September 27, 2026. Memory verse this week: John 1:12.