

ADULT SMALL GROUP GUIDE

The Word Became Flesh

The Gospel of John: Why Should I Believe? · Week 03 · September 27, 2026

LEADER OVERVIEW

Big idea: In Jesus, God came near. He took on flesh, brought grace that never runs out, and made the Father known. We don't close the distance to God; He closed it to us.

Sermon outline: Jesus took on human flesh and dwelled among people (v.14) · Jesus brought with Him grace and truth (vv.16–17) · Jesus made God known to the world (v.18).

Scriptures used: John 1:14–18 · Philippians 2:5–8 · Exodus 33:18–23 · Exodus 34:6 · Romans 7:12

Time: 60–75 minutes. Eleven questions are more than you need — choose what fits your group and skip freely. Questions in bold are the ones not to skip.

OPENING (10 MIN)

The goal of the opener is to get every voice in the room once before the harder questions arrive. Keep it light.

1. Who is someone you only really got to know once you were physically close to them — a roommate, a coworker, a neighbor?
2. **Pastor said most religions are about keeping an angry god happy. What picture of God did you grow up with — near or far, angry or kind?**

THE WORD BECAME FLESH (15 MIN)

Read John 1:14 and Philippians 2:5–8 aloud.

3. **Jesus became fully human without ever ceasing to be God. Why does the Christian faith need both halves — and which one do you tend to forget?**

Leader: most people drift one way. Some picture God wearing a human costume; others picture a very good man. John and Paul hold both without flinching.

4. MacArthur lists what Jesus set aside: heavenly glory, independent authority, the independent use of His divine attributes, His riches, and His favorable relationship with the Father on the cross. Which one moves you most?
5. “Dwelt” literally means “pitched His tent.” The tabernacle was where God's glory lived among Israel. What does it tell you about God that He chose to move into the neighborhood?

Leader: the ESV Study Bible notes the pattern keeps going — through the Spirit, Christ makes the church and the believer's body His temple. God keeps moving closer.

GRACE UPON GRACE (15 MIN)

Read John 1:16–17.

6. **How would you define grace for someone who has never been to church — one sentence, no church vocabulary?**

Leader: a working definition: a gift from God we don't deserve and can't earn. Mercy is not getting what we deserve; grace is getting what we don't.

7. “Grace upon grace” can picture grace rolling in like waves, or a fuller grace in Christ following the grace given through Moses. Where have you seen God’s grace show up again after you thought you had used it up?

8. The law is like a check engine light — it tells you something’s wrong but can’t fix it. Where are you still staring at the light, trying to fix things yourself?

Leader: don’t let the law become the villain. Romans 7:12 calls it holy and good, and verse 17 has no “but” in the Greek. It’s promise and fulfillment, not opposites. The law just can’t do what only Jesus can.

G O D M A D E K N O W N (1 2 M I N)

Read John 1:18 and Exodus 33:18–23.

9. Moses asked to see God’s glory and was only allowed to see His back. John says in Jesus we have seen His glory. What does it mean to you that God showed His face?

Leader: Exodus 34:6 is where God proclaims Himself “abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” John’s “full of grace and truth” echoes it on purpose. What Moses heard described, the disciples saw in a person.

10. “Made him known” gives us the word “exegesis” — Jesus is God’s explanation. If your picture of God doesn’t look like Jesus, which one needs to change?

Leader: many believers quietly carry a God who is harsher than Jesus. John says that God doesn’t exist. Jesus is exactly what God is like.

11. Where are you keeping God at arm’s length right now — in your schedule, your struggles, your questions?

C L O S I N G (5 M I N)

Read John 1:14 together. God didn’t wait for you to close the gap. You don’t have to run to God. In Jesus, God ran to you.

Close by praying for two groups by name: anyone in the room who is worn out trying to fix something alone, and the people in your circle who think God is far away.

Then give the week’s assignment: read John 1:14–18 every day and answer one question honestly — “What am I trying to fix on my own that I need to bring to Jesus?”

Memory verse: John 1:14. Next week: Week 4 · A Voice in the Wilderness · John 1:19–28 · October 4, 2026