

Take the Challenge! Gospel of John -21 Day Bible Reading Plan

Recommend [Printing](#) out Bible Reading Plan and keeping a copy in your Bible.

Day 1: Gospel of John Chapter 1

Congratulations! You are only 21 days away from something that will change your life. Researchers say that in order to make an activity a habit you must do it for at least 21 days. The habit we're interested in is Bible reading. So, for the next 21 days you'll go through the 21 chapters of the Book of John.

Did you notice the many different names or titles for Jesus in this chapter alone? He is called the "[Word](#)" in verse 1. In verse 17 He is called "[Jesus](#)" (which means "God saves") and "[Christ](#)" (which is the Greek word for Messiah or "[anointed one](#)"). John the Baptist twice presents Him as "the Lamb of God" and also "the Son of God." The first disciples refer to Jesus as "Rabbi" (teacher) while Nathanael recognized Him as "[the King of Israel](#)." Finally, in the last verse, Jesus calls Himself the "Son of Man."

What's in a name? Sometimes quite a bit. In these different names for Jesus we see Him as a Lamb (What were lambs used for in Jewish tradition?) and a King. We also see Him as the Son of God and the Son of Man ("[the Word became flesh](#)"). He is our teacher, and He is our Savior.

Why not start a list of the names and descriptive words used for Jesus that you find in this chapter of John? We've given you some names here, but there are more you can add.

Day 2: Gospel of John Chapter 2

Now here's a memorable story: Jesus turns water into wine. But has it ever struck you as kind of an odd miracle? I mean, Jesus is known for healing the sick and the lame and for driving out demons. But did He really get his start performing "social miracles" like this? It's a bit like watching a Before They Were Stars special.

So, why is this story important? That's a good question, but there's a danger to avoid in answering it. Be careful how much you read into the specifics of any Bible story. If you wanted to, you could launch an in-depth study of how the word "water," for instance, is used in the Bible. What was wine like in Jesus' day? The word "bridegroom" comes up elsewhere in Scripture--in Revelation Jesus is seen as the bridegroom of the Church. Is that important here?

These are interesting questions, but the Bible actually tells us quite plainly why this story is here. "[This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him](#)" (2:11, ESV). This miracle was done for the disciple's benefit.

A lot of bad theology comes from reading too deeply into the words of the Bible. But God hasn't made the truth hard to find. You just have to accept it when you see it.

Day 3: Gospel of John Chapter 3

Two worlds. The world of God and the world of humans. At the beginning of this chapter they seem utterly separate and unique. Nicodemus says that Jesus must be from God because of the things He does. Jesus counters by saying you can't really know about God's Kingdom unless you've been born again. Impossible, right? The barrier between the worlds stands, but not if someone breaks through.

"No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man" (3:13, ESV). Jesus broke that barrier. Jesus, God the Son, became Jesus, God in the flesh, the Son of Man. But He didn't come for a sightseeing trip. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (vv. 14-15, ESV).

There is a way for us with fleshly human bodies to live forever, to break through into the world of God. And that is by believing in Jesus. This is such an important concept that the next three verses state this truth in three different ways, and then once more in verse 36. The way to be born again, to be born into the Kingdom of God is clear: "whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (v. 15, ESV).

Day 4: Gospel of John Chapter 4

Chapter 4 of John contains the well-known and much-loved story of the woman at the well. But as you read the chapter today, don't skim it. Force yourself to take in every word. Ask God to help you see this amazing passage of Scripture with fresh eyes.

In the last chapter, we saw a theme begin--the theme of a new spiritual life, of being born again into an everlasting life through belief in Jesus. In this chapter, we find that spiritual lives, like physical lives, need nourishment.

Jesus begins by discussing spiritual thirsts. He says that a person only needs to ask Him and He will give water that will drive away thirst forever. The woman asking for this water doesn't quite get it. So, Jesus drives the point home by asking that she go bring her husband to Him. The woman had a spiritual thirst for a relationship but after five husbands, she was still thirsty. That's the thirst Jesus wants to quench--the thirst for a deep, meaningful relationship.

Jesus talks later to His disciples about spiritual hunger that is satisfied through doing the will of God. There's many people who have yet to hear about God, many opportunities yet for the spiritually hungry to be filled.

Is your spirit being nourished today?

Day 5: Gospel of John Chapter 5

As you read through chapter 5 of John today, are you a little bit startled? Is your perception of Jesus shaken up a little bit? Do you see the stark contrast between who Jesus says He is and how people today describe Him?

Any unbiased historical scholar will admit that, yes, Jesus really did live 2,000 years ago; there's enough references to Him outside of the Bible to prove that. They'll even admit that Jesus was an influential teacher. He had a lot of good ideas and at the very least, Jesus deserves a spot among the other great moral teachers humanity has seen. The scholars will say that Jesus was a wise, compassionate man who wanted to make the world a better place. But God? Not a chance!

That's why John chapter five is so startling. Read through and count the number of times Jesus identifies Himself with God the Father. "[The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise](#)" (5:19, ESV). The point is, when a person makes a claim like this, you either believe that person or you dismiss them as being crazy. You don't patronize them by saying, "Well, he has few good ideas, but he's a bit touched in the head, if you know what I mean!"

Either Jesus was God, or He was a madman on the loose. **Who do you say He is?**

Day 6: Gospel of John Chapter 6

There are 71 verses in today's chapter, so make sure you set aside enough time to read through the whole thing. When you read through an entire passage of the Bible--even an entire book--in one setting, you'll get a much clearer picture of what God is trying to teach you. In this chapter you'll hear the familiar verse, "[I am the bread of life](#)" (6:35, ESV). By reading the rest of the chapter around that verse, you'll find out exactly what Jesus meant.

Maybe you've read the chapter already and find yourself confused. You're not alone. Even those who heard Jesus that day had a hard time understanding what He meant. "[When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?'](#)" (v. 60, ESV).

Use this opportunity to bring your questions to God. Ask Him, "What did you mean by this?" And then patiently wait for His reply. It may come as you read through the passage a second time or on your drive to the grocery store as you mull it over in your mind. More often than not, though, your questions will be answered by God Himself in the pages of the Bible. And you'll find them as you keep on reading.

Day 7: Gospel of John Chapter 7

Welcome to day seven. We hope you've been challenged and encouraged over the last week and that you've realized that God wants to connect with you through the Bible. When we read of Jesus and see how He lived, we see a very real example of how we should live our lives.

An issue that was raised in chapter 5 comes back in today's chapter. In chapter 5 Jesus healed a lame man and told him to take up his mat and walk. But the Jews considered carrying a mat to be work, and since the healing happened on a Sabbath, this man who hadn't walked in 38 years was breaking the Law. Not only that, but because Jesus did the healing, and healing was considered work, Jesus also was breaking the Sabbath. It was this issue that the Jews in Jerusalem were raising.

The Jews who thought they were honoring God by condemning the act of healing on the Sabbath only showed how ignorant they really were of God. We make the same mistake today. We think we understand God and what He likes and doesn't like so we make a bunch of rules to keep people in line. Unfortunately, these rules can also keep people away from God. You can get to know what God really wants, though, by spending time in the Word. My prayer is that in this last week God has already shown you something you never knew about Him.

Day 8: Gospel of John Chapter 8

Do you ever read the Bible aloud? Try that with chapter 8. The Bible was written with the expectation that it would be read aloud to others. As a result, many old familiar passages will take on a new life when you hear them with your ears as well as your eyes.

As you read, try to imagine the people; try to picture Jesus and the Jews who believed in Him (v. 31). Try to picture the Pharisees who confront Jesus. See if you can't feel the emotion rising through this whole chapter up to Jesus' climactic statement, "**Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am**" (8:58, ESV).

This statement looks like a mistake at first. Shouldn't Jesus have said, "before Abraham was, I was"? No, Jesus knew exactly what He was saying here--and the Pharisees did too. Jesus was declaring Himself to be the God of Abraham. And by using the phrase "**I am,**" He was identifying Himself as the one who spoke to Moses from the burning bush. This made the Pharisees furious.

God said to Moses on that occasion, "**I AM WHO I AM**" (Exodus 3:14). But the Pharisees and even some people today have been telling God, "**You will be who I say you are.**" But it doesn't work that way. Only those willing to accept God on His terms will ever truly find Him.

Day 9: Gospel of John Chapter 9

The disciples begin this chapter by raising a question a lot of us have asked. They see a man who was blind from birth, and they feel pity for him. It must have been terrible living in such a state, and such misery could only be the result of sin. Right? Jesus' answer to the disciples' question is understandably hard to swallow.

"It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him" (9:3, ESV). In other words, this man was born blind and lived blind so that one day Jesus could heal him. It wasn't punishment for someone's sin or the result of someone's carelessness; he was blind so God could display His glory. Does that sound cruel of God?

The fact is, all of us are born in an equally miserable state. We're all born blind to spiritual matters. We're all born with a sinful spirit and a rebellious nature awaiting the day we meet Jesus. The problem is, some people, like the Pharisees, don't recognize their own blindness.

It's easy to look at a physically challenged person and see his or her limitations and feel sorry for that person. But as Jesus pointed out time and again, it's possible to be physically whole yet spiritually disabled.

Do you know someone who hasn't yet met Jesus? Maybe you're in his or her life to make the introduction. More than anything, Jesus wants to restore that person's sight and show him or her the glory of God.

Day 10: Gospel of John Chapter 10

For several chapters now we've seen Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees, the religious leaders of the Jews. It would seem that the Pharisees would be delighted to have Jesus, the Son of God, among them. The Pharisees had devoted their lives to serving God and following His law and teaching others to do the same. But Jesus revealed the truth about them. They weren't serving God with all their religious practices; they were serving themselves.

They were using religion to make themselves rich and influential. As a result, they were driving people away from God rather than drawing them near to Him. They were the thieves and the robbers of Jesus' parable.

The parable is also a warning for today. There are many religious leaders out there who claim to be serving God but are really only serving themselves. How can you and I avoid them? "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (10:27, ESV). Become familiar with the voice of Jesus by spending time in His Word. And when you listen to the men and women claiming to be servants of God, listen to the Spirit's prompting in your heart. He knows the voice of God, and will recognize those who speak for Him.

Day 11: Gospel of John Chapter 11

When we think about Jesus, it's easy to go to one of two extremes. One extreme emphasizes His humanity. People who do this will read the Gospels and especially notice where Jesus talks about His compassion for others, His tiredness, the pleasure He gets from being in the company of others. When they read John 11, they'll be particularly moved by the verse, "[Jesus wept](#)" (11:35, ESV). Who wouldn't weep at the tomb of a good friend?

Others will focus on the divine nature of Jesus. They'll look at the miracles of turning water into wine or giving sight to the blind man and declare that only God can do such things. When they look at John 11, they'll key in on verse 43 where Jesus "[cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out'](#)" (ESV).

It's not entirely wrong to lean toward one or the other view of Jesus, but it does become wrong when that view begins contradicting the rest of Scripture. When a person starts believing that the miracles of Jesus are just legends added to the Bible at a later date, they invalidate the entire Bible. And when a person says that Jesus was so much God that He didn't experience life like we did, they contradict verses like Philippians 2:6-11 and Hebrews 4:15 (check them out and see what we mean.)

We pray that as you continue reading that you also continue to see the wonder and miracle of Jesus, completely human and yet totally God.

Day 12: Gospel of John Chapter 12

The story of Lazarus is a familiar one for many people. And in yesterday's reading, we looked at it again. We saw how he was sick, how his sisters sent for Jesus, how Jesus delayed and arrived four days after his death and how Jesus then raised Lazarus from the dead. But the story of Lazarus doesn't end there.

Probably more than any miracle before this, the raising of Lazarus convinced people that Jesus was the promised Messiah. (See 12:9.) In fact, so many people were believing in Jesus because of this miracle that the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus "because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus" (v. 11, ESV).

Like Lazarus, we who have believed in the name of Jesus have been raised into a new life. "[Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!](#)" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV.)

And just like Lazarus, we have the incredible opportunity to bring glory to God.

Will you tell others your story? [Share here.](#)

Day 13: Gospel of John Chapter 13

Imagine that you have been invited to an exclusive dinner at the White House. You and 11 others are to be the guests of honor of the President of the United States. You arrive at the White House and approach the door, and instead of being opened by a Secret Service agent, the President himself welcomes you. He takes your coat and hangs it up. When you sit down for dinner, instead of a team of servers carrying silver platters coming from the kitchen, the president gets up from the table and serves each one of you individually.

That's essentially what's happening in today's chapter of John. Jesus, at dinner, washing the feet of His disciples. Peter recognized the incongruity of this when he declared, "**You shall never wash my feet**" (13:8, ESV). He was embarrassed to see the Lord and Messiah performing the duties of a common servant. That's exactly the point. Jesus explained a bit later, "**I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you**" (v. 15, ESV).

How often do you perform the duties of a servant for someone else? Too often we are quicker to demand that someone serve us than we are to volunteer to serve others. But service is at the heart of Jesus' message, and if we miss that part, have we understood anything?

Day 14: Gospel of John Chapter 14

Jesus has mentioned it before, but the fact that He will soon be leaving is the main point of this chapter. And He makes a couple of promises in regard to this.

1) He goes ahead to prepare a place for us (14:2-3). When people think of these verses, they often envision mansions lining the streets in heaven, each one with a different person's name on the front door. They imagine Jesus, again as a carpenter, lovingly framing the walls and carpeting the floor of an eternal home prepared especially for them. It's probably not exactly like that. But whatever it's like, it's a place where we'll be able to be with Christ, and He with us forever.

2) He promises to come again. (vv. 3,18,28). Though He has to go away for a time, it won't be forever. The disciples, and those of us who have come to love Jesus since, will see Him come again. So, does that mean we're alone now? Not at all.

3) He promises to send the Holy Spirit. (vv. 16-18,26). Just as Jesus came in God the Father's name, the Spirit comes in Jesus' name (v. 26). The Spirit will continue to teach us and remind us of what Jesus taught. The Spirit won't be God in the Flesh; He will be God in the hearts of those who love Him.

Our job now is to continue living the way Jesus demonstrated, showing love for Him and compassion for others. And when you need help, the Spirit, the Divine Counselor will be there to assist.

Day 15: Gospel of John Chapter 15

Two weeks down in the 21-Day Challenge, and only one to go! We pray you choose to make daily Bible reading a habit for life! We don't say this just to sound "*religious*," or because we think 15 minutes in the Bible every day is some secret to spiritual blessing. It's because we believe what Jesus says in today's chapter of John.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (15:5, ESV). And later He says, "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full" (v. 11, ESV).

Walking with Jesus, living the way He lives and loving the way He loves is impossible without the Bible. Though Jesus is now in heaven with the Father, do you remember how He promised to help us until His return? The Holy Spirit, as we learned yesterday, will "*bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you*" (14:26, ESV). The Holy Spirit is accomplishing this mission every day by speaking to you through the Bible.

A life without Jesus is a life without joy and one full of spiritual frustration. That's why we need the Bible, not just for 21 days, but for a lifetime! Each day allow the Holy Spirit to remind you of God's love and Jesus' life. And then take those lessons into the world, and let others see.

Day 16: Gospel of John Chapter 16

Have you ever been a bit mystified by Jesus' promise, "*whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you*"? (16:23, ESV). Can that really be true? Can you ask God for anything and you'll get it? Is this really a "*blank check*" He's offering?

Instead of a blank check, think of it as a company credit card. With a blank check, you can walk into any store, find anything you like and bring it home. It's a gift you spend on yourself. A company card, on the other hand, can buy just as much, but the purchase is on behalf of the company you represent.

That's what the phrase, "*in my name,*" means in the verse above. A constant theme of Jesus' ministry is that His work is on behalf of God the Father. And in these past couple of chapters, Jesus reminded His disciples that they'll soon be doing the works of the Father too.

Jesus has promised us the help of the Holy Spirit to instruct us and to remind us of His teachings and actions. He also promises us the resources we need as to accomplish His work on earth. Will this mean fast cars and fine dining for the children of God? Rarely. What it does mean is that whenever our hearts are set on doing the will of God, we'll have everything we need.

Day 17: Gospel of John Chapter 17

Have you ever been in a tough situation and asked a friend to pray? It's comforting to know that someone cares about you and is willing to pray on your behalf. It's a uniquely Christian experience too. It draws us together knowing we have a Father in heaven who not only listens to our prayer but actually asks us to give them. Did you know that Jesus said a prayer for you?

In John 17 we see Jesus pray, first for Himself and for God's glory, then for His disciples and then He turns His eyes to the future. ["I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word"](#) (17:20, ESV). Jesus knew that after He was gone, the message of Christ would spread like fire to the ends of the earth. That includes us today. Jesus went on to pray for us.

["That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me"](#) (v. 21, ESV). Believers from all corners of the world, despite their differences, are united by their love of God and their desire to see His Kingdom spread on earth. And one of the best ways to maintain that unity is simply by praying for each other, which is exactly what Jesus demonstrated here.

Keep on reading, and keep on praying.

Day 18: Gospel of John Chapter 18

It's a miracle that Jesus was ever killed. I don't say that to be glib or offensive. But when you read through this chapter, it's hard not to notice that all the events worked out in such a way as to lead Christ to His death. God was leading Jesus to the Cross despite the people involved.

Judas and the mob cowered when Jesus identified Himself (18:6). When Jesus was questioned by the high priests, it was clear they had no charges to bring against Him. He had hid nothing of His actions, and they were the actions of a teacher, not a rebel (vv. 19-24). The high priests sent Him to Pilate, the Roman official in Jerusalem. When Pilate asked why the Jews brought Jesus to him, their answer was evasive: ["If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you"](#) (v. 30, ESV). When Pilate interviewed Jesus, he found nothing wrong with Him (vv. 28-40).

Jesus' death was a tragedy just as it is a tragedy when anyone dies under false accusations.

But Jesus' death was also a miracle. *His purpose in living was to die for us.*

And He lives now so that we might never die.

Day 19: Gospel of John Chapter 19

In today's chapter about the crucifixion of Jesus, we are told of four specific prophecies, or predictions, that came true about Him.

When soldiers gambled for Jesus' clothes, this was a fulfillment of Psalm 22:18. When Jesus says "[I thirst](#)," in verse 28 and given sour wine, this is a fulfillment of Psalm 69:21. Verse 37 is a fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10: "[They will look ... on him whom they have pierced](#)" (ESV), referring to the soldier who stabbed Jesus in the side with a spear.

But the most significant fulfillment of prophecy is in verse 36 where it mentions that none of Jesus' bones were broken. Exodus 12:46 says, "[you shall not break any of its bones](#)." At first, this doesn't sound like a prophecy at all. It's talking about how to prepare the Passover lamb. The lamb itself was to be a perfect one with no spots or blemishes. And when it was killed, its blood was to be spread on the doorposts of the house. On the original Passover, an angel from God went throughout Egypt. In any house that didn't have blood on the doorposts, the firstborn was killed. The blood of the lamb was the symbol of God's redemption and protection.

Jesus was the Passover lamb for the world. His blood has redeemed us from hell and the consequences of our sins.

All we need to do is believe.

Day 20: Gospel of John Chapter 20

Normally, when a person dies and is laid to rest, you expect the story to end. But this is not a normal story, and Jesus was not a normal man. One of the first descriptions of Jesus in the Book of John was, "[In him was life](#)" (1:4, ESV). Throughout His ministry, Jesus restored many people to health and even brought the dead back to life. It comes as no surprise then that Jesus, life incarnate, could not stay dead.

John ends this chapter by telling us why he wrote his Gospel in the first place. "[These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name](#)" (20:31, ESV).

This isn't the first time in the Book of John that life is offered to those who believe in Jesus. But if Jesus hadn't been raised from the dead, those earlier promises would have meant nothing. Any man can promise you life and salvation, but only one Man proved that He actually had the power to give life. That man was Jesus, and death couldn't hold on to Him. It's because of that we can believe that He truly has the power to give eternal life to those who believe in Him.

If you haven't made that choice yet, would you today? [Let us know here.](#)

We have only one more day to go in our 21-Day Challenge. See you tomorrow.

Day 21: Gospel of John Chapter 21

OK, be honest. When you started this challenge, did you think you'd make it to day 21? We're glad you stuck with it, because you have taken a significant step toward making Bible reading a daily part of your life. Whether you feel it now or not, your time in the Word these last three weeks will prove in the future to have been time well spent.

We hope you've seen how the Word of God, the Book of John specifically, can apply to your life today. Here's a couple of those applications.

First, Jesus is alive! That's something that's repeated every Easter, but let it sink in. Though Jesus is now in heaven with God, the Man that we read about who lived 2,000 years ago is still alive. He's still caring for those who love Him, and like we learned in chapter 17, He's still praying for us. (See Hebrews 7:25.)

Second, God has sent the Holy Spirit. That Spirit, in all of us who believe, is currently and daily carrying out the promises Jesus made, to teach us and to help us remember Jesus.

Finally, Jesus has a promise waiting to be fulfilled. He promised He would come again so that we can be with Him where He is. (See John 14:3.) And that gives us hope.

It's our prayer that you'll continue daily spending time in the Word and connecting with the God who was, who is and who is to come. God bless.

Gospel of John Conclusion

First Congratulations on Finishing the Gospel of John 21 Day Bible Reading Plan. Most Christians know they should read God's word. They understand that it is God's message to them and He expects them to read it. However, for various reasons, many Christians find this duty a daunting task. It is a mountain they fear they cannot climb. The Bible seems so big. Many Christians just give up and never read the Bible—or at least never read it through.

Now, there is another way. Our different Bible Reading Plans takes into account the great number of people who do not have a strong background in the word of God. Or if you are like me, might not enjoy reading as much as some do or you are not a strong reader. After you feel comfortable at this level, then you can go on to the next level of Bible reading plans.

We have a number of choices to fit each individual [here](#) or www.questionsgod.com/70-bible-reading-plans.htm

Let us know your thoughts on this reading plan by filling out our short Survey [here](#).

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Again Congratulations! Way to Go on Finishing! God Bless.

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