



For the week of April 17

Monday, April 18 — John 8



Chapter Summary: The Scribes and Pharisees bring Jesus a woman caught in adultery. Jesus says anyone without sin can cast the first stone. Then He forgives the woman and tells her to sin no more. He defends His witness concerning who He is and speaks of His departure. He promised those listening that the truth would make them free. When the leaders bring up Abraham, Jesus claimed to be superior to Abraham and that Abraham rejoiced over the Messiah.

Devotional: Jesus says that God's truth will make us free. This implies that there is truth available. We live in a world that often rejects absolutes but Jesus says there are some things which are always true. He also says that knowing the truth can make us free. This teaches us that we can learn the truth. Some today want to say that IF there is a God, He is not knowable. But Jesus clearly promises that there is truth and you can know it and when you do, you'll enjoy the blessing of freedom from ignorance and the penalties that accompany ignorance. What truth of God makes freedom possible? How does God's truth counteract the lies that Satan loves to tell? If I can know the truth and if it will set me free, what should I do with the Word of God?

Questions for more thought/discussion: How do you think the woman caught in adultery felt? How about the religious leaders? How can Jesus stand for truth and uphold the law while still saying, "Neither do I condemn you?"

Tuesday, April 19 — John 9



Chapter Summary: Jesus heals a man who has been blind since birth. The disciples think his blindness is a punishment for sin but Jesus explains this is to display the power of God. Because He does this on the Sabbath, the leaders excommunicate the formerly blind man. Jesus finds him again and encourages him to faith.

Devotional: When the blind man is healed and questioned about it, he claims that Jesus must be from God. While his faith is obviously incomplete, he has already recognized some of the marks of a godly person. How do people know we are Christians? What outward signs might be obvious even to an unbeliever that your life had been changed by Jesus Christ?

Questions for more thought/discussion: The disciples think they can spot sin by looking for pain and suffering. Jesus shows them they are actually blind to the power of God and His ability to work in difficult situations. How are we prone to think we see God's judgement or mercy in situations? How can we be wrong about that? What can we do to truly open our eyes to sin and righteousness?

Wednesday, April 20 — John 10



Chapter Summary: Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd and says He is an example for all those who are godly. He knows and protects the sheep. The Jews attempt to stone Him for blasphemy since He claimed to be equal to God but Jesus slips away goes across the Jordan where many more people come to faith.

Devotional: Jesus promises that He has come to give life. And not just existence, but abundant life. His intention is that His people would lead lives full of meaning and importance. We often focus on the spiritual blessings of being a Christian and the eternal life we look forward to, but how does being a Christian bless us in this life? What advantages does a Christian have over an unbeliever? We may not have all the money and stuff that others do, but we can still have an abundant life today and eternal life in heaven.

Questions for more thought/discussion: Being a Christian doesn't mean you won't suffer pain and heartache. Christians get sick and many times struggle to make ends meet financially. If being a Christian doesn't fix all the problems I can have in this life, what is this abundant life that Jesus promises? How can I have it now even if I still go through problems?



Thursday, April 21 — John 11

Chapter Summary: Jesus's friend Lazarus gets sick and dies. Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha were very close to Jesus. Jesus returns to Bethany and raises Lazarus from the dead. As a result of this miracle, the council of Jewish rulers again determines they must do all they can to put Jesus to death. Caiaphas prophesies that it is better for one man to die than the whole nation to be lost.

Devotional: This chapter includes one of the most emotional scenes in all of Jesus's ministry. He stands at the tomb of Lazarus and He weeps along with the sisters. Everyone in the crowd is touched by how much Jesus obviously loved Lazarus and his sisters. The amazing thing to us is that Jesus KNEW He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead, but He wept anyway! His compassion for His friends was so great that He joined them in their sorrow.

How can we be compassionate friends like Jesus? Sometimes our friends go through hard times that are difficult for us to understand. How can we show love anyway? How is comforting to those who are grieving when we weep with them?

Questions for more thought/discussion: When the Sanhedrin meets to talk about their reaction to Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, there are several interesting things that happen. First, they freely acknowledge that if they don't do something, everyone will believe in Jesus. How do the signs Jesus is doing lead people to faith? How can the leaders refuse them? Then Caiaphas the High Priest prophesied that Jesus would die so that the entire nation would not perish. John says that even though he didn't know it at the time, Caiaphas was being used by God. How can God use people without their knowledge? How can we intentionally serve God?



Friday, April 22 — John 12

Chapter Summary: Jesus returns to Bethany for a supper where Lazarus is a guest. Mary anoints the feet of Jesus with perfume and Judas Iscariot is upset that the money was “wasted” instead of being used for the poor. Judas was a thief and stole from the money bag. Jesus enters Jerusalem and crowd welcomes Him as a king.

Devotional: Judas was with Jesus everyday. He saw every miracle and heard every parable. He was in attendance for all the sermons and heard Jesus refute every argument from his opponents. In spite of this powerful and up close access, Judas only saw Jesus as a way to advance his personal wealth. He stole from Jesus! How could Jesus allow this to go on? Can you imagine Judas thinking he was sneaking around undetected and stealing from the Son of God? How are we often tempted to do the things we want and convince ourselves that we are “getting away with it?” In spite of all that we know about God and His will and His providence, we are still prone to sin. Satan tempts us with the same lies that he used on Judas. How can we learn to spot the temptation and reject the lies?

Questions for more thought/discussion: Judas’s love of money eventually caused him to turn his back on Jesus. How can we guard against the same thing? People who rejoiced and called Jesus king would chant “Crucify Him” just a few days later. How can we be consistently faithful?

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