

OCTOBER

2020

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# **BIBLE FOR ALL (BFA) MATERIAL FOR SMALL GROUPS DISCUSSION**

## **John – Jesus, the Word among Us**

### **Sermon Series**

<b>04 Oct 2020</b>	<b>John 1:1-18</b>	<b>Jesus, the Word Became Flesh</b>
<b>11 Oct 2020</b>	<b>John 2:1-11</b>	<b>Jesus, the Glorious Bridegroom</b>
<b>18 Oct 2020</b>	<b>John 4:1-26</b>	<b>Jesus, the True Temple</b>
<b>25 Oct 2020</b>	<b>John 5:2-23</b>	<b>Jesus, the Son at Work for the Father</b>



**04 Oct 2020**

**John 1:1-18**

**Jesus, the Word Became Flesh**

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Imagine that an acquaintance asked you who Jesus is. How would you describe Jesus?

**OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read John 1:1-3. What does John tell us about Jesus as the Word of God here?
  
2. Read John 1:4-9.
  - (a) What is the “light” that is spoken of here?
  
  - (b) Why does v.5 emphasise that the darkness has not overcome it?
  
  - (c) Who was John, what did he do, and why did he do it?
  
3. Read John 1:10-13. What response would we expect the world to have when its Creator God enters it and comes to them? What responses did Jesus receive, and what implications did each response have?
  
4. Read John 1:14-18.
  - (a) What did Jesus do, and why does John include this?
  
  - (b) The Old Testament records instances where men see God’s glory – what is different about this time? (cf. Exod 16:10, 24:16-17, 40:34-35; 2 Chr 5:14, 7:1-3)
  
  - (c) What did John say about Jesus? (cf. Matt 3, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-18, John 1:19-28)
  
  - (d) John 1:17 contrasts Moses and Jesus. Moses led the first Exodus, and it was through Moses that the Mosaic covenant (the law) was given. What does this contrast tell us about Jesus and the covenant He brings?

5. Who does the Apostle John say Jesus is? How does he describe Jesus? What reason(s) did he have for describing Jesus this way?

## **APPLICATION**

6. How does the world today describe Jesus? Why is it hard for people today (including us) to recognise him and receive him?

7. Who do we say Jesus is? How has that changed us?

## **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson that you have learnt from this study.

What is a key verse that you would like to take to heart?

## **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- Jesus is God incarnate – Creator and source of all life. He is both God and God's self-revelation, the only way we can know God.
- Those who receive Jesus, believing and trusting in Him, have been given new identities as God's children
- Jesus is God – the question before us is whether we will follow Him.
- Jesus' example is a source of encouragement for us to stay faithful while suffering as witnesses for him

**11 Oct 2020**

**John 2:1-11**

**Jesus, the Glorious Bridegroom**

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When someone comes along and fills in for what we lacked, we usually have one of two responses – joy with acceptance, or anger with defensiveness. Which do we usually choose? Why?

**OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read John 2:1-5.

(a) What is the problem presented here?

(b) By right, whose responsibility is it to resolve this problem? Who was asked to resolve it?

2. Read John 2:6-10.

(a) What was done to resolve the problem?

(b) What is surprising about the problem-solving method?

(c) What is surprising about the end result?

3. Read John 2:11. What does John say was the result of this event? Why is this significant?

4. What conclusions does John want us to reach about Jesus' identity through this story? What significance does that carry in the Old Testament (e.g. in Isa 54:5)?

5. Jesus is the glorious Bridegroom, the true bridegroom at the wedding feast (cf. Matt 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22, Luke 5:33-39, John 3:25-36, Rev 21:9-27). What would that have sounded like to the Jews? Do we hear this message the same way?

## **APPLICATION**

6. Jesus provided wine of supreme quality and quantity, and that is only a picture of what is to come (Isa 25:6-7). How does that keep us excited for, or looking forward to our future wedding feast with our Bridegroom?

## **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson that you have learnt from this study.

What is a key verse that you would like to take to heart?

## **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- Jesus, the true Bridegroom, has provided richly and abundantly
- The miracles performed at Cana in Galilee underscore Jesus' identity as God and Christ, Saviour and Lord.
- The miracles performed reveal the glory of Jesus and call for a response from us – will we trust and follow Jesus, or will we reject him?

**18 Oct 2020**

**John 4:1-26**

**Jesus, the True Temple**

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What are our expectations of what worship should look like and how it should be done?

**OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read John 4:1-6.

(a) Why was Jesus in the Samaritan town of Sychar? What was the scene like?

(b) Given what the Jews associated as happening at wells (Gen 24, 29 and Exod 2:15-22), how does this set up expectations for what is going to happen in this story?

2. Read John 4:7-16.

(a) What does Jesus ask from the Samaritan woman? How does she respond? Does this surprise you?

(b) Consider Jesus' response in v.10, as well as the Samaritan woman's response in vv.11-12, in light of his original question. What is he saying about the water he asked for, and about who he is?

(c) How does Jesus' response in vv.16-18 answer the implicit challenge given by the Samaritan woman in v.15?

3. Read John 4:17-26.

(a) How does the Samaritan woman define true worship? How does Jesus define true worship? How are they the same, and how are they different?

(b) From the text, who does Jesus say has the authority to decide what true worship is? Does the Samaritan woman agree?

4. What is Jesus saying about who he is and what the implications are?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Consider the background of tension between the Samaritans and the Jews. How is Jesus' offer to the woman shocking, and what does it suggest about who is now welcome to worship in the true temple?

### **APPLICATION**

6. What are the equivalents of "Mount Gerizim" and "Jerusalem" in our worship today? How might these have become ways for us to be religious without truly worshipping?

### **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson that you have learnt from this study.

What is a key verse that you would like to take to heart?

### **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- True worship is not about place (or tradition), but about Who and How
- True worship is recognised because it is empowered by God's Spirit and informed by the revelation of God who is the One who is the Truth
- Jesus is the Bridegroom who reveals what true worship is, he is the Messiah who reveals all things



**25 Oct 2020**

**John 5:2-23**

**Jesus, the Son at Work for the Father**

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What do you do when you are sick in order to get better?

**OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION**

1. Read John 5:2-9.
  - (a) What draws your attention about the sick man in the story? Why?
  
  - (b) Jesus asks the sick man, “Do you want to get well?” Why do you think Jesus asks this question?
  
  - (c) What surprises you about how Jesus heals the sick man? Why?
  
2. Read John 5:10-15.
  - (a) The dispute centres on the Sabbath – what was the Sabbath? What was allowed and not allowed on the Sabbath?
  
  - (b) Do you think the sick man knew that he was breaking the Sabbath by obeying Jesus? Why or why not?
  
3. Read John 5:16-18. Jesus’ statement that “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working” is the reason why the Jewish religious leaders sought to kill him. How is this linked to healing on the Sabbath (which led merely to persecution), and how does this lead to a claim of being equal with God?
  
4. Read John 5:19-23.
  - (a) How does Jesus explain his relationship to God the Father?
  
  - (b) Is Jesus the only one who says that he (Jesus) is the Son of God? (cf. John 5:31-39, 46)

5. Who does Jesus say he is, what authority does he have, and what evidence is there to support it?
6. What were the main arguments the Jewish religious leaders had against Jesus? Compare these to the main arguments the world today has against Jesus.

### **APPLICATION**

7. There are two kinds of sickness described in this story – one in the person of the sick man, and the other in the persons of the Jewish religious leaders. What does spiritual health look like? How far are we, personally, and as a church, from spiritual health?

### **REFLECTION**

Write down a key lesson that you have learnt from this study.

What is a key verse that you would like to take to heart?

### **DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS**

- Jesus is the Son of God, who has authority over eternal life
- Jesus is the Son of God, and is equal with God
- Believing in Jesus and the message brought by him is true belief in God who sent Jesus – this is the pathway to true life (spiritual health)
- Jesus' identity as part of the divine Trinity, the Son of God, is still not accepted by the world today. The Bible (and history) sets out evidence for us about who Jesus is – the only question that remains, then, is of our response. Only two responses are possible: acceptance of Jesus as God (and all the implications thereof), or else, rejection. There is no middle way.