

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

A STUDY THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

I am writing this introduction to the next part of our series through John on a Friday morning and I'm dead tired. It's been a long week, and honestly, part of me doesn't want to write or think or work. And yet, there is another part of me that wants to do these things because, in prayer, I just told Jesus about my tiredness, and Jesus actually met me and reminded me through his Word that he is with me and he will be strong in my weakness.

So now I am still tired, but I'm also filled with joy and confidence, because Jesus just encouraged me with his presence and power.

I want every single person to have this kind of personal relationship with Jesus, and I want Faith to be a church of people who daily encounter Jesus as a risen, living, powerful Savior.

Over the years, I have discovered that numerous people have found that by reading through the book of John, Jesus becomes real for them, full of grace and truth, light and beauty. This discovery is what first piqued my interest in doing a lengthy study through the book of John.

We are now several months into this study and countless people at Faith have shared with me how Jesus has worked in their lives during this series. The vast diversity of these people has been staggering to me. Some of the stories have come from people who have been following Jesus for years, and some are from people who only recently started their journey of faith. Some of the people who shared with me are highly intelligent, while others have a more average intellect. Some of the stories are from people who came from healthy families, and some are from people still trying to figure out what a healthy family even means.

So, a wide variety of people have encountered Jesus during this series, and yet one thing has been consistent across the diversity. Every person who shared their story of encountering Jesus had a humble heart that sensed their need for Jesus and was willing to receive whatever Jesus wanted to give.

This discovery has encouraged me to cultivate a humble heart. Practically, this means bringing Jesus my needs on a daily basis so that he can be my daily Savior. A humble heart also means I'm learning to embrace the truth that I can't manage any area of life on my own. I need Jesus in my tiredness as much as I need him in my moments of strength. I need him when I sin and when I stand in victory over temptation. I need him when I'm healthy and when I'm sick.

Simply put, I need Jesus in every moment of life. During this series I have been growing in approaching Jesus with humility and hope. Humility, because I need him; and hope, because he is a living Savior who wants to give me what I need. In this, I am discovering what many people at Faith are discovering through John: Jesus is a risen, living, powerful Savior.

So, here's to another season of walking through John with the humility to admit that we need Jesus and the hope to believe that he will give us what we need.

Every Blessing,
Pastor Charlie for the Preaching Team

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SMALL GROUPS AT FAITH

WHAT IS A SMALL GROUP?

Small groups at Faith are small gatherings of people from Faith that meet regularly for friendship, prayer and Bible study.

Each small group is unique because it is shaped by the people who attend. However, at the heart of each small group is a desire to see a tight-knit community form that is marked by a growing love for Jesus and for the other people in the small group.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN A SMALL GROUP?

We are made for friendship with God and others. When we are not known and loved by others, we suffer because we are not experiencing all that God created us to experience. Additionally, life is too difficult to journey alone. Therefore, small groups are a place where we can connect in friendship with other people through the ups and downs of life.

HOW DO I GET CONNECTED TO A SMALL GROUP?

The easiest way to get connected to a small group is to go to www.faithchurchfortcollins.org/smallgroups. You can also sign up on Sunday by filling out a Connect card. Finally, if you would like to join a small group, you can call the church at **970-226-2095**.

INTRODUCTION TO SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

No one is born into this world with a theology. So each generation must rediscover the truths of Scripture for itself.

Preaching the Bible is one of the primary tools God has given the church for this to take place.

Small groups are the place where the preaching at Faith is applied and where our church is encouraged to live out God's word. Members of Faith's small groups take time each week to discuss the previous Sunday's sermon, share specific insights from the Bible and care for one another so that, as a church, we grow up to maturity in Jesus.

This study guide has been put together to give you an overview of our current sermon series so that you know where we are going and so that you are prepared for great discussions in your small group.

Here is an overview of what you will find for each week in this study guide:

Main Passage – This is the passage the teaching pastor will preach from.

Supplementary Passages – These passages help to unpack and explain the main passage.

Passage for Memorization and Meditation – This is one passage to memorize and meditate on throughout the week so that at all times you are giving Jesus an opportunity to work in your life.

Overview – This is an overview of what will be discussed in small group this week.

Opening Question – This is a general question meant to spark conversation.

Discussion Questions – These are questions related to the Bible passages.

Application Section – These are questions and ideas for applying the Bible to your life.

Table Time With Kids – These are questions and ideas for families with young kids.

These materials are not meant to be a rigid formula for your small group, but rather a means for intentional study, discussion and life application so that ultimately, as a church, we grow together to maturity in Jesus.

We hope you find this helpful.

Title: The Resurrection and the Life

Main Passage: John 11:1–44

Supplementary Passage: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

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Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

WHEN I SAW HIM, I FELL AT HIS FEET AS THOUGH DEAD. BUT HE LAID HIS RIGHT HAND ON ME, SAYING, “FEAR NOT, I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST, AND THE LIVING ONE. I DIED, AND BEHOLD I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE, AND I HAVE THE KEYS OF DEATH AND HADES.”

- REVELATION 1:17-18

”

Overview: In this chapter Jesus performs his most compelling miracle - raising Lazarus from the grave. This miracle clearly reveals Jesus’ identity as God, because only God can call a dead man back to life.

This miracle also answers some of the questions we ask during difficult seasons.

The first question we often ask when we suffer is this: *Does God care about our suffering?* Jesus’ tears at Lazarus’ tomb help us to see that God does care. His heart isn’t closed off to our hurt and pain. His heart is moved when we suffer.

The second question this passage addresses is this: *Why does God delay in bringing help?* This is the question Lazarus’ sister Martha was wrestling with when she said to Jesus, “If you had been here our brother would not have died.”¹ After all, she had told Jesus that Lazarus was sick and yet Jesus hadn’t come to heal him. Instead, Jesus delayed two whole days before heading back to Judea. His reason for the delay was that raising Lazarus back to life would strengthen his followers’ faith more than healing him would.

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John 11:21

The general principle of this passage is this: *Sometimes Jesus delays in bringing immediate help in order to strengthen our faith.* In other words, Jesus' delays are delays of love.

The final question this passage addresses is this: *Is God able to help in our times of need?* As Lazarus walks out of the tomb, we find our answer and the answer is yes! Jesus is powerful. Jesus is in control. Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

OPENING QUESTION

- What kinds of questions do people ask when they go through difficult times?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 11:1-44. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What does this passage reveal about Jesus?
- How did Mary and Martha react to Jesus' late arrival?
- What was the first thing that Martha did when Jesus arrived? What does this reveal about her character?
- When Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life," what do you think he wanted to reveal?
- Jesus was moved to tears when he saw Mary and the Jews weeping. How does this picture of Jesus challenge the way many people - including Christians - often understand God?
- Why do you think Jesus chose to perform the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead rather than just healing him?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- The opening of this story shows that Jesus doesn't always do what we expect him to do. In what ways has Jesus not done what you thought he would do for you?
- Mary and Martha confront Jesus with their frustration. Both of them say, "If only you had been here, my brother would not have died." What "if only" do you need to take to Jesus?
- How do Jesus' words and actions in the passage comfort you?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS CONT.

- When have you felt that Jesus was delayed in coming to help you? How does this passage help you with your feelings of disappointment?
- What helps you to surrender your hurts and your frustrations to God?
- How has Jesus helped you during a time of loss or disappointment?

TABLE TIME WITH KIDS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 11:1–44. What stands out to you from these verses? What happened in this passage? *Jesus' friend got sick and he died. Then Jesus came and raised him from the dead.*
- Does Jesus care about us when we suffer? *Yes. In this passage Jesus wept when his friends were hurting.*
- Is Jesus able to help us when we suffer? *Yes. He is able to overcome everything that hurts us.*
- Will Jesus always deliver us from suffering? *Yes and no. Ultimately, Jesus will deliver us from suffering when he comes back, but until he returns, there will be moments when we suffer.*
- Based on this passage, what do you think Jesus wants us to do with our pain, disappointment and sorrow? *He wants us to tell him all about it.*

Title: The Plot to Kill Jesus

Main Passage: John 11:45–57

Supplementary Passages: Romans 3:9–18, James 4:1-8

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Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

SUBMIT YOURSELVES THEREFORE TO GOD. RESIST THE DEVIL, AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU. DRAW NEAR TO GOD, AND HE WILL DRAW NEAR TO YOU. CLEANSE YOUR HANDS, YOU SINNERS, AND PURIFY YOUR HEARTS, YOU DOUBLE-MINDED.

- JAMES 4:7-8

”

Overview: The passage for this week is a pivotal section in the book of John. As we can well imagine, everything changed for Jesus after he raised Lazarus from the dead. This miracle clearly revealed Jesus' identity as God for only God has the power to bring a dead man back to life.

This bold demonstration of Jesus' power and divinity made the religious leaders very nervous. They wanted Jesus to use his power to overthrow the Roman government and to prop up their dead form of religious legalism. But Jesus was using his power to bring people to repentance and faith in him.

Not wanting to respond to Jesus with repentance and faith, the religious leaders came up with a plan to shut him up for good. They would put him to death, because according to Caiaphas, “it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.”¹

This statement was both prophetic and cold. It was prophetic because it gave a clear prophecy of Jesus' substitutionary atonement on the cross. On the cross Jesus did die so that people might not perish. It was cold because it was spoken by a shrewd and calculating religious leader who had come to the top of his

¹ John 11:50

profession and was not willing to have his power or authority undermined.

This passage invites us to consider how we respond to Jesus when his power and identity undermines something that we hold dear.

OPENING QUESTION

- What is something in your life that you really want right now? What would you be willing to do to get it?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 11:45-57. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What did the religious leaders say about Jesus? What does this tell you about Jesus' power?
- What were the different responses that people in this passage had to Jesus' power?
- What seemed to be the biggest fear among the chief priests and the Pharisees when they heard of Jesus' power and that many people were responding to Jesus with belief?
- Why do you think the religious leaders were so threatened by Jesus?
- The religious leaders wanted to kill Jesus. What did this desire to kill reveal about what they really wanted in life?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- When have you been frustrated or angry with Jesus?
- When has Jesus been a threat to your status quo?
- When you don't get what you want, what helps you to respond to Jesus with belief instead of anger?
- Is there any frustration or anger that you have in your heart toward Jesus? If so, share with your small group.

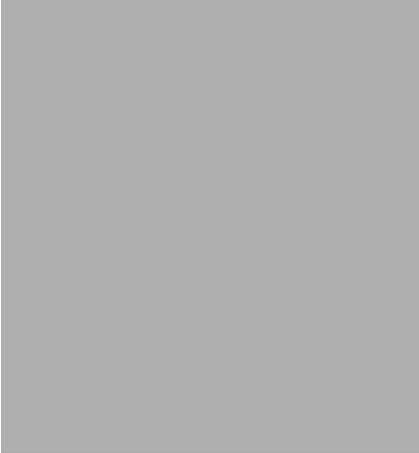
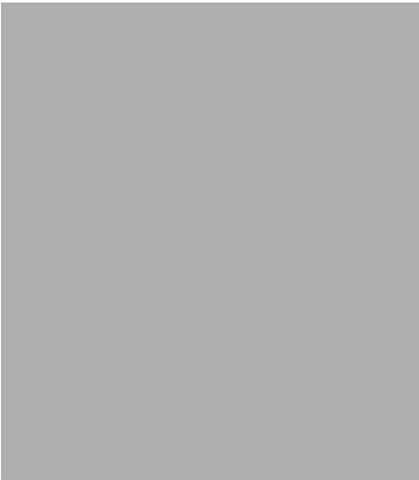


TABLE TIME WITH KIDS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 11:45–57. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What did the religious leaders want to do to Jesus? *They wanted to kill him.*
- Why did the religious leaders want to kill Jesus? *Jesus was a threat to them and they didn't like what Jesus was doing.*
- Will there be times when we don't like what Jesus is doing? *Yes. Absolutely. His thoughts are higher and better than our thoughts. Also, we are sinful, and we don't always want what God wants.*
- What should we do when we don't like what Jesus is doing? *We should trust that his plan is better than our plan.*

Title: The Anointing at Bethany

Main Passage: John 12:1-8

Supplementary Passages: Philippians 2:5-11, Revelation 4:9-11

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Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

**SO, WHETHER YOU EAT OR DRINK, OR WHATEVER YOU DO, DO
ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD.**

- 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

”

Overview: In our passage for this week we see a microcosm of what happens when Jesus impacts the lives of other people. After raising Lazarus from the dead, Mary and Martha put together an extravagant dinner for Jesus to express their gratitude and devotion. During this dinner, Martha served Jesus with all that she had, and her sister Mary poured out her most treasured possession, an expensive perfume, on Jesus' dirty feet. After this, Mary bent over Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair.

Judas saw this act of love and selfless devotion as an extravagant waste and proposed that the perfume should have been sold and the money given to the poor. While this sounded somewhat wise and compassionate for the poor, it was really a cover to disguise Judas' greed and his indifference toward Jesus.

Jesus saw Mary's act of love for what it was. Her selfless and sacrificial act honored him and inspired others to worship.

This passage causes us to consider our response to Jesus. Mary and Martha gave Jesus their best. They were selfless, giving and thankful believers; but Judas was selfish, greedy, and indifferent. What set of words most describes you? If it's not the first set, this passage calls you to get down on your knees at Jesus' feet and to give him everything.

OPENING QUESTION

- What are different ways people show honor and gratitude in your culture today?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 12:1-8. What stands out to you from these verses?
- How did Mary and Martha respond to Jesus?
- What do you think motivated Mary and Martha to respond to Jesus with such extreme gratitude and devotion?
- How did Judas respond to Mary's extreme gratitude and devotion?
- Read Philippians 2:5 - 11 and Revelation 4:9 - 11. Why is Jesus worthy of honor, gratitude and devotion?
- What keeps people from responding to Jesus with honor, gratitude and devotion?
- What impact can indifference towards Jesus have on other people?
- What impact can honor, gratitude and devotion for Jesus have on other people?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Which character in this passage do you most identify with and why?
- When are you tempted to be apathetic towards Jesus?
- For Martha, responding to Jesus with gratitude and devotion meant serving him a great meal. For Mary, responding to Jesus with gratitude and devotion meant pouring perfume on his feet and wiping it with her hair. Personally, what does it look like for you to respond to Jesus with gratitude and devotion?
- What keeps you from responding to Jesus with gratitude and devotion?
- When have you been strengthened or encouraged by someone's devotion for Jesus?

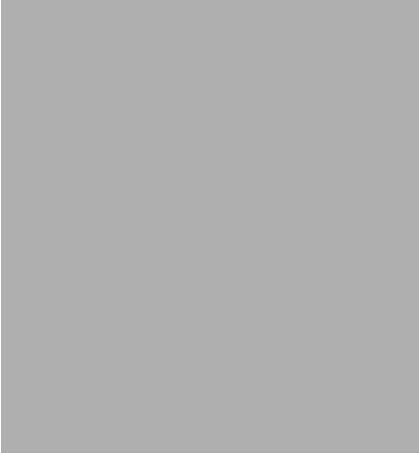


TABLE TIME WITH KIDS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 12:1–8. What stands out to you from these verses?
- How did Mary and Martha respond to Jesus? *She used one of her most valuable possessions to honor him.*
- Why is Jesus worthy of honor and devotion? *Jesus is worthy of honor and devotion because he is God, and he died and rose again to save us.*
- How can you express honor, gratitude and devotion for Jesus?

Title: A New Kind of King

Main Passage: John 12:12–36

Supplementary Passages: Romans 12:1-2, 1 Peter 5:6, Zechariah 9:9



Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE SERVED BUT TO SERVE, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY. - MATTHEW 20:28



Overview: In John 12:12-36, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and presented himself as Israel’s King. The people responded to Jesus’ coronation by swarming to the streets, waving palm branches, and crying out “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”¹

This may seem like a strange response to us, but it made perfect sense to the Jewish people living in the first century. The term “hosanna” literally meant “save us,” and the palm branch was a symbol for the nation of Israel. So, in no uncertain terms, the Jews were communicating to Jesus that they saw him as the king who would restore the nation of Israel by getting rid of the hated Romans. The coming of this king was prophesied all throughout the Old Testament, most notably in Zechariah 9:9.

Jesus was Israel’s king, but his kingdom was established in a totally different way than everyone expected. Instead of establishing his kingdom through force and military might, Jesus established his kingdom through love and sacrifice.² He laid down his life as a ransom for many. He died for the rebels of his kingdom.

Those who follow Jesus are called to the same kind of life.³ We don’t advance Jesus’ kingdom by holding

1 John 12:13

2 See John 12:24, 31-32

3 See John 12:25-26

onto our lives or by forcing people to believe what we believe; instead we advance Jesus' kingdom by laying down our lives for Jesus and other people.

OPENING QUESTION

- On May 19, 2018, an estimated 29.2 million people woke up early on a Saturday morning to see TV actress Meghan Markle marry Britain's Prince Harry. Needless to say, many people are intrigued by royalty. Why do you think so many people are intrigued by royalty?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 12:12-36. What stands out to you from these verses?
- How did the people react to Jesus in this passage?
- What does their response to Jesus tell you about the kind of king they expected Jesus to be?
- Jesus responded to the people by telling them that he came to die. What does this tell you about the nature of Jesus' kingdom?
- In a coronation speech, a king shares with his subjects his vision of the type of king he wants to be. Imagine that John 12:23-36 is Jesus' coronation speech. Based on this passage, how would you describe the kind of king Jesus came to be?
- According to Jesus, what events were going to glorify the Father and the Son?
- How did these events, which appeared to be moments of defeat and humiliation, actually glorify the Father and the Son?
- What does Jesus call his followers to in this passage?
- Jesus says in verse 25, "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." What do you think this means?
- Read Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Peter 5:6. How do these passages explain what it means to hate our lives?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- The people wanted Jesus to be a military king who overthrew the Romans. What things do you want Jesus to do for you that he isn't interested in doing?
- Jesus' kingdom is marked by sacrificial love. What does it look like for you to live a life of sacrificial love?
- Jesus said whoever loves his life loses it. In what ways do you wrongly love your life?

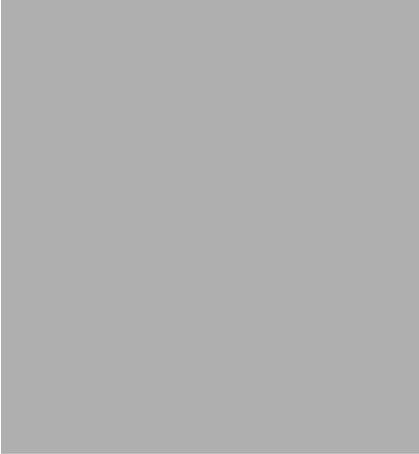
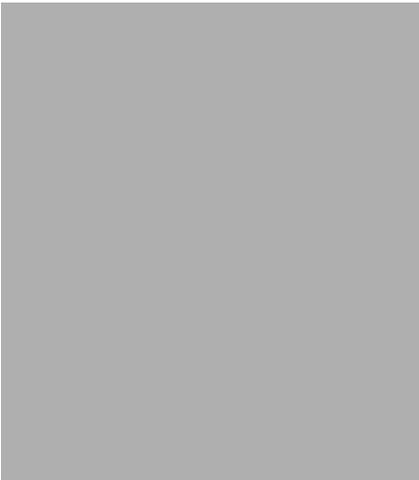


TABLE TIME WITH KIDS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 12:12–36. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What did Jesus come to do? *He came to die for our sins and to rise again from the grave.*
- Why is Jesus' death good news? *Jesus' death is the way God dealt with sin. Jesus died so that we might be forgiven.*
- What kind of king is Jesus? *Jesus is a sacrificial king. He came to die for his subjects.*

Title: Blind Eyes and Hard Hearts

Main Passage: John 12:37–50

Supplementary Passages: Hebrews 3:7-14, Psalm 139:23-24, Romans 9:14-23

“

Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

BUT EXHORT ONE ANOTHER EVERY DAY, AS LONG AS IT IS CALLED “TODAY,” THAT NONE OF YOU MAY BE HARDENED BY THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN. - HEBREWS 3:13

”

Overview: In John 12:37-50, we see that many people do not believe in Jesus because God has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts.¹ This reality has caused no shortage of debate. Some people say that God is unjust to harden people’s hearts and then to judge them for unbelief. Others say that God is free to do what he pleases because he is the creator of all things. Wisdom suggests that we should be careful about speaking too dogmatically or simplistically when it comes to the relationship between God’s sovereignty and human freedom because that relationship cannot be precisely pinned down nor can it be denied. Both exist, and at the end of the day, we do not fully know how the two interact.

What we do know from this passage is that people could not believe in Jesus because God had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts; yet Jesus came to save people with hard hearts and blind eyes.² This is good news because the one who is able to blind eyes and harden hearts can also open eyes and soften hearts. Ultimately, opening eyes and softening hearts is what he wants to do.

What this means for us is that whenever we sense our hearts hardening to the things of God or our eyes becoming blind, we can cry out to Jesus for help with the confidence that he is both willing and able to change us from the inside out.

¹ John 12:39-40

² John 12:46

OPENING QUESTION

- Share a time when you were powerless to change something in your life. How did that situation make you feel?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 12:37-50. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What does Jesus clearly reveal in John 12:37-40?
- Why might God intentionally harden hearts and blind eyes?
- What does Jesus clearly reveal in John 12:46-47?
- Why are Jesus' words in John 12:46-47 good news for people who have blind eyes and hard hearts?
- Why didn't the few religious rulers who believed in Jesus speak up about their faith?
- What does this tell you about their hearts?
- Read Hebrews 3:7-14 and Psalm 139:23-24. What should we do when we realize our hearts are becoming hard?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Take ten minutes to talk with Jesus about your heart. Ask Jesus to search your heart and show you if there is any hardness in your heart. Then spend some time asking Jesus to give you a soft heart. Here are some questions to ask: Jesus, is my heart soft? Jesus, are there areas of hardness or unbelief in my heart? Jesus, are there areas in my life where I am tolerating sin? Jesus, are there areas of my life where I am hesitant to follow you because I fear what people will think of me? At the end of 10 minutes, share with your small group how Jesus met you during that time.

TABLE TIME WITH KIDS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 12:37–50. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Why didn't people believe in Jesus? *Because God had hardened their hearts.*
- What does it mean to have a hard heart? *It means that you are not willing to believe Jesus.*
- Why did Jesus come into the world? *To save people with hard hearts.*
- What should we do when we realize we have a hard heart? *We should ask Jesus to change our hearts, and we should have confidence that he is both willing and able.*
- Do you have a hard or a soft heart for Jesus?

Title: Jesus' Footwashing Sermon

Main Passage: John 13:1–20

Supplementary Passage: Philippians 2:5–11

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Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

HAVE THIS MIND AMONG YOURSELVES, WHICH IS YOURS IN CHRIST JESUS, WHO, THOUGH HE WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD, DID NOT COUNT EQUALITY WITH GOD A THING TO BE GRASPED, BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF, BY TAKING THE FORM OF A SERVANT, BEING BORN IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN. AND BEING FOUND IN HUMAN FORM, HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF BY BECOMING OBEDIENT TO THE POINT OF DEATH, EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS.

- PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8

”

Overview: In John 13, Jesus shifts from a very public ministry before the masses to a private ministry before his most devoted followers. With his death looming on the horizon, Jesus centers his attention on the people who will carry his ministry forward. Clearly, Jesus wants them to be prepared to advance his kingdom with courage, humility, and love. In other words, Jesus wants his disciples to live and love like he lived and loved.

This section of John begins with Jesus washing his disciples' feet. The dusty and unsanitary conditions of the roads at that time meant that people needed their feet washed when they came indoors. The unwanted and unpleasant job was customarily done by the lowliest of servants. Jesus' disciples were not willing to wash one another's feet, so in an act of love, Jesus humbled himself and washed their feet. This section of John closes with Jesus' call to follow his example as a servant.

OPENING QUESTION

- Have you ever had a job in the service industry? If so, what was it?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 13:1-20. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What range of feelings did Jesus have for his disciples?
- How did Jesus show his love for his disciples?
- Think about the moment when Jesus washed Judas' feet. Think about the fact that Jesus served Judas knowing that Judas was about to betray him. How does that make you feel?
- What was Peter's reaction to being served by Jesus?
- Why do you think it was difficult for Peter to accept Jesus' service?
- What particular lesson was Jesus trying to teach his followers by washing their feet?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Jesus' footwashing sermon reveals that we need to be willing to meet needs even if doing so seems below us. How does this passage challenge the way you understand your role in serving people?
- What practical things can you do to better serve people?
- What things keep you from serving people?
- What are some of the rewards of serving people?
- Jesus' interaction with Peter reveals that Jesus must wash us if we are to belong to him. This washing happens when we first place our faith in him, but we also need a day by day washing of those parts of ourselves that get dusty and dirty. In what ways do you need Jesus to "wash your feet" today?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS CONT.

- How do you feel knowing that Jesus wants to serve you?
- In what ways do you need Jesus' humble service? Are you comfortable asking him to help you?

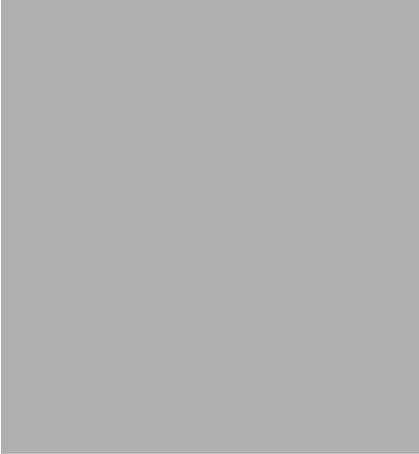
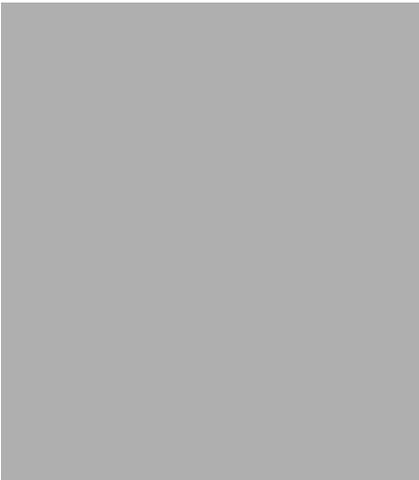


TABLE TIME WITH KIDS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 13:1–20. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What did Jesus do in this passage? *He loved his disciples by washing their feet.*
- Does Jesus continue to serve us today? *Yes. Jesus is a living God who wants to serve.*
- Does Jesus want us to serve other people? *Yes.*
- In what ways do you need Jesus to serve you?

Title: Jesus and Judas

Main Passage: John 13:21–30

Supplementary Passage: Romans 3:10-18



Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

NONE IS RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE; NO ONE UNDERSTANDS; NO ONE SEEKS FOR GOD. - ROMANS 3:10-11



Overview: In John 13:21-30, Jesus predicts that one of his disciples will betray him. Then Jesus signifies which disciple will do this by dipping a piece of bread in a dish and passing it to his betrayer. Dipping bread in a dish and passing it to someone was a sign of special friendship. So, it seems that even in this moment, Jesus wants to communicate his love to Judas.

Judas was not open to Jesus' love. From John 12:1-8, we see that tension was growing between Jesus and Judas. Judas was upset because Jesus wasn't doing what he wanted him to do. Judas wanted comfort, success, power and wealth; and Jesus seemed to be leading him away from these things. Jesus was okay with a woman "wasting" money to anoint his feet with oil, and Jesus was losing respect from the religious and political leaders. In other words, Jesus was moving in a direction that Judas didn't like. So, he took matters into his own hands to get what he wanted.

Nobody wants to identify with Judas, and yet the truth is we all, at times, want to leverage God for our end!¹ We all want God to be in on our thing, and we all get frustrated when following Jesus seems to mean we won't get what we want.

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See Romans 3:10-11

So here is a question to consider this week: How are you like Judas? In other words, what isn't going your way? In what ways are you upset with where Jesus is leading you? How are you taking matters into your own hands and trading your friendship with Jesus for a few pieces of silver?

These questions need to be addressed because there is something of Judas in all of us. If we don't recognize this, the gospel of Jesus passes from good news that gladdens our souls to lifeless words on a page.

OPENING QUESTION

- What is one thing that you really want in life right now?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 13:21-30. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Dipping a piece of bread in a dish and passing it to someone was a sign of special friendship. Why would Jesus use this as the sign to indicate which disciple would betray him?
- In John 13:27, we read that Jesus was troubled in spirit. What does this reveal about his heart toward Judas?
- What might Jesus have done if he had been bitter or angry at Judas?
- Why do you think Judas was so willing to betray Jesus?
- Judas was willing to betray his friend for money. What do you think Judas wanted Jesus to give him?
- Read Romans 3:10-18. What does this reveal about the similarity between you and Judas?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- When have you been upset or angry with Jesus?
- What are healthy ways to deal with moments when you feel like Jesus isn't doing what you want him to do?
- What are unhealthy ways to deal with moments when you feel like Jesus isn't doing what you want him to do?

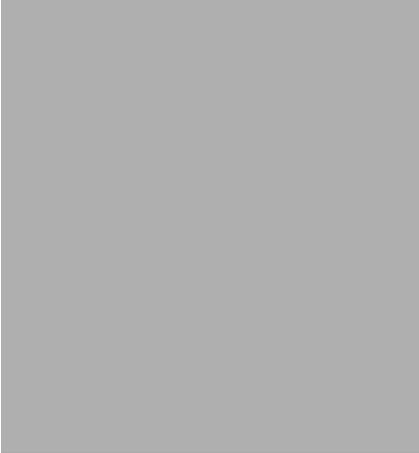
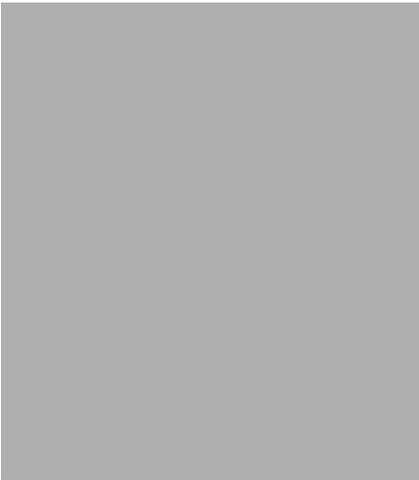


TABLE TIME WITH KIDS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 13:21-30. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Was Judas upset with Jesus? *Yes. Jesus wasn't doing what he wanted him to do, and it was making him very angry.*
- Will you have moments when Jesus doesn't do what you want him to do? *Yes. Jesus is God, and there will be times when you won't understand what he is doing.*
- What should you do in those moments? *You should have honest conversations with Jesus about your frustration.*

Title: The Marks of a Christian

Main Passage: John 13:31–38

Supplementary Passage: 1 John 3:11-18



Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

**AND I AM SURE OF THIS, THAT HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK
IN YOU WILL BRING IT TO COMPLETION AT THE DAY OF JESUS
CHRIST.**

- PHILIPPIANS 1:6



Overview: Throughout time, men and women have displayed different symbols to show that they belong to Jesus. They have tattooed their bodies with sayings from the Bible, they have hung crosses around their necks, and at times they have worn special clothes to set themselves apart. There is nothing wrong with these signs, but in John 13:31-38 Jesus gives two distinguishing marks of his followers.

The first mark of a Jesus follower is deep love. *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*¹

The second mark is great failure. This mark is seen in Jesus' words to Peter at the end of this chapter: *Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.*²

Granted, in this passage the mark of great failure is not plainly applied to all of Jesus' followers, but it is plainly revealed in the rest of the Bible. Additionally, it is plainly seen in the unfolding history of Jesus' people. No one would argue against the claim that Christians do not love perfectly. Sadly, there have been many moments when Christians have presented a pretty dismal picture of God's love, and yet there have also been many moments where Christians got it right. In these bright moments people actually caught a

1 John 13:35

2 John 13:38

glimpse of God's goodness and grace.

So Christians are great lovers and failures. In other words, spiritual maturity takes an awful lot of time, and it isn't something anyone is particularly good at. Yet slowly Jesus works to get us where he wants us to be so that the world sees his love through us.

OPENING QUESTION

- What are different things people do to identify as a follower of Jesus?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read John 13:31–38. What stands out to you from these verses?
- Love isn't new. It is a central theme in the Old Testament. So, in what way is Jesus' commandment new?
- Why do you think Christians loving other Christians is such a compelling way for the world to see that we belong to Jesus?
- In what ways is Peter's denial of Jesus a failure to live out Jesus' new commandment?
- Why do you think Jesus points out Peter's impending failure in this section about Christians loving each other?
- Read 1 John 3:11–18. What does it mean to love in deed and in truth?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Love and a failure to love are both marks of Jesus' followers. How do you see this reality played out in your own life?
- Who do you struggle to love?
- Most likely, as we read verse 35 we cringe at the ways that professing Christians have treated each other throughout the years. Many Christians have turned the Bible into a weapon to defend their own theological camps, and many Christians distanced themselves from those who don't agree with their theological positions. In this, the idea of a Christian brother or sister gets so tightly defined that it means many Christians only love and respect people who agree with them and reinforce their beliefs. This was not what Jesus wanted for his church. How can we begin to live out Jesus' command to love one another in a way that genuinely communicates to the world how much he loves us?
- How has Jesus loved you?

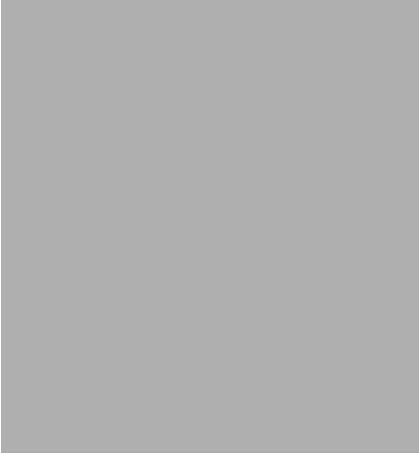
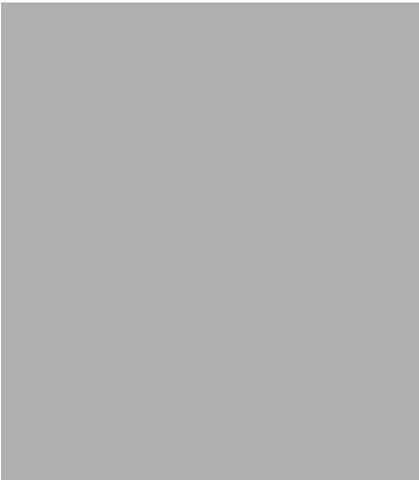


TABLE TIME WITH KIDS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 13:31–38. What stands out to you from these verses?
- What did Jesus command his disciples to do? *He commanded them to love one another.*
- What did Jesus predict Peter would do? *Jesus predicted Peter would fail to love him.*
- Do Christians love perfectly? *No, but empowered by Jesus, Christians grow to love truly.*
- Who can you love this week?

