



The Gospel of John
Seeing is Believing

Christ Redeemer Church
Sermon Series Study Guide
Fall 2022

Special thanks to Anna Kaye Schulte for the sermon series artwork

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INTRODUCTION

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

~John 1:1, 14 (ESV)

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but 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.”

~John 20:30-31 (ESV)

“...if two thousand years of pious handling had not dimmed both John’s story and its demand, this gospel would still be seen as the burning outrage it continues to be, a work of madness or blinding revelation.”

~Reynolds Price (1933-2011), Duke University

On Sunday, January 30th, we will be continuing our sermon series on the Gospel of John. This study guide is intended to be a simple and basic way for us to engage in the passages for each week’s upcoming sermon.

The Gospel of John: An Introduction

There simply is no other document in all of human literature like the “Gospel According to John.” No other writing, except perhaps Paul’s epistle to the Romans, has had the kind of redemptive, transformative effect on human existence that John’s Gospel has.

Even within the corpus of Scripture—even among the other gospels—it stands apart in its own unique category. On its face it is a bundle of contradictions. The opening lines tell us that Jesus is the light of God that is both unstoppable and rejected (John 1:4-13). Jesus is presented most explicitly divine, and yet most obviously human. The Jesus of John explicitly claims equality with the Creator, while also explicitly suffering need and weakness. He thirsts and has to ask for water, but then in turn claims to be Living Water that satisfies our thirst eternally. He weeps at the death of a friend and then proceeds, by the power of His own command, to raise him from the dead. This is nothing if not shockingly strange. Who is this man?

Perhaps no one in recent memory has grasped the uniqueness of this gospel better than the late Reynolds Price (1933-2011). The professor at Duke and prolific man of letters points out that:

“...a powerful case can still be made that this last gospel—little more than a pamphlet and written in a curiously shackled Greek prose—is

the most outrageously demanding work, in any type of prose or verse, that had yet appeared in the West or Near East. Even its companion gospel Mark, some twenty-five years older and a reckless pioneer, is tamed a little in the dazzling light of John.” (*Three Gospels*, Reynolds Price, Touchstone/Simon & Schuster 1996, p. 128)

Price goes on to sum up the Jesus presented in John:

“The force that conceived and bore all things came here among us, proved his identity in visible human acts, was killed by men no worse than we, rose from death and walked again with his early believers, vowing eternal life beside him to those who also come to believe that he is God and loves us as much as his story shows.” (Price, p. 166)

To this summary, he then says:

“None of the other active world religions says anything remotely similar or comparable.... There is likewise no parallel in the theologies of John’s contemporaries – the dead myths of Greece or Rome, with their demigods and deified bureaucrats. ...John hands us a brand-new thing.” (Price, p. 167)

Jesus is, indeed, something brand-new, unlike anything we have seen before, and He has the power to make our lives new.

How to Use the Study and Prayer Guide

The date at the top of each page notes the Sunday for the respective week. The Scripture verse listed under each heading is a suggested memory verse. Below that you will find a passage of Scripture, followed by “*Reflection Questions*.” In general, these readings will allow you to reflect on the previous sermon or prepare you to hear the sermon for that upcoming week. We estimate that each day’s “lesson” should require no more than 15 minutes.

To be clear, this guide and these times are not intended to be a legalistic requirement. Not at all! Rather, it is a way for us as a congregation to walk together as we explore God’s Word and petition our Father in heaven. And to what end? Our hope is that as we grow in our understanding and practice of daily prayer and meditation, we will grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and so grow in our love for Him and one another.

A Word about Walking with Christ

Walking with Christ is a work that God is calling us to and, in a very profound sense, doing in us. As we will see in the Gospel of John, it is Jesus who calls us to discipleship (John 1), and it is Jesus who restores us to discipleship when

we fail and fall (John 21). Without Him we can do nothing (John 15). This is why we call the message of Jesus the gospel (i.e. good news), because it is not about us but about Him. “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the pastoral and administrative staff and interns of our Hanover, New London, and Quechee churches who have collaborated to craft this study guide for the benefit of our congregations...and beyond.

In the name of the One who is full of grace and truth,

Don Willeman
January 2022
Hanover, NH

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 25th

Memory Verse:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another."

~John 13:34 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 13:21-30

Reflection Questions:

- Why is Jesus troubled? How does He deal with His sorrow?
- How is the betrayer identified? What causes him to act at once?
- Why does Jesus tell them about the betrayal ahead of time?

Prayer:

- Gracious God, help me to endure times of loneliness and sorrow and to remain faithful.

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 13:31-35

Reflection Questions:

- What does Jesus reveal to the disciples after Judas leaves? What makes "now" the time of glory for Jesus?
- What does Jesus command the disciples to do?

- What does the new commandment reveal about God to the world?

Prayer:

- Heavenly Father, bless me with humility and love for my brothers and sisters in Christ.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 13:36-38

Reflection Questions:

- Why can't Peter follow Jesus where he is going?
- Who else, aside from Judas, is predicted to betray Jesus? Is there a difference between the betrayers?
- Why does Jesus tell Peter that he will fail?

Prayer:

- Heavenly Father, thank you for forgiving my sins and failures.

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- God, help me to hear the gospel and listen to Your Word at church tomorrow.
- Jesus, draw near to us as we draw near to you!

WEEK OF OCTOBER 2nd

Memory Verse:

"And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." ~ John 14:3

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 13:36-38

Reflection Questions:

- How does Peter in these verses respond to Jesus' command to love one another from the previous verses?
- What is it that Peter is missing in his response to Jesus?
- Where in your own life have you forgotten obedience to God?
- Where have you underestimated your human weaknesses?

Prayer:

- Repent of your disobedience and pride
- Ask God to make Him and His Word your delight to follow.
- Ask God to overcome your weaknesses with His power so that you might glorify Him and follow Him.

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:1-3

Reflection Questions:

- What is the Lord's plan for you, and how does it make you respond?

- Meditate on the line “where I am you may be also” from verse 3. How does this future reality comfort our troubled hearts in the present?

Prayer:

- Praise and thank God for the place He has prepared for you in heaven.
- Ask God to come again soon!
- Acknowledge the current reality of God being with you and the fullness of that reality that we have waiting for us and ask God to comfort your troubled heart.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:4-6

Reflection Questions:

- Thomas seems to be lost as he listens to Jesus, not understanding what’s going on, just like the rest of the disciples. What is his response to Jesus? When you’re lost and need help to understand, do you ask Jesus?

- What does it mean that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life?

- Where in your own life can you ask Jesus to reveal how he is your way, the truth, and your life?

Prayer:

- Ask Jesus to reveal to you how he is your way, the truth, and your life
- Ask God to transform the hearts of your unbelieving friends and family so they might know Jesus as the way, truth, and life.

SATURDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 13:36-14:6

Prayer:

- Ask God to transform hearts to delight in following Him and His Word.
 - In CRC
 - In the Upper Valley
 - In the schools
 - In your own lives

- Ask God to come again soon!
 - Ask Him for the endurance and heart contentment as we wait

- Pray that the church would unashamedly proclaim that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and our life!

WEEK OF OCTOBER 9th

Memory Verse:

"Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say show us the Father?'"

~John 14:9 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 13:36-14:6

Reflection Questions:

- As you think back to the sermon yesterday, what encouraged you most?

- How were you challenged to trust in Christ?

Prayer:

- Spend time thanking God for His grace to you and ask for the strength to trust and obey Him this week.

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:6-7

Reflection Questions:

- What do you think Jesus means by saying He is the way, the truth, and the life?

- How is this different from how people may think about Jesus in our culture and in the church?

- Why should we desire to see come to Jesus so that He could show us the Father?

Prayer:

- Pray that we would know and believe the truth about Jesus so that we can see God as He truly is

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:8-14

Reflection Questions:

- What evidence had Jesus given to Philip and the rest of the disciples that He was in the Father and the Father was in Him?

- Why do you think it was still hard for Philip to believe despite the evidence?

- What work has Jesus done in your life to show you who He is?

Prayer:

- Pray that God would open your eyes to see all the ways He's been at work in your life so that your faith in Him would be strengthened.

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- Pray that God would continue to teach us in the midst of our sin, weakness, doubt, and confusion so that we could see Him clearly.
- Pray that we would be a community that shares the ways God is at work in our lives so that our faith would continually be strengthened.
- Pray that God would bless the preaching of the gospel at tomorrow's worship service.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 16th

Memory Verse:

“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

~ John 14:21 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:6-15

Reflection Questions:

- How did yesterday’s sermon help you understand this passage?
- What practical difference does this passage make to how you will live this coming week?

Prayer:

- Lord, You alone are the way, the truth, and the life. I want to know You. I want my life to be exploding with the reality that I know You—the unique Son of God. Please help make this a reality in our life as a church community by helping us to do the works You do. Teach us the humility and love that comes from knowing You—who are the only way, and yet who welcomes all people to Yourself. Glorify Your name in our lives. Amen.

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:15-18, 23-28

Reflection Questions:

- What do we learn about the role of the Holy Spirit in these passages? (Look especially at verses 26 & 27).

- Why do you think Jesus says that “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me,”? What is the relationship between love and obeying commandments? Does this make sense to you? How might it impact your daily life? Are there any places in your life where you are not obeying the commandments of Jesus?
- What is the relationship in these verses between the Holy Spirit (or Helper) and the commandments Jesus has given to His disciples?

Prayer:

- Lord Jesus, You promised to send Your Holy Spirit to those who love You and keep Your commandments. You promised that He would be with them forever. I confess that I have fallen short of your commandments. I have not loved God with all I am. I have not loved as You have by laying my life down for others. I often feel like I am an orphan. But I want to know You. I want to be filled with Your Spirit. Please help me love You. Please fill me with Your Spirit. Please help me obey Your commandments. They are what I was made to do, and it is as I do them that I experience your presence. Amen.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:15-21

Reflection Questions:

- How does what we looked at on Wednesday with the promise of Holy Spirit connect with the rest of the passage?

- Jesus promises He will not leave his disciples as orphans. He promises they will receive the life He has. He promises the Spirit will dwell in His followers forever. He gives differently than the world gives, so that their hearts should not be troubled or afraid. This is true for all of His followers. Do you know the security and comfort of what Jesus promises here? How might your life change if you did?

- Make a list of three people who you know have not yet received the Spirit of Truth.

Prayer:

- Spend some time responding to what Jesus' gracious and eternal promise. Repeat them back to Him. Ask that He would transform these words from abstract truths to your experiential reality. Pray for those who you just listed. Ask God to break into their lives to enable them to be transformed by Him.

SATURDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 14:15-19

Prayer:

- Pray for our church gathering tomorrow. Pray that God would be present among us in the power of His promised Spirit. Pray that those who might be new to our church community would feel welcomed and be able to get connected into the life of the body. Pray for strengthening and deepening of our fellowship through the Word of God. Pray that the love of our Triune God would be on display through the preaching, singing, and our relationships and interactions with one another.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 23rd

Memory Verse:

"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."

~John 15:5 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:1-5

Reflection Questions:

- What does it mean to abide in Christ?
- What does it mean to bear fruit?
- Why are some branches taken away?

Prayer:

- Lord and God, I confess that my life is in Christ, and I pray that I would become more like him!

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:6-8

Reflection Questions:

- What does it mean to abide in Christ's love?
- What does it look like for Christ's word to abide in you?

- How would you pray if you were abiding in Christ? What could you expect?

Prayer:

- Heavenly Father, do more than I can ask or imagine, and show the world your glory!

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:9-11

Reflection Questions:

- How has Jesus loved the disciples?

- What does it mean to abide in Christ's love?

- What does Jesus want for His people?

Prayer:

- Jesus, thank you for loving me. Teach me to love and honor others before myself!

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- Lord, cause us to bear fruit as we worship you, love one another, and serve our community.
- Heavenly Father, help us to recognize and experience your great love.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 30th

Memory Verse:

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."

~John 15:16 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:12-13

Reflection Questions:

- How has Christ loved His people?
- Why is this the measure of love, rather than "You shall love your neighbor as yourself"?
- Why is self-sacrifice the greatest love?

Prayer:

- Thank you for loving me, O God, according to your grace and mercy!

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:14-15

Reflection Questions:

- What does it mean for Jesus to call the disciples His friends?
- How does Jesus say a friend differs from a servant?
- What has Jesus told His people about the Father's work?

Prayer:

- Lord Jesus, thank you for being my savior, my master, and my friend.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:16-17

Reflection Questions:

- Why did Jesus choose the disciples? Why is this more important than their choosing Him?

- What do Jesus' followers ask for in His name?

- How does this help us love one another?

Prayer:

- Heavenly Father, glorify Yourself in the church, and show Your glory to the world.

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- Lord God, bless the preaching of the gospel tomorrow, that many would hear the voice of Christ and believe in Him!
- Heavenly Father, renew Your people in Your love.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 6th

Memory Verse:

"If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

~John 15:19 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:18-21

Reflection Questions:

- What is the relationship between the disciples and the world?
- Why does the world hate them?
- What reason does Jesus give for His people to not be exempted from this hatred?

Prayer:

- Lord God, protect Your church throughout the world, and give endurance to those suffering persecution.

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:22-25

Reflection Questions:

- Is there any neutral ground between God and humanity? Why or why not?
- How did Jesus provoke the hatred of the world?

- What would excuse sin in the world? Why is sin not excused?

Prayer:

- Holy Spirit, convict our world of its sin, so that we might turn back to God.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:26-16:4

Reflection Questions:

- Why does Jesus speak of the Spirit at this point? What is the Spirit sent to do?

- What role does Jesus say His people will have?

- How will his people be treated because of this?

Prayer:

- My God, make me bold to share the good news of Christ!

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- Lord, open new doors for the witness of the good news and save those who do not yet believe.
- Heavenly Father, strengthen us, Your church, with Your Spirit and with joy.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 13th

Memory Verse:

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

~John 16:13(ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 15:18-27

Reflection Questions:

- What stood out from the sermon this Sunday?
- What is one thing you want to try to apply or explore more of this week after hearing the sermon?
- How should we respond to the "hatred of the world" for us and for Christ?

Prayer:

- Heavenly Father, please help us to understand how to love amid hate, how to have compassion for those who would have none for You, and how to see our own guilt in the hatred this world has turned upon You. We need You, Lord, so help us see the truth of that need and cling to You this week.

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 16:1-11

Reflection Questions:

- How can it be "to our advantage" that Jesus is no longer physically in the world?
- What exactly does John say the "Helper" will do when He comes?

- Why do you think the Holy Spirit is so focused on these three things: sin, righteousness, and judgment?

Prayer:

- Do you feel the Holy Spirit convicting you of any of these three things right now? If so, what in particular? Is there anything you need to ask God for forgiveness for?
- Spend some time praying that the Holy Spirit would do the work Jesus says He would in our lives and in the world.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 16:12-15

Reflection Questions:

- Why do you think the disciples weren't ready to hear some of what Jesus had to say? Hadn't they been with Him for almost all His ministry?
- It sounds like the Holy Spirit is how this other truth Jesus wants to share will be revealed. What might be some of the purposes behind the Spirit revealing what He hears from the Father and the Son?
- One of the things the Holy Spirit will do is bring glory to the Father and the Son, and we, as Christians, are told to do likewise. What does it look like for us to glorify the Father and the Son

Prayer:

- Father, help us to learn more of what it means to glorify You and help us to do that this week as we go out in our jobs, families, and communities.

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- Lord, help us to understand the mystery of the Holy Spirit and the Trinity as a whole. Give us eyes to see You, Your glory, and Your majesty as we prepare to worship together tomorrow.
- God, show us our sin and our need for the free gift of grace Your Son offers us through His sacrifice on the cross. Help us to proclaim that good gift clearly and more frequently with those who do not know You.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 20th

Memory Verse:

“Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

~ John 16:32, 33 (ESV)

MONDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 16:16-33

Reflection Questions:

- As you think back to recent sermons, what have you been learning about the glory of God?

- How do you see this passage contributing to that?

Prayer:

- Spend some time thanking God for sharing His glory with us, asking Him to teach you more about it this coming week

WEDNESDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 16:16-24

Reflection Questions:

- What is Jesus suggesting in v. 20? Or put differently, how would you interpret/explain the different responses and tensions that he describes in this verse?

- In verses 22 and 23, while referring to a coming hour or day, Jesus suggests that at that time, no one will have the ability to take their joy away. He also suggests that when that time comes, they will ask nothing of him. How would you explain these extremes?

- Until that hour or day comes, how does the Gospel teach us and empower us to navigate both sorrow and joy simultaneously?

Prayer:

- Pray that God would fill His church with hopeful, forward-looking followers.
- Pray that God would develop us into people who navigate sorrow with joy.

FRIDAY:

Scripture Reading: John 16:25-33

Reflection Questions:

- In this section, Jesus says more about that “coming” hour or day. What things does He hone in on here and why might they be significant?

- Jesus is committed to preparing His disciples for his departure. How do verses 31-33 contribute to that? How do His words here help to set their expectations going forward?

- How do these same words assist you? How might they inform your own expectations going forward?

Prayer:

- Pray about this last question. Ask God to reveal your current expectations, and to develop them to be more and more in keeping with his.

SATURDAY:

Prayer:

- Pray that God would continue to teach us about His glory.
- Ask God to increasingly season our sorrow with His joy.
- Pray that God would do both of these things during our worship service tomorrow morning.



• Christ Redeemer Church •
• P.O. Box 5523, Hanover, NH 03755 •
• office@christredeemerchurch.org •
• www.christredeemerchurch.org •
• Don Willeman, Pastor • 603-643-5588 •