



# The Gospel of John

## Week 1 **LEADER** Discussion Questions

**Text:** John 1:1-18

Many of our LifeGroups are starting back up this week, so we hope you are refreshed and ready to embark on this new series!

These questions are a resource for you, not an assignment, which means there's no single "right way" to use them. Feel free to modify the questions to suit your group, skip questions, or read carefully through every last word!

Remember that we want all our groups to balance out 3 different values: (1) a commitment to knowing God's Word, (2) a commitment to caring for each other as a community, (3) and a commitment to serving those around us.

**Icebreaker:** If someone asked you, "What's the big deal about Jesus?" how would you answer them?

The book of John is rich in theological assertions about Jesus' identity. This question is meant to prompt us to think about who Jesus is and why he is the central figure in our faith.

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out from the text or sermon?
2. In verse 1, John has used the language "In the beginning" purposefully. What does this language bring to your mind?  
The language "In the beginning" should take us to Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God Created the heavens and the earth."
3. What is John's purpose of linking these passages?  
John is purposefully reminding us that the God we are talking about here is the same God of the Old Testament, the Creator of the world. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The God who promised a Messiah who was to come and redeem the world. This is important because in this book John is going to claim that Jesus is one and the same with this God. A wild and bold statement to his audience at the time.
4. Consider what "one's word" means in today's world. What do a person's words reveal about their character, and what does it mean when someone gives their word?  
The phrase "I give you my word" usually comes as a promise from someone. It's an assurance that the words they have said have meaning and substance and can be trusted. They are willing to stake their reputation on their claims.



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5. Take a look at a few instances of God's "Word" in the Old Testament (Ref: Genesis 1:1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 14; Genesis 15:1, 4; Psalm 33:6; 1 Samuel 15:1; Isaiah 38:4). What is the significance of God's word and what does it tell us about the character of Jesus?

Genesis 1 tells us of God's Word being creative and powerful. By His Word he creates all that is out of nothing. We see in these verses God's comfort, promise, action, and power. Jesus is our comfort, the promised one, who came to do what God said he would, in power that was unexpected.

6. It is not difficult to reflect on things in the world today and see darkness. Describe the sorts of things that you would consider "darkness" in the world today.

Here is a great opportunity to discuss both the darkness we see around us and the darkness and sin within ourselves. It's easy to point the finger at the big darkness problems "out there" and not really reflect on the darkness in our own lives. Try to reflect on both areas of darkness.

7. John says in verse 5, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." What does it look like for Christ's light to shine in our present world?

Having addressed areas of darkness in the world and in ourselves in the question above, this question and the next allow us to contemplate what difference Christ can make in those areas of darkness. While we can trust that God's Spirit is convicting the world and at work within it, Jesus says in Matthew 5:14-16 that we are the light of the world and that the world will see Jesus' light through us.

8. Where have you seen Christ's light overcome darkness in your own life?

Now is the opportunity to address how they have experienced Christ's peace and victory over the darkness in their own lives. This can be a very rich time of reflection together. Hearing one another's stories of faith brings vulnerability and encouragement to the group.

9. John 1:14 says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The Greek word here used for "dwelt" is the same word used to translate the word "tabernacle" in the Old Testament. What was the significance of the Tabernacle in the Old Testament (Ref: Exodus 40:34-38)?

The Tabernacle was the dedicated space for God's presence to dwell. God's presence traveled with the Israelites, but it was contained within the Holy of Holies inside the Tabernacle. Only Priests had access to God's presence in the Holy of Holies and even that was limited to one day a year and only after a lengthy process of consecration/cleansing (Exodus 25-30). You may also talk about the curtain within the Tabernacle as a barrier between anyone who would enter it and the Holy of Holies where God's presence dwelled.



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10. In what way is Jesus' incarnation ("word became flesh") similar to the tabernacle of the Old Testament? In which ways is it different?

We are told in John 1 that the very presence of the God of the Old Testament in fact dwells in the person of Jesus Christ, as it did in the Tabernacle. However, Jesus coming to earth as a person and dying "tore the veil" and removed the barrier between humanity and God (Matthew 27:51). Access to God is no longer limited, but fully available through Christ and His Spirit.

11. Take a moment to think about God becoming human. What impact does this have on your faith and how does it affect your daily life?

Our combined humanity, male and female, is a reflection of Christ, the true human. If we are made "in the image," Christ is that Image. God sending his Son as a human not only creates a way for us to be with God, it also shows us the perfect human, whom we are to be like. Jesus' humanity should shape our very lives as we seek to follow Him.