

The  
New  
Testament  
in a Year

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Week 41

Gospel of John 6-10

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*This week's reflector is  
**Diane Walker**, who serves in ministry  
with Pelham Community Church.*

General Questions for Reflection

You might pick one part of each chapter and think about these questions.

- What does this tell me about God (including Jesus and the Holy Spirit)?
- What does this tell me about our world?
- What does it tell me about me?
- What does it say about following Jesus?
- Is there something here I'd like to learn more about?

Why not use these thoughts to shape your prayer today.

Monday

John 6

A long chapter today, both action-packed and idea-packed, probably enough material for a week (or a lifetime.) John's purpose in writing, to bring the reader into faith that Jesus is the Son of God, is crystal clear. John recounts here events that are already a part of the common tradition around Jesus and arranges them to bring out their full meaning.

These events are also seen through the lens of older memories which are enshrined in the tradition of Israel: God miraculously leading his people safely through waters, miraculously feeding them in the desert, a 'bread from heaven' that roused 'murmuring', disputes and testing. Moses was given the law, a covenant sealed by the shedding of blood (Numbers 24:1-11.) Here we see the new covenant similarly sealed in verses 53-56.

Now Jesus reveals the central mystery: He is the bread of life, a man of flesh and blood, the very presence of the One who alone gives life.

Tuesday

John 7

John sketches the light shining in the darkness and darkness seeking to destroy it. Jesus is confronted and challenged in the midst of the most popular festival of the year. Vast crowds drawn to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Tabernacles when an older harvest festival was influenced by a strong element of expectation of the end of time. Each day, water was drawn from a pool and carried to the Temple (with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation: Isaiah 12:3) and each night the Temple courts were brilliantly lit up. Jesus' teaching reflects these festival themes: light and living water.

The light of Jesus come into the world has created a crisis and plans to kill him begin to emerge. His opponents are much like us: they cannot bear God's means of self revelation for these require that we abandon every intellectual prop and spiritual security, to lay it all aside to come to Jesus.

Wednesday

**John 8**

The story of the woman taken in adultery does not appear in the earliest manuscripts but it is nevertheless a stunning portrait of Jesus' wisdom, compassion and grace.

And then, the gospel returns to the previous setting, the Temple and to the theme of light. Jesus' words "I am the light of the world" is of cosmic significance, a staggering claim, one to be either accepted or rejected. There is no middle road. In his long debate with his opponents, Jesus, the I am, is an eternal spring of self emptying love (living water). This is a forceful rejection of our self glorification which always stands in stark contrast to God's self emptying.

Jesus is still speaking the truth of God, offering the life of God, holding before us the light which shines in the darkness, a darkness that cannot comprehend or overwhelm the light.

*Where in your life is that truth and life being offered?*

Thursday

**John 9**

Two months have elapsed since the Feast of Tabernacles. Seeing a blind man, Jesus moves directly to action. Here faith will arise out of healing, not healing arise out of faith. Once healed, the man is subject to questioning and every attempt is made to discredit both healing and healer.

A vivid portrait emerges of light shining in the darkness and the darkness neither comprehending nor overcoming it. The light shines in the simple testimony of those who know what Jesus has done for them. However, those who insist on saying 'we know' are driven by the testimony of healing into a denial of ever deepening darkness. The terrible reality of judgment is revealed: even though the light of Jesus is a healing light, that light compels those who love the darkness to seek refuge in deeper darkness.

Jesus overcomes all the wisdoms of this world, his light throws them into disarray.

Friday

**John 10**

John's imagery here is complex. Jesus is both the shepherd and the door to the sheepfold. This expresses the fact that only in Jesus can we find both total freedom and total security: life in total abundance. Often we see freedom and security as a trade off: more of one means less of the other and where I live, this is clearly delineated at border crossings into the United States: more freedom, less security, more security, less freedom.

But with Jesus we can move out of established securities to find new freedom in serving him in the world. Free to serve, we find true security in Christ. Of course this abundance comes at a cost, but it is price paid by Jesus, for us.

As the chapter continues, the forces of opposition continue to gather, the sky darkens and the manner of price begins to come clear.