

SERIES: CHURCH 101
SERMON #2

This week, we are going to use our small group time to have a personal devotional. For some, this may be the first time you've ever had a personal devotional time. For others, this is something you do every day. You might be asking, "Why should we do this *together*?" First, devoting group time to it demonstrates the importance of the devotional life. Second, going through devotions and sharing your insights with one another while they are fresh on your mind will allow you to learn from one another. Third, seeing how others approach devotions will help enrich your personal devotions in the days to come. Often, someone who is new to daily devotions will have some exciting and new way of looking at the Bible and their relationship with God that refreshes those that have been at it a long time, and those that are more experienced have usually gained some insight and wisdom from their spiritual practice over years of walking with God. That's the beauty of walking with Jesus as a small group community.

GETTING STARTED

Make sure that everyone has a copy of the handout "31 Day Journey through the Gospel of John." Read through the "Suggested Daily Reading" exercise, and clarify any questions about the process. Be sure to agree upon which passage you are working through together.

DIGGING IN

Have a brief time of worship together, either through prayer or singing (suggested time: less than 5 minutes). Then each person may silently move to a place where they can spend the next 30 minutes in the devotional exercise. After 30 minutes, have everyone regroup together for the discussion below.

LIVING IT OUT

Go around the group, and answer the following questions:

- What was the most significant thought in the passage to you?
- What was the one thing you wanted to personally apply?
- What was this devotional process like for you?

Something to consider: Would you, as a group, commit together to spend time in the daily devotions over the next 31 days? It can be a great encouragement to know that others are doing this alongside you. You could start each group meeting off by sharing how devotions were over the previous week. Or, you might pair people within the group as prayer partners that would check in with one another throughout the week to encourage daily devotions and to pray for one another.

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your true worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 12:1-2

These sermon notes are produced each week for further study and discussion in our small groups. If you are interested in joining a small group, please contact Leslie Ann Yell at smallgroups@chathamchurch.org or 545-9589.

31 Day Journey Through the Gospel of John

There is no more worthwhile pursuit as a follower of Jesus than to seek to know God more. As we see glimpses of His love and character more clearly, we continually grow in our desire to give our lives more fully to Him. God has given us His Word, the Bible, as an incredible gift to know Him and see Him better.

This reading plan is a 31 Day Journey through the Gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament. Take time each day focusing on the character of God with questions such as: Who is God? What is God like? Why is God worthy of our worship? What does God want for me? Below is a suggested way to spend 20-30 minutes each day with the Lord.

Suggested Daily Routine

- **10-20 minutes**
Ask God to help you understand more today, and then read the passage for the day (see the chart below). Write out the main thought of the passage or the point that is most significant to you. What does this Scripture teach you about God? How does this specific teaching relate to you?
- **5 minutes**
Write out one specific thing you will apply from what you've learned. This may be an attitude or action.
- **5 minutes**
Thank God in prayer for what you've learned. Determine what your greatest need is in regards to your relationship with the Lord. Ask God to meet that need in your life. Bring any other concerns before Him. (1 Peter 5:7)

You'll notice on days 6, 13, 20, and 27 that there is no new chapter to read. Take some time to reflect on what you have learned each week from that section of God's Word. You may also want to pick 1 verse that was significant in your life over that week and write that out on a note card to work on memorizing that verse.

On the final two days (30 & 31), take some time to prayerfully summarize all that you have learned from this Journey through the Gospel of John.

	<i>DAY</i>	<i>Reading</i>		<i>Day</i>	<i>Reading</i>
	1	John 1		17	John 13
	2	John 2		18	John 14
	3	John 3		19	John 15
	4	John 4		20	<i>Summary</i>
	5	John 5		21	<i>"Off"</i>
	6	<i>Summary</i>		22	John 16
	7	<i>"Off"</i>		23	John 17
	8	John 6		24	John 18
	9	John 7		25	John 19
	10	John 8		26	John 20
	11	John 9		27	<i>Summary</i>
	12	John 10		28	<i>"Off"</i>
	13	<i>Summary</i>		29	John 21
	14	<i>"Off"</i>		30	<i>Summary</i>
	15	John 11		31	<i>Summary</i>
	16	John 12			