



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

July 28 - August 3

John 1

Things to Know

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder: Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

1. **Jesus is the eternal Word—fully God and Creator of all things.**
 2. **Jesus is the true Light—rejected by many but received by those born of God.**
 3. **Jesus is the Word made flesh—revealing the Father and pouring out grace upon grace.**
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Discussion Questions

1. **Who is “the Word” in John 1:1, and what do we learn about His relationship to God and creation?**
 - *Follow-up:* How does this verse shape your understanding of Jesus’ divinity?
 2. **John says Jesus is the Light that shines in the darkness (v. 5). Where do you see darkness in the world—or in your own life—that needs His light?**
 3. **Why do you think so many rejected Jesus when He came to His own (vv. 10–11)? What does this teach us about the human heart?**
 4. **What does it mean to be “born of God” (v. 13)? How is this different from simply being religious or moral?**
 5. **John says we have received “grace upon grace” through Jesus (v. 16). How have you experienced that overflowing grace personally, and how can you reflect it to others?**
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Read

Read John 1:1-14 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Scripture

John 11:1-14

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4** In him was life,^[a] and the life was the light of men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. **8** He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. **11** He came to his own,^[b] and his own people^[c] did not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son^[d] from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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John 1:14

Living on Mission In Community

The Word who was with God and is God stepped into our darkness to bring light and life. He didn't remain distant—He took on flesh, moved into our broken world, and poured out grace upon grace. That means no sin is too deep, no crack in your life too wide, for His grace to fill. If you have received Him, you are a child of God, secure in His love and called to reflect His light to a dark world. The question is, will you receive Him fully and let His grace shine through you this week?

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*

Leader Resources - Week 30

Small Group Curriculum: Grace Upon Grace

Passage: John 1:1–18

1. Session Overview

John 1:1–18, often called the **Prologue of John**, introduces us to the eternal Word who is with God and is God. It reveals the mystery of the Trinity, the incarnation of Jesus, and the grace upon grace we receive through Him. In this session, we'll explore who Jesus truly is—eternal God, the light of the world, and the one who reveals the Father to us.

2. Opening

Prayer Prompt:

“Father, open our eyes to behold the glory of Jesus, the Word made flesh. Let us see Him more clearly and love Him more deeply as we study Your Word tonight.”

Icebreaker Question:

What's one thing in creation (sunrise, stars, ocean) that makes you stop and think, *“This points to something greater”*?

3. Scripture Reading

Read **John 1:1–18** aloud together.

Encourage participants to listen for:

- Who is “the Word”?
- What does John say about His relationship to God and creation?
- What is promised to those who receive Him?

4. Teaching Points

A. The Word is Eternal God (vv. 1–3)

- *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”*
- Jesus (the Word) is not a created being—He is eternal and co-equal with the Father.
- He is both **with God** (distinct Person) and **is God** (one essence).
- All things were made through Him—He is Creator, not creation.

Key Cross-References:

- Colossians 1:16–17 – All things were created by Him and for Him.
- Hebrews 1:2–3 – He upholds the universe by the word of His power.

B. The Word is the True Light (vv. 4–9)

- In Him is life, and that life is the light of men.
- Darkness cannot overcome His light—Jesus shines into the world’s sin and death.
- John the Baptist was a witness to the light, not the light itself.

Key Cross-Reference:

- Isaiah 9:2 – The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

C. The Word is Rejected Yet Received (vv. 10–13)

- He came to His own people, yet many rejected Him.
- But those who receive Him are given the right to become **children of God**, not by human effort but by God’s will.

Key Cross-Reference:

- Romans 8:15–16 – The Spirit testifies we are God’s children.

D. The Word Became Flesh (vv. 14–18)

- The eternal Word took on flesh—God became man and dwelt (literally “tabernacled”) among us.
- We have seen His **glory**, full of **grace and truth**—He reveals what God is truly like.
- From His fullness, we have received **grace upon grace**—wave after wave of mercy.
- No one has seen God, but Jesus makes Him known.

Key Cross-References:

- Philippians 2:6–7 – He humbled Himself, taking the form of a servant.
- Exodus 34:6 – God reveals Himself as full of steadfast love and faithfulness (mirrored in “grace and truth”).

5. Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean that the Word was *with God* and *was God*? How does this shape your view of Jesus?
2. Why do you think so many rejected the Light even though He came into the world He created (v. 10)?
3. What does it mean to be “born of God” (v. 13)? How does that contrast with our natural birth?
4. How do you personally experience “grace upon grace” in your life?

5. How does knowing Jesus is the exact revelation of God (v. 18) change the way you see the Father?

6. Application Points

- **Marvel at His Glory** – Slow down this week and meditate on the fact that the eternal Creator stepped into creation for you.
- **Live as a Child of God** – If you’ve received Him, you are His child. How will you live differently knowing your identity is secure in Him?
- **Shine His Light** – The Light of the world now shines through us. Where can you bring His truth and love into darkness this week?

Reflection Question:

Where are there “cracks” in your life that need the grace of Jesus to seep in and bring healing?

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

Read **John 1:16–17** aloud:

“From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

Invite the group to quietly thank God for specific ways they’ve received His grace.

Close in prayer, asking for hearts that see His glory more clearly and share His light more boldly.

8. Memory Verse

John 1:14

“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.”

9. Leader’s Notes

- Emphasize the **Trinitarian depth**—the Son is both with God and is God.
- Highlight **incarnation** as the ultimate display of grace.
- If participants struggle with the mystery of the Trinity, remind them we can’t fully comprehend God but we can **trust and worship**.
- Encourage open sharing on how they’ve seen “grace upon grace” in their own lives—this fosters vulnerability and worship.