

**I AM**  
**CURRICULM**





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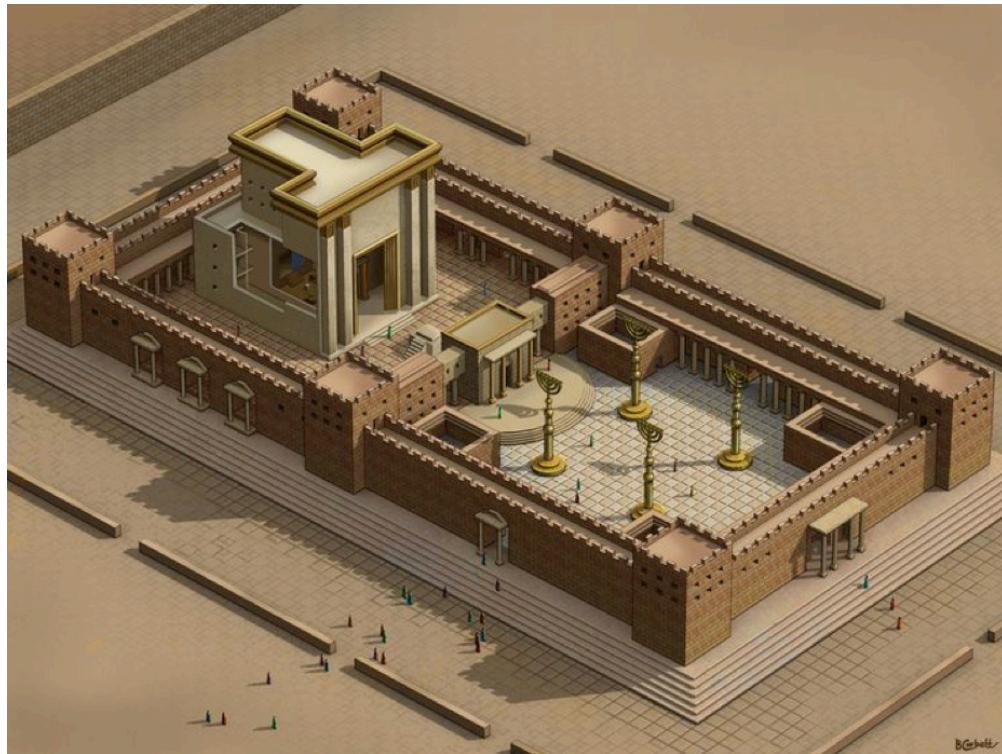
**WEEK #1: MARCH 17, 2019  
I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD  
JOHN 8:12-30**

***Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”***

Read John 8:12-20 as a group.

**THE SETTING**

Jesus was in the temple speaking in the treasury, near the place where the offerings were put (v. 20). Great candles burned symbolizing the pillar of fire that led the people of Israel through the desert. What a great visualization for Jesus to use in this context, calling Himself the light of the world. The pillar of fire represented God's presence, protection, and guidance. Jesus now brings us God's presence, protection, and guidance.



Pictured: This shows how tall the great candles stood in the temple where Jesus was preaching.

## **ASK YOURSELF**

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What does it mean to follow Christ? And, is He the light of your world?

In what ways have you allowed the light of Christ to shine into your life?

Do you feel there are times when you could be carrying this torch of good news into dark places and you ignore or avoid it? Explain.

***"The light of Christ is the brightness of God shining on the retina of the human soul."***

**-John Piper**

## **TAKE SOME TIME AND REFLECT**

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In what ways do you benefit from light? You can go any direction with this question from the gift that light is all the way to technologies of daily life that depend on it – but think through specifically, what would life be like without light?

Think of a time you were exposed to complete or near complete darkness for an extended amount of time. How did it make you feel?

## **DIGGING DEEPER**

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In what ways do you experience the darkness of sin in your life? (Guilt? Fear? Struggles with family? Health issues? Loss of loved ones?)

In what ways are you tempted to try to bring light to your darkness by ways other than Jesus?

What does trusting in Jesus, the Light of the World, provide for you that these other things have not?

### **OLD TESTAMENT LIGHT**

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Look up Isaiah 42:6, 49:6; Psalm 27:1, 119:105

How is Christ the fulfillment of these OT passages?

What is our role now as a people who are united to Christ?  
(Matthew 13:43; Acts 13:47, 26:18-23; John 1:5-7)

Matthew 5:14-16 says we are the light of the world. We are to shine through our deeds to the unbelieving world so that people will glorify God. Can God be glorified by our deeds alone? What else is necessary for someone to glorify God?

## **LUNATIC, LIAR OR LORD?**

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### **CAN I GET A WITNESS?**

The Pharisees thought Jesus was either a lunatic or a liar. Again, Jesus was giving them a third option that they refused to believe; that He was telling the truth. In verse 13 the Pharisees tell Him His testimony is not valid because He has no witness. In Deuteronomy 19:15 the law explains there must be two or three witnesses to testify in order to validate a matter.

Who was Jesus' witness?

Why did the Pharisees not realize who His father was?

## **PRAY**

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Ask God in what ways He wants to use you as His light.

Asked to be “nudged” by the Spirit when opportunities arise.

Be thankful for His providence and that Jesus is the Light of the World.



## **KNOWING THE TRUTH**

Jesus Himself is the truth that sets us free. Not only is He the source of truth, but He is the perfect standard of what is right. We are enslaved by our sin, being deceived by Satan and even ourselves. The freedom we receive from Jesus is not to do whatever we want, but freedom to serve, seek and follow God. It's Jesus' perfect truth that sets us free to be who God meant for us to be.

## **DISCUSS**

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Read John 8:31-47 as a group.

Why does the author include the text, "To the Jews who had believed in him?"

What does it mean to be Jesus' disciple (read verses 31-36)?

What does freedom mean to you?

What does freedom mean to Jesus?

## **CROSS REFERENCING**

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Read and discuss how these verses relate to the passage and to your life.

Abiding and being a disciple – John 15:6-8 (vs. 31)

The cost of being a disciple – Luke 14:26-27, 33 (vs. 31)

Being Spirit-led into truth – John 16:13 (v. 32)

Slavery switch – Romans 6:12-23 (vs. 34-36)

## **THE JEWS' LOST CONDITION (37-47)**

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The Jews are claiming Abraham as their father, yet they are not following his example (38-40). Why can't their physical ancestry save them?

What was the difference between Abraham and the Jews Jesus was talking to?

How was Jesus telling them they were imitating Satan? Why was He telling them (41-44)?

How were they blinded by their condition? Is there a condition in your life that may be blinding or hindering you that you could use some prayer for? Be ready to share with your group (45-47.)

## **JESUS' IDENTITY (VS. 48-58)**

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### **ARE YOU CRAZY? NOW WE KNOW YOU'RE CRAZY!**

There are quite a few places where Jesus challenges His listeners to test Him. He is willing to do this so they can follow through on what they would discover about Him. He wanted to show them His character and that he followed through on His claims. Yet a couple of things would happen here. One, they would never step up to test or challenge Him. Or two, they refused to believe the truths they would discover. We may ask ourselves, have we ever made these same mistakes?

Are there any claims that Jesus makes that are hard for you to accept?

Is it still tough to cling to the truth even when your prayers aren't answered the way you feel they should be? Why or why not?

***God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"***

**Exodus 3:14 New International Version (NIV)**



**WEEK #3: MARCH 31, 2019**

**SIGN #6: HEALING THE MAN BORN BLIND**  
**JOHN 9:1-40**



This particular sign was such a miracle because this man had been born blind. He had not become blind. This example is not just showing Jesus' ability to heal a man born blind physically, but also figuratively represented for the need of healing from spiritual blindness. The interest of the disciples was prompted by theological curiosity rather than compassion. They didn't see someone in the midst of suffering who needed relief. Instead, they were more concerned with how he became this way.

### **FIRST RESPONSE**

Read John 9:1-12

When we run across someone less fortunate than ourselves, should our compassion be different based on how we think they arrived to this point in their life? Why or why not?

Explain Jesus' message in verses 3-5 in your own words. How does this message apply to you today?

Have you ever been in the midst of suffering and asked, "Why is this happening to me?" or "What did I do wrong?" or "Why did you make me like this?" Feel free to share a specific story with the group.

**Even though it's difficult, we need to ask God in the midst of these trials to give us strength and a clear perspective of what we should learn from what's happened or happening.**



9:7 - The Pool of Siloam was built by Hezekiah. His workers constructed an underground tunnel from a spring outside the city walls to carry water into the city. Thus the people could always get water without fear of being attacked. This was especially important during time of siege (see 2Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:30). (The Life Application Study Bible, Zondervan, 1988)

In verses 6 and 7 Jesus never tells the man that he will be healed, He simply instructs him to go and wash. The Pool of Siloam was located at the southern end of the city and would be a considerable distance to walk. This would have taken some genuine effort being blind. The journey was an act of faith. Especially with what seems like a foolish command, how could washing in the public pool restore sight he never had?

Can you think of a time where God had you going through something that was seemingly pointless to you, but was a divine plan to restore something in your life?

What journey might you be on that seems foolish right now? Have you prayed for endurance and understanding?

## **ACTION AND REACTION**

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Jesus saw this blind man and decided to heal him. In verse six He sends him away to get healed. After rinsing the clay from his eyes, the man returns healed and seeing. There are four different reactions to Jesus in this passage. Take time to describe each one here.

1. The neighbors

2. The Pharisees

3. The parents

4. The man himself

What was the man's reaction to everyone (including Jesus)?



**WEEK #4: APRIL 7, 2019**  
**I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD**  
**JOHN 10:1-21**

**THE BIG PICTURE**

Read John 10:1-21 as a group.



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The imagery of the first two paragraphs is based on the concept of the "sheep pen." It was usually a rough stone or mud-brick structure, only partially roofed, if covered at all, or very often a cave in the hills. It had only one opening through which the sheep could pass when they came in for the night. The pen served for the protection of the sheep against thieves and wild beasts. The thief, who would not have any right of access by the gate, used other means of entrance. He would not follow the lawful method of approach.

"Thief" and "Robber" are different in meaning. "Thief" (kleptes) implies subtlety and trickery; "robber" (lestes) connotes violence and plundering. The latter term was sometimes used of bandits and guerillas. The purpose of both was exploitation; neither was concerned for the sheep. (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Zondervan, p.107, 1981)

## **"I TELL YOU THE TRUTH..."**

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When Jesus starts by saying, "Truly, truly" or "I tell you the truth," He is expressing the importance of what He is about to say. Explain the importance of these subjects in the first five verses and who they might represent in your life.

Verse 1 – The Thief and Robber

Verse 2 – The Shepherd

Verse 3 – The Watchman

Verses 3-5 – The Sheep

Verse 5 – The Stranger

### **CONTEXT**

Jesus states He is the Good Shepherd and also the "Gate." In fact, the shepherd is the gate. At the end of the day the shepherd would inspect all the sheep as they entered the pen. After being inspected for wounds and scratches which were anointed with oil, the shepherd kept a count of the sheep that entered the pen and gave them water. (Psalm 23:5-6) Then he would lie down across the doorway and act as the gate insuring no intruder, man or beast, would enter without his knowledge. The shepherd is the sole determiner of who enters and who is excluded from the fold. This parallels the later statement: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) (Tenney, p. 108, 1981)

## **IMAGERY**

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What imagery does the Bible use to describe God's relationship with His people? Read Psalm 79:13; 95:7; 100:3 and Isaiah 53:6. What does this tell you about your relationship with God?

If someone were to refer to you as sheepish or sheep-like, would you view that as an insult or a compliment? Why?

Why do you think we are referred to as sheep? Does this help explain the importance of having a Good Shepherd in your life? Why?

## **THE THIEF**

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Who is the thief that is being described in verse ten? How does this thief try to kill, steal and destroy your life today?

How do you see this thief kill, steal, and destroy the life of people you know? Be specific. What is/should your response be to this?

What are some ways we can defend ourselves against the thief? Try and use Scripture to back up your response.





WEEK #5: APRIL 14, 2019

I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE  
JOHN 10:22-42



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The Feast of Dedication commemorated the cleansing of the temple under Judas Maccabeus in 164 B.C. after Antiochus Epiphanes had defiled it by sacrificing a pig on the altar of burnt offerings. The feast was celebrated toward the end of December. This is also the present-day Feast of Lights called Hanukkah. Solomon's Colonnade was a roofed walkway supported by large stone columns, just inside the temple courtyard. (Life Application Study Bible, Zondervan, p.1762, 1981) Read vs. 22-30

## PLAIN AND SIMPLE

What do you think the Jews meant by the statement, "If you are the Christ, tell us plainly"? Why did the Jews reject the testimony and miracles of Jesus?

### REMEMBER

Just read all Jesus had told about who he is so far; **I am the one who came from heaven** (John 3:13, 6:38), **whoever believes on Me has eternal life** (John 3:15), **I am the unique Son of God** (John 5:19-23), **I will judge all humanity** (John 5:19-23), **all should honor Me just as they honor God the Father** (John 5:19-23), **the Hebrew Scriptures all speak of Me** (John 5:39), **I perfectly reveal God the Father** (John 7:28-29), **I always please God and never sin** (John 8:29, 8:46), **I am uniquely sent from God** (John 8:42), **before Abraham was, I Am** (John 8:58), **I am the Son of Man, prophesied by Daniel** (John 9:37), **I will raise Myself from the dead** (John 10:17-18), **I am the Bread of Life** (John 6:48), **I am the Light of the World** (John 8:12), **I am the Door** (John 10:9). If the Jews haven't listened by now, do you think they ever will?

Has there been a time in your life when you have asked Jesus to prove Himself to you? What happened? What was His response? Are there times when you still do this? Explain.

## **THE MESSAGE**

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Explain, in your own words, the message of verses 27-30 and what this means to you personally.

Thankfully the security of the sheep is in the hands of the Shepherd and the security of the sheep doesn't depend on the sheep. Our eternal security is not a performance-based reality.

## **TIME TO PONDER**

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Consider the promises of these verses and discuss what kind of security they provide in your life.

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Ephesians 1:13-14, "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."

1 Peter 1:3-5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

**Personal Challenge – Memorize one of these three verses and be ready to share with the group.**

## **"I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE." (V. 30)**

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There is no doubt about what Jesus is saying here. This is one of the clearest statements He makes about His divinity. There is no doubt these Jews understand who Jesus is saying He is.

How do the Jews respond in verse 33?

What does their response say about them (Refer to 1 Corinthians 2:14)?

What is Jesus' response in verses 34-38?

What does this say about Him?

## **USING SCRIPTURE**

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In verses 34-36 Jesus refers to Psalm 82:6 to back up the truth of what He is trying to explain. Jesus held a very high view of Scripture. He quoted it and referred to it often.

What are some of your favorite Scriptures to help you explain the truth to non-believers?

How important is memorizing Scripture in your life? Do you feel you have a sufficient amount of scripture arrows in your quiver? Why or why not?

What are some techniques or challenges you can share with your group to help each other memorize more Scripture?

## **FRUIT**

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John the Baptist's testimony is still producing fruit in verses 41-42. How can you ensure your testimony lives on (not just after death but after leaving different areas in life)?

At work?

With family?

With friends?

With strangers in public?

## **PRAY**

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Ask God to help us be intentional about sharing Jesus first, last and always. Ask God for wisdom and boldness. Thank God that as Christians we have no fear of death!

