

Meeting **JESUS** in the Gospel of John

Reproducible Lessons
for Evangelistic Bible Studies

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MEETING JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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Dedicated

*to my loving husband, Jim,
who ignited my desire to see people
come to Christ through a study of the
Word and who constantly encourages
me in my ministry to women.*

Introduction

It took me several years of teaching Bible studies to realize that many women in our society have very little knowledge of the Bible. Our postmodern culture has produced people who do not know the 10 Commandments, the books of the Bible, or even basic Bible stories. Because of this, many interested women join a Bible study only to be embarrassed that they cannot flip to cross references in their Bibles or participate in discussion that require previous Bible knowledge. My goal was to provide an introductory Bible study that would meet the need of these women—some who are vaguely interested in God, some who are seeking Christ, and some who are new in their relationship to God.

The basic format of this study has the following features.

- The first two questions in each lesson help women feel comfortable sharing and help them get to know one another. The questions also serve as a natural introduction to the subject of the text.
- The lessons are based on one book of the Bible, which is studied chapter by chapter. Ladies will not have to find their way around the entire Bible.
- The questions can be answered directly from the text without cross references. When an additional reference is needed, it is printed in the notes.
- Several questions in each lesson require

no Bible knowledge and are based on general knowledge or personal experience. This allows any woman to participate, even if this is her first visit.

- Difficult terms are explained, or participants are asked to look them up in a standard dictionary.
- Each lesson provides at least one opportunity for the leader to explain how a person can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. These questions are noted in the leader's guide with an *. Some people may come only once; the way of salvation is the most important Biblical truth they need to hear. The leader should familiarize herself with these questions so she can clearly present the gospel message. Also, the leader should be prepared to lead ladies to Christ. The article on page 7 explains how to lead a friend to Christ.

As I have used this Bible study format, I have seen many unsaved women come to know Christ. I have seen new believers blossom in their knowledge of the Word. As you pray for your friends and neighbors, God will lead you to women who are searching for God but who do not know how to find Him. I pray that this study will help you lead them toward a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Jeannie Vogel

How to Use This Study

This Bible study is designed as an evangelistic outreach tool for women who are new to Bible study. You may want to suggest that a woman from your church may attend only if she brings an unsaved friend. Any church ladies who attend should remember that although the questions may seem easy, newcomers need time to process and answer each question. The study can be used in a church setting, but it is also effective in a home. One or two church ladies could host the study for women in the neighborhood. Regardless of where you meet, establish a regular day and time and stick to the schedule.

As you begin the study, establish some basic guidelines. You may use the guidelines on page 9, or you may develop your own. Give each lady a copy at the beginning of the study. Ask everyone to abide by the guidelines, especially numbers 2 and 3. If you want to minister effectively to women of all church backgrounds, participants must refrain from mentioning their church (or what their church teaches). Otherwise, a well-meaning lady may cause confusion in the minds of some ladies and may even arouse animosity if a lady thinks her church is being criticized. Comments should come directly from Scripture. If someone introduces a false statement, ask her where in Scripture that idea is found, or ask someone to read a Biblical passage that corrects the misconception. The Bible is the authority, not the leader.

Another helpful practice is to take a survey as you begin the study. This survey will give you some general information about your participants. (You may photocopy the introductory survey on page 10.) I also like to use a

questionnaire at the end of the study. (See page 11.) This questionnaire asks each woman to explain her understanding of how she can get to Heaven. (See question 8.) If a woman is not sure of her eternal destiny (question 7), you can make it a point to ask if she would like to discuss these matters in private.

If you are uncertain about leading someone to a personal relationship with Christ, you may refer to page 7. This page gives some simple instructions and verses that will help you explain salvation. Remember, however, that simply explaining how you accepted Christ can be one of the most effective ways to share the gospel.

This book is designed so that the student lessons are reproducible. Make the number of photocopies you need for each lesson; distribute the lesson the week before it is taught. *Please note that photocopies may be made only by the individual or church that purchased this book. Any other copying is a violation of the copyright and is illegal.* You may want to give each lady a colored document folder in which to place the guidelines, map, and lessons.

Perhaps God has given you the desire to lead this type of study, but you do not have any unsaved friends. Prayer is the key to finding women who are interested in studying God's Word. Walk around your neighborhood and pray for people in each house, or pray before you leave your house each day that God will direct you to women who need Christ. You will be amazed at how God brings into your life women who are longing to know Him. You will be ready to help them meet Jesus in the Gospel of John.

How to Lead a Friend to Christ

While studying the life of Jesus with someone else, you may have the awesome privilege of leading a friend to personal faith in Christ. The Gospel of John teaches salvation so clearly that a person may not need your help in making that commitment; but if she does need help, I want you to feel confident in making the way of salvation plain to her. Here are a few simple things to keep in mind when talking with a lady who has shown an interest in trusting Christ.

One of the first things you need to determine is if she understands why she needs a Savior. You might ask her some questions to see if she understands sin. Let her answer for herself first so you can determine what she has learned from the Bible. She must understand that even one sin disqualifies her for Heaven (James 2:10). Also, she must understand that sin is not just wrong actions, but is a condition of the heart that is part of our nature (Rom. 3:10, 11, 23). Because of this internal sin problem, we cannot just improve our lifestyles or do good to others to take care of our sin.

Next, ask her if she knows what penalty God has set for sin. Explain Romans 6:23 and Romans 5:12 to help her see that the result of our sinfulness is death. This death is not merely physical death, but is eternal punishment and separation from God (Matt. 25:41). If we die in our sinful state, we will face judgment and the penalty for our sin (Heb. 9:27).

When the reality of this concept sinks in, a lady will probably feel helpless or hopeless. Ask her how anyone can escape punishment if we are all sinners. Then explain that God Himself had to provide the way of salvation. In Matthew 1:21 the angel proclaimed that

Jesus would come to earth not to be a good example but to “save his people from their sins.” His death on the cross was not accidental; it was planned so that His punishment would pay the penalty for the sins of the world (Rom. 5:8; 1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21). He then conquered death by His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 55).

Perhaps a lady will wonder what she needs to do to be saved. Or she may wonder why everyone does not go to Heaven if Christ paid for our sins. Explain that although the price has been paid for everyone, not everyone accepts the free gift of salvation. For example, if I bought each person in my family a gift and set the gifts on the table, only those who actually took the gifts would possess them and benefit from them. The only thing God requires of us is to believe that what the Bible reveals about Jesus Christ is true and accept His gift of forgiveness of sins (Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8, 9).

Although this is simple, many people do not choose to accept God's offer. Some refuse to believe they need a Savior; some enjoy their sin and do not want God to cleanse them of it; some are skeptical about anything that they do not have to work for; and some have just not thought about it that much. The Bible is very clear on one point: No matter what the reason, people who have not made a choice to believe and receive Christ's forgiveness personally stand condemned by their sin (John 3:16–18, 36). No middle ground exists since Jesus is the only way to Heaven (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

At this point encourage your friend to explain back to you what God expects from her.

If she understands the gospel, encourage her to talk to God right then and express her belief and trust in Him and accept Christ as her Savior. If she is unsure, encourage her to continue to study the Bible and ask God to reveal Himself to her.

When a lady accepts Christ as her Savior, show her 1 John 5:11–13, which explains that she can know for sure that she has eternal life once she has believed on Jesus. She should continue to grow in Bible study and, if pos-

sible, be involved in one-on-one discipleship for a few weeks.

If a lady does not accept Christ immediately, intercede earnestly on her behalf. Remember what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:20: “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” What a great privilege to offer the greatest gift ever given—for free—to those whom we love. Be faithful!

Guidelines for This Study

1. This Bible study is designed for women who are new to Bible study. All you need is a Bible, a pen, and a dictionary to complete each lesson.
2. This study is for women of all church backgrounds, so no mention of specific churches will be made during the study. We will not discuss any church doctrine; we will focus on what the Bible says on each topic.
3. The Bible is the authority for the study. We believe the Bible is the Word of God and is vital to a proper understanding of God, human life, and one's eternal destiny.
4. We will discuss the study questions each week. If you have studied the questions in advance, you will gain more from the study and have more insights to share with the group. Each week the lesson for the following week will be distributed. If you miss a week, make arrangements to obtain the lesson for the following week.
5. Everyone has important views and ideas to share each week; therefore each woman should be sensitive to other ladies who have not had the opportunity to share in the discussion. The discussion is voluntary, so a woman can attend even if she feels uncomfortable sharing with the group.
6. Each participant should make every effort to be on time each week and to be faithful in attendance for the ten weeks.
7. Some discussions may reveal sensitive areas in a woman's life. Each member of the group is expected to maintain strict confidentiality of such information.
8. We expect sharing about family members to be positive, not negative. If you want to share an incident that pertains to the lesson but might be embarrassing to a family member, ask his or her permission first. We will not participate in gossip or slander.
9. We will usually ask for prayer requests at the end of the class session. Bible study leaders will pray, remembering these requests.
10. Bible study can change your life. Be prepared!

Introductory Questionnaire

(for leader's use only)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone (_____) _____

Work phone (_____) _____

E-mail address _____

How often do you attend church?

☐ never ☐ seldom ☐ occasionally ☐ regularly

Name of church _____

How long have you attended? _____

Have you ever been in a Bible study group? _____

If so, where did you go and when? _____

Why did you decide to come to this Bible study? _____

What do you hope to gain from this study in the next ten weeks?

Do you have a Bible? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you like a free Bible? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Concluding Questionnaire

(for leader's use only)

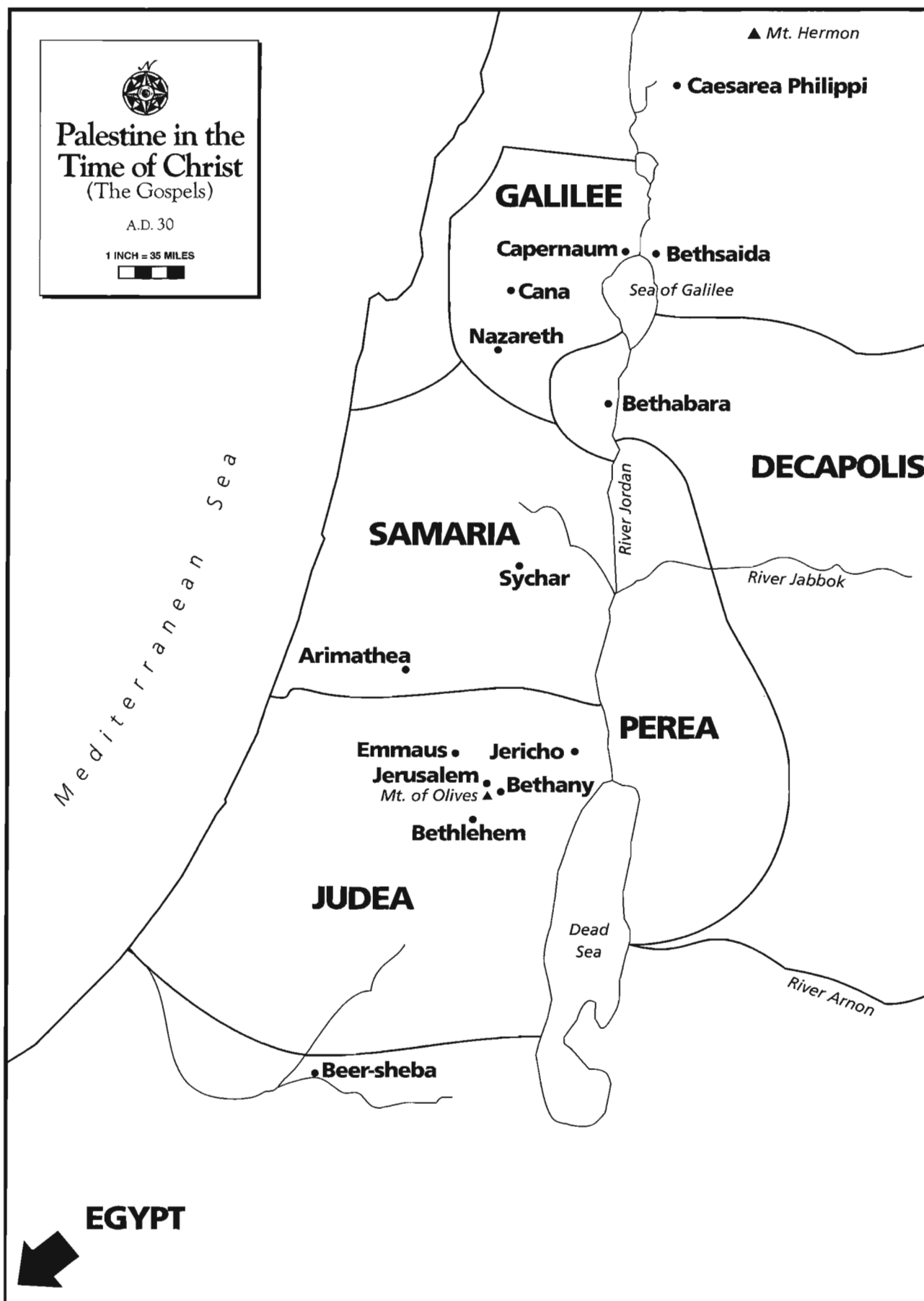
1. What or who convinced you to come to this Bible study?

2. What did you enjoy most about this Bible study? _____

3. What did you enjoy least about this Bible study? _____

4. Would you be interested in another Bible study? _____
5. Name a book or topic you would like to study. _____
6. Would you prefer a longer or shorter study in the future? _____
7. Do you know for sure that you have eternal life? _____
8. If you died today and stood before God and He asked you, "Why should I let you into Heaven?" what would you say? _____

9. Name one way this study has helped you or changed you. _____



L E S S O N 1

In the Beginning

John 1:1–18

Approach This Study

1. (a) What is your full name? Share anything significant about your first name and why your parents may have chosen it.

(b) What are some other terms by which you are introduced (e.g., wife, mom, coworker, friend)?

2. Think about some biographies you have read. At what point in the person's life do most biographies begin? Have you ever read a biography that started at a different point? Where in the person's life did it begin?

Study the Text

Read John 1:1–18.

3. The first three words of John 1:1 are familiar words to many people. Can you recall where in the Bible these three words were used previously? What do the words introduce in that account?

4. Write down the names of the two main characters in verses 1 and 2. (Hint: Look for capital letters.)

_____ and _____

Copy the four phrases that describe these two individuals.

(a) verse 1

(b) verse 1

(c) verse 1

(d) verse 2

5. Do you have any clues about the identity of the unnamed person? What facts seem contradictory?

6. Read verses 3 and 4 and 10–14. Look for facts about the person referred to as “he,” “him,” or the “Word.” Record those facts below.

(a) verse 3

(b) verse 4

(c) verse 10

(d) verse 11

(e) verses 12, 13

(f) verse 14

7. Can you think of anyone who fits all of these descriptions? What key passage helps you understand the identity of the Word?

8. *Reflect*: How important are words in our everyday life? What problems might occur if we could not use written or spoken words?

9. Can you give some reasons why John might have called Jesus the “Word”? (“Word” in Greek is *logos*, which also means “reason,” “wisdom,” and “power.”) What are some things His life communicated to mankind?

10. In verses 6–9 we read about John. (This is not the writer of the book, but a man referred to as John the Baptizer, or John the Baptist, because he baptized his disciples.) What were the differences between John and Jesus?

11. (a) What kind of “light” did Jesus bring?

(b) What do you think “darkness” (v. 5) refers to?

12. What do verses 3 and 10 say the Word accomplished?

13. In light of His significant power, why was He rejected (v. 11)? Do you think that some people reject Jesus today for the same reason?

14. How does verse 12 say a person can become a child of God? What is significant about believing on His name?

14)? How were people affected by His grace (vv. 16, 17)?

15. How does verse 13 clarify the ways a person does *not* become God's child?

19. Compare verses 14 and 18. How do these verses indicate Jesus is God?

16. Based on what you have learned about the identity of the Word, how did the event in verse 14 take place? What holiday commemorates this event?

20. Why do you think it is important that God chose to reveal Himself to mankind?

17. John (the writer) seemed to take this event more seriously than we do. What facts did John relate about this event? What details did he omit?

Think about These Truths

What did you learn about Jesus in this lesson?

Since Jesus is God, how should you respond to His commands?

How can you learn more about the Word?

Have you made the personal decision to receive Jesus and become God's child? Do you know for sure that you are a child of God?

18. Look up the words "grace" and "truth" in a dictionary. Why do you think it is important that Jesus be full of grace *and* truth (v.

