



2019

SPIRITUAL FORMATION GUIDE

A LETTER FROM *Pastor Chad*

Hello Friend,

My Dad used to say “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. This reading plan was created for you so you have a plan to grow in your walk with Jesus! We want you to succeed in your walk with Jesus as God reveals Himself to you every day.

I love Psalm 19 and how it shows us some of the ways God reveals Himself to us. In verses 1-6, our Father shows us who He is through His Creation. We can look at the skies, the seas, the earth, ALL of it and SEE Him! Then in 7 and 8 we see how God reveals Himself in His Word;

7 The instructions of the LORD are perfect,
reviving the soul.

The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.

8 The commandments of the LORD are right,
bringing joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are clear,
giving insight for living.

Pastor John Paul, Pastor Kason and I spent quite a bit of time and energy to put together this reading plan for you for 2019. Why? Because we believe that God wants to multiply Himself in AND through you. How will He do this? Through the way He reveals Himself in His Creation, His Word and the way He can use these things together with the church He surrounds us with to personally reveal Himself to you. His will is to for you to know Him more and more every day! We believe our Father will do this every day through His “instruction, decrees and commands” every day as you seek Him in these readings.

Your Friend,
Pastor Chad

THE Gospel of John

Introduction to John

Author, Date, and Recipients

John the son of Zebedee wrote this Gospel. He was a Jew, one of the original twelve disciples, and a member of Jesus' inner apostolic circle. He was referred to as the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (13: 23). John also wrote 1- 3 John and Revelation. He likely wrote his Gospel account between A.D. 70 (the date of the destruction of the temple) and A.D. 100 (the end of John's life). His original audience consisted of Jews and Gentiles living in the larger Greco-Roman world, in Ephesus and beyond, toward the close of the first century A.D.

The Gospel in John

Setting out to find a gospel-focus in John's Gospel might seem like the "challenge" of finding a mountain in a photo montage of the Swiss Alps—an exercise in the obvious. Yet there is a great difference between holding a travel brochure in your hand and actually standing at the base of the Alps. It is the difference between pleasant thoughts and soul-gripping wonder; a curious imagination and awe-fueled adoration; being well studied, and being knee-buckling stunned. John's Gospel is written not just to inform our minds but to inflame our hearts. Think of John's Gospel not so much as a book but as a destination. John is a tour guide of the Alps of the gospel. He says to us, his readers, "You've got to see Jesus for yourself. There's so much more to Jesus, and what he's done for you, than you can possibly imagine or even hope." Indeed, John didn't write merely to communicate trustworthy data (which he did), but to generate transforming doxology (which he does). As we meet Jesus in the text, John anticipates we will respond like the Samaritan woman whose story he shares with us: "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" (4: 29). To see Jesus in John's Gospel is to discover Christ and, consequently, to be changed forever. John speaks from a firsthand encounter with Jesus. He doesn't just tell about the One who came from "the Father's side" (1: 18); he writes as one who felt close enough to Jesus to rest his own head against Jesus' side (13: 23). This beloved disciple (20: 2) wants us to discover what he discovered—that from Jesus' fullness we receive "grace upon grace" (1: 16). From his prologue to his epilogue, John sets out to answer two primary questions: "Who is Jesus?" and "What has Jesus come into this world to accomplish?" John fixes our eyes on Jesus himself, the very embodiment of the gospel. John begins his Gospel heralding the advent of the new creation story—positioning Jesus as the principal character and carrier of the whole narrative. Unlike the other three Gospel writers (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), John did not structure his Gospel with a strict chronology in mind. His is both a selective and a strategic record. In fact, while all four Gospel writers focus their accounts ultimately on the death and resurrection of Jesus, John spends a full 40 percent of his account on this last week—the most crucial week of our Lord's life and of human history (John 12: 1– 20: 25). Everything John tells us about Jesus leads us to his cross and his empty tomb—to his substitutionary death and glorious resurrection. We don't have to guess about John's purpose and goal in writing his Gospel. John tells us that he chose particular stories and "signs" so that "you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20: 30– 31). Who is Jesus? He is the promised Messiah. Why did he come? Jesus has come to give us life—abundant life (10: 10), eternal life, the life of "the age to come" (cf. Luke 18: 30; Heb. 6: 5). The gospel of God's grace is so much more than a story about life after death. It is also a story about life before death—how through Jesus' death and resurrection the kingdom of God has already arrived and has restored fallen creatures, and the fallen creation, to their right relationship with the Lord of life. And one day this kingdom will arrive in fullness, eradicating all remaining sin and sadness. Let's begin our journey. With John, we will discover that there's not more than the gospel to bring fulfillment to our lives, just more of the gospel.

Outline

- I. Prologue: The Incarnate Word (1: 1– 18)
- II. Signs of the Messiah, with Teaching about Life in Him (1: 19– 11: 57)
- III. The Farewell Teaching and the Passion Narrative (12: 1– 20: 31)
- IV. Epilogue: The Roles of Peter and of the Disciple Whom Jesus Loved (21: 1– 25)



January

READING PLAN

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Passage</u>
Sunday	1/6/19	John 1:1-18
Monday	1/7/19	John 1:19-28
Tuesday	1/8/19	John 1:29-34
Wednesday	1/9/19	John 1:35-51
Thursday	1/10/19	John 2:1-12
Friday	1/11/19	John 2:13-22
Saturday	1/12/19	John 2:23-25
Sunday	1/13/19	John 3:1-15
Monday	1/14/19	John 3:16-21
Tuesday	1/15/19	John 3:22-36
Wednesday	1/16/19	John 4:1-15
Thursday	1/17/19	John 4:16-26
Friday	1/18/19	John 4:27-38
Saturday	1/19/19	John 4:39-43
Sunday	1/20/19	John 5:1-9
Monday	1/21/19	John 5:10-17
Tuesday	1/22/19	John 5:18-47
Wednesday	1/23/19	John 6:1-21
Thursday	1/24/19	John 6:22-59
Friday	1/25/19	John 6:60-71
Saturday	1/26/19	John 7:1-13
Sunday	1/27/19	John 7:14-24
Monday	1/28/19	John 7:25-44
Tuesday	1/29/19	John 7:45-52
Wednesday	1/30/19	John 8:12-20
Thursday	1/31/19	John 8:21-30



February

READING PLAN

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Passage</u>
Friday	2/1/19	John 8:31-59
Saturday	2/2/19	John 9:1-7
Sunday	2/3/19	John 9:8-12
Monday	2/4/19	John 9:13-34
Tuesday	2/5/19	John 9:35-41
Wednesday	2/6/19	John 10:1-21
Thursday	2/7/19	John 10:22-41
Friday	2/8/19	John 11:1-16
Saturday	2/9/19	John 11:17-27
Sunday	2/10/19	John 11:28-37
Monday	2/11/19	John 11:38-44
Tuesday	2/12/19	John 11:45-57
Wednesday	2/13/19	John 12:1-8
Thursday	2/14/19	John 12:12-19
Friday	2/15/19	John 12:20-26
Saturday	2/16/19	John 12:27-36
Sunday	2/17/19	John 13:1-11
Monday	2/18/19	John 13:12-20
Tuesday	2/19/19	John 13:21-30
Wednesday	2/20/19	John 13:31-35
Thursday	2/21/19	John 13:36-38
Friday	2/22/19	John 14:1-11
Saturday	2/23/19	John 14:12-14
Sunday	2/24/19	John 14:15
Monday	2/25/19	John 14:16-31
Tuesday	2/26/19	John 15:1-11
Wednesday	2/27/19	John 15:12-17
Thursday	2/28/19	John 15:18-16:4



March

READING PLAN

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Passage</u>
Friday	3/1/19	John 16:4-15
Saturday	3/2/19	John 16:16-24
Sunday	3/3/19	John 16:25-33
Monday	3/4/19	John 17:1-5
Tuesday	3/5/19	John 17:6-19
Wednesday	3/6/19	John 17:20-26
Thursday	3/7/19	John 18:1-14
Friday	3/8/19	John 18:15-18, 25-27
Saturday	3/9/19	John 18:28-32
Sunday	3/10/19	John 18:33-40
Monday	3/11/19	John 19:1-16
Tuesday	3/12/19	John 19:17-27
Wednesday	3/13/19	John 19:28-37
Thursday	3/14/19	John 20:1-10
Friday	3/15/19	John 20:11-18
Saturday	3/16/19	John 20:19-31
Sunday	3/17/19	John 20:30-31
Monday	3/18/19	John 21:1-8
Tuesday	3/19/19	John 21:9-14
Wednesday	3/20/19	John 21:15-19
Thursday	3/21/19	John 21:20-25

THE Gospel of Matthew

Author and Date

Matthew was probably written in the late 50s or early 60s A.D. The author is Matthew (also called Levi), the former tax collector who became Jesus' disciple.

The Gospel in Matthew

Matthew's Gospel is focused on explaining what the gospel is and how it should be applied in the lives of Jesus' disciples. For Matthew, the gospel is the good news that God has inaugurated the final stage of his plan to reclaim the world from the destruction of sin and establish his just and merciful reign over it (4: 23; 9: 35; 11: 5). God has given the central role in this final stage of his work to Jesus, his long-awaited and specially designated King (2: 2; 21: 5; 25: 34). Where Jesus is present in Matthew's Gospel, God and his kingdom are present (1: 23; 12: 28). The reign of God is evident when Jesus banishes demons; heals the sick, the lame, and the blind; and gathers together a group of people whose lives are to demonstrate God's just and merciful character (4: 23; 5: 16; 9: 35; 11: 4- 5; 12: 28). All this is cause for celebration to those who know they need deliverance from sin—to the poor in spirit (5: 3), the grieving (5: 4), those who long to see justice done (5: 6, 10- 11), those who know they need forgiveness for their sins (6: 12; 9: 10- 13; 11: 19), and those laboring under the burden of religious rule-keeping (11: 28- 30). When Jesus, like his predecessor John the Baptist, preaches the need to turn from sin and follow Jesus in light of God's coming kingdom (3: 1- 17; 4: 17), these people embrace this message of deliverance without hesitating (4: 20, 22) and with joy (13: 44). Matthew also paints a sobering picture of those who reject Jesus and his message. Surprisingly, Jesus' most energetic opponents are religious leaders who value so highly the recognition that comes from their positions of leadership and their clever interpretations of Scripture (23: 1- 7; see also 6: 2, 5, 16) that they have become blind to its more basic principles (23: 23). They would rather talk about the fine points of blasphemy, Sabbath, and tithing law than show compassion to the needy (9: 1- 7; 12: 1- 14; 23: 23). They would rather find subtle ways around the fundamental principles of God's law, such as honoring parents, than make the sacrifices necessary for keeping it (15: 3- 9). This radical contrast between the evil that is in their hearts and their outward piety and concern for God's law shows that they are moving toward eternal destruction (23: 15, 33). Even more disturbing, however, is Matthew's portrait of those who claim to be followers of Jesus but whose claims will be found empty on the day of judgment. Like Jesus' real disciples they will have done much in his name, but Jesus will order them to depart from him because they were lawless (7: 21- 23; 22: 11- 14; 25: 11- 12) and because they neglected his disciples who needed food, clothing, medical attention, and support while in prison (25: 41- 46). This does not mean that Matthew sees good works as the basis for entering God's kingdom. Instead, the condition of the heart will determine who enters God's kingdom on the day of judgment, and one's deeds will be the outward manifestation of that condition. The healthy tree bears good fruit and the diseased tree bears bad fruit (7: 17- 20; 12: 33- 37). The condition of the heart defiles a person, says Jesus, and the heart's condition is revealed in the evil thoughts, words, and actions that come out of it (15: 10- 20). This is why Jesus can say that, on the day of judgment, people will be either justified or condemned by their words: these words reveal their heart condition (12: 36- 37). How can one's heart be in the right condition? Those for whom following Jesus is more important than anything else in life can be sure they are on the road to eternal life (16: 24- 27). This is what Jesus means when he insists on perfection from his disciples (5: 48; 19: 21). They certainly are not capable of being morally perfect in this life. Indeed, Jesus has deep compassion for sinners who need his forgiveness (9: 9- 13; 11: 19). He demonstrates this in the restoration of his disciples after their miserable failure during his arrest and execution (28: 7, 10, 18- 20). As a consequence, Jesus' disciples become perfect in the sense that their desires and affections belong to him. They recognize that they must entirely depend upon him to provide what they most need—him. Like the merchant in the parable (13: 45- 46), they have found the one person who gives value to life, and they have put everything they have at his disposal (see also 4: 20, 22; 13: 44; 16: 24- 26; 19: 21- 22, 27- 30; 26: 6- 13). Certainly they will fail, but, unlike Judas, recognition of their failure will send them to Jesus, who blesses the poor in spirit, promises rest to the weary, and gave his own life so that their sins might be forgiven (5: 3; 11: 28; 26: 28).

Outline

- I. The Arrival of Jesus the Messiah (1: 1- 2: 23)
- II. John the Baptist Prepares for the Messianic Kingdom (3: 1- 17)
- III. Jesus the Messiah Begins to Advance the Messianic Kingdom (4: 1- 25)
- IV. The Authoritative Message of the Messiah: Kingdom Life for His Disciples (5: 1- 7: 29)
- V. The Authoritative Power of the Messiah: Kingdom Power Demonstrated (8: 1- 9: 38)
- VI. The Authoritative Mission of the Messiah's Messengers (10: 1- 42)
- VII. Opposition to the Messiah Increases (11: 1- 12: 50)
- VIII. The Messianic Kingdom Revealed in Parables (13: 1- 53)
- IX. The Identity of the Messiah Revealed (13: 54- 16: 20)
- X. The Suffering of the Messiah Revealed (16: 21- 17: 27)
- XI. The Community of the Messiah Revealed (18: 1- 20: 34)
- XII. The Messiah Asserts His Authority over Jerusalem (21: 1- 23: 39)
- XIII. The Delay, Return, and Judgment of the Messiah (24: 1- 25: 46)
- XIV. The Crucified Messiah (26: 1- 27: 66)
- XV. The Resurrection and Commission of the Messiah (28: 1- 20)



March

READING PLAN CONTINUED

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Passage</u>
Friday	3/22/19	Matt 1:1-17
Saturday	3/23/19	Matt 1:21-23
Sunday	3/24/19	Matt 2:1-12
Monday	3/25/19	Matt 3:1-12
Tuesday	3/26/19	Matt 3:13-4:11
Wednesday	3/27/19	Matt 4:12-17
Thursday	3/28/19	Matt 4:23-25
Friday	3/29/19	Matt 5:1
Saturday	3/30/19	Matt 5:3-7
Sunday	3/31/19	Matt 5:13-16



Midweek Schedule

Throughout this year, we will be working through reinforcing our foundation by focusing on Bible Basics. You will notice that in conjunction with our monthly panel discussions on sundays, we will allow time during those weeks to dive deeper into the subjects that we discuss.

Here is our Schedule for Quarter 1.

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>
Jan 2	Intro
Jan 9	Vision Frame 2019
Jan 16	The Concept of the Bible
Jan 23	The History of the Bible
Jan 30	The Mechanics of the Bible
Feb 6	Panel Breakdown
Feb 13	Why Jesus
Feb 20	Background of Jesus
Feb 27	The Humanity of Jesus
March 6	Panel Breakdown
March 13	The Divinity of Jesus
March 20	The Work of Jesus
March 27	Intro to the OT