



grace
in place of *grace*

Walking Through the Book of John DEVOTIONAL | WEEK 5 | FEBRUARY 23

RECEIVE

This week we will move through three different chapters that all connect on a similar theme. Before you begin with the chapters for this week, take a moment and return to John chapter 1. Read verses 1–5 before you begin to read the chapters for this week (**3, 7, and 19**). As you read along, make notes on the way John uses the theme of light and darkness in these chapters and how they connect to John 1:1–5.

REFLECT

1. In chapter 3, we meet a Pharisee named Nicodemus. What do you notice about him? Why do you think he comes to Jesus at night?
2. Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus is a famous dialogue about being "born again." What does this phrase mean? How do you understand their conversation?
3. In 3:19–21, Jesus talks about the light coming into the world but people preferring darkness because of their evil deeds. Why do you think people choose to live in the shadows? What does stepping into the light cost us?
4. In chapter 7:1–13, the disciples engage with Jesus in a robust conversation about how public His ministry should be. What are the reasons they wanted Him to reveal Himself to the world? Why does Jesus resist? The confusion about Jesus continues throughout this chapter. What are the arguments that you see unfolding here about who Jesus is or is not?

5. In 7:6 and 7:30, John writes that Jesus' time, "had not yet come." What does this phrase mean?
6. How do you see the themes of light and darkness unfolding in this chapter? How do you define spiritual darkness? Can you name a time in your life when you have seen God's light? Or a time when you experienced spiritual darkness?
7. Why did the Pharisees have such a strong reaction to Jesus healing the blind man?
8. What are some of the strong reactions to the light of Jesus that you have noticed in others or, that you have had yourself? Where does doubt and mistrust come from? How can we offer a helpful response?

RESPOND

We live in a polarized world divided into tribes who often use religion to make their point. The goal of Jesus is to draw all people together and to pull them into the light yet these passages reveal how much debate and division surrounded Jesus. That same debate and division surround us today. Pray this week that you can be a calming presence among the chaos of our time. Pray that God would use you to shine a light into dark places and not fall into the pitfall of argument and division.

BLESSING

This week may you catch glimpses of God's light in every shadow you encounter. When you dare to open your eyes in the dark, may they adjust to find that even when it feels dim, God's light is still there. And may you reach out to others who find themselves in the dark, whether their own darkness or your shared shadows. May the light of Christ shine forever and always upon you.

READ FOR NEXT WEEK



Reading Plan | Grace in Place of Grace

Week 1 | January 26 | John 1

Week 2 | February 2 | John 2 & 3

Week 3 | February 9 | John 4 & 5

Week 4 | February 16 | John 6 & 7:13

Week 5 | February 23 | John 7:14–8

Week 6 | March 2 | John 9 & 10