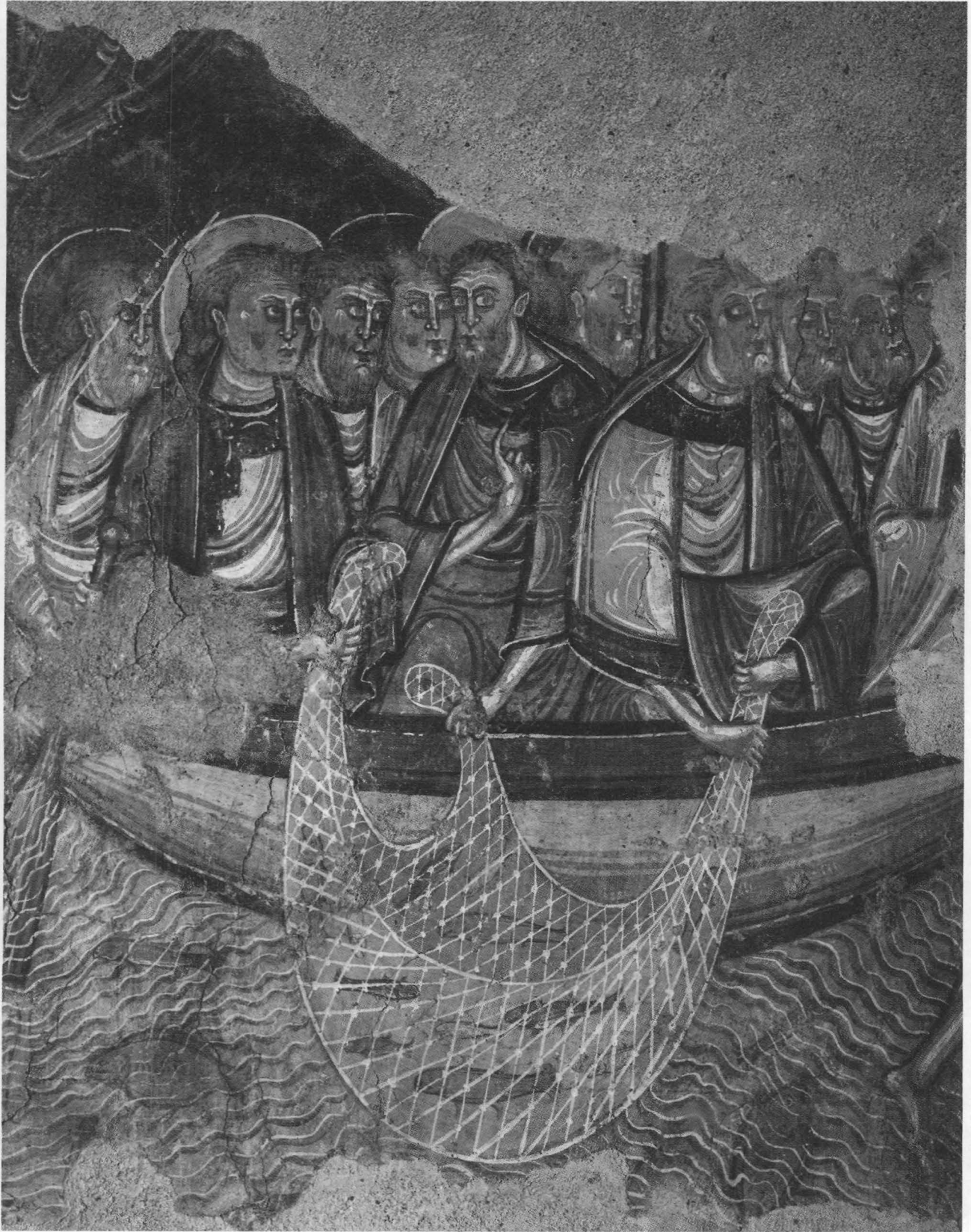
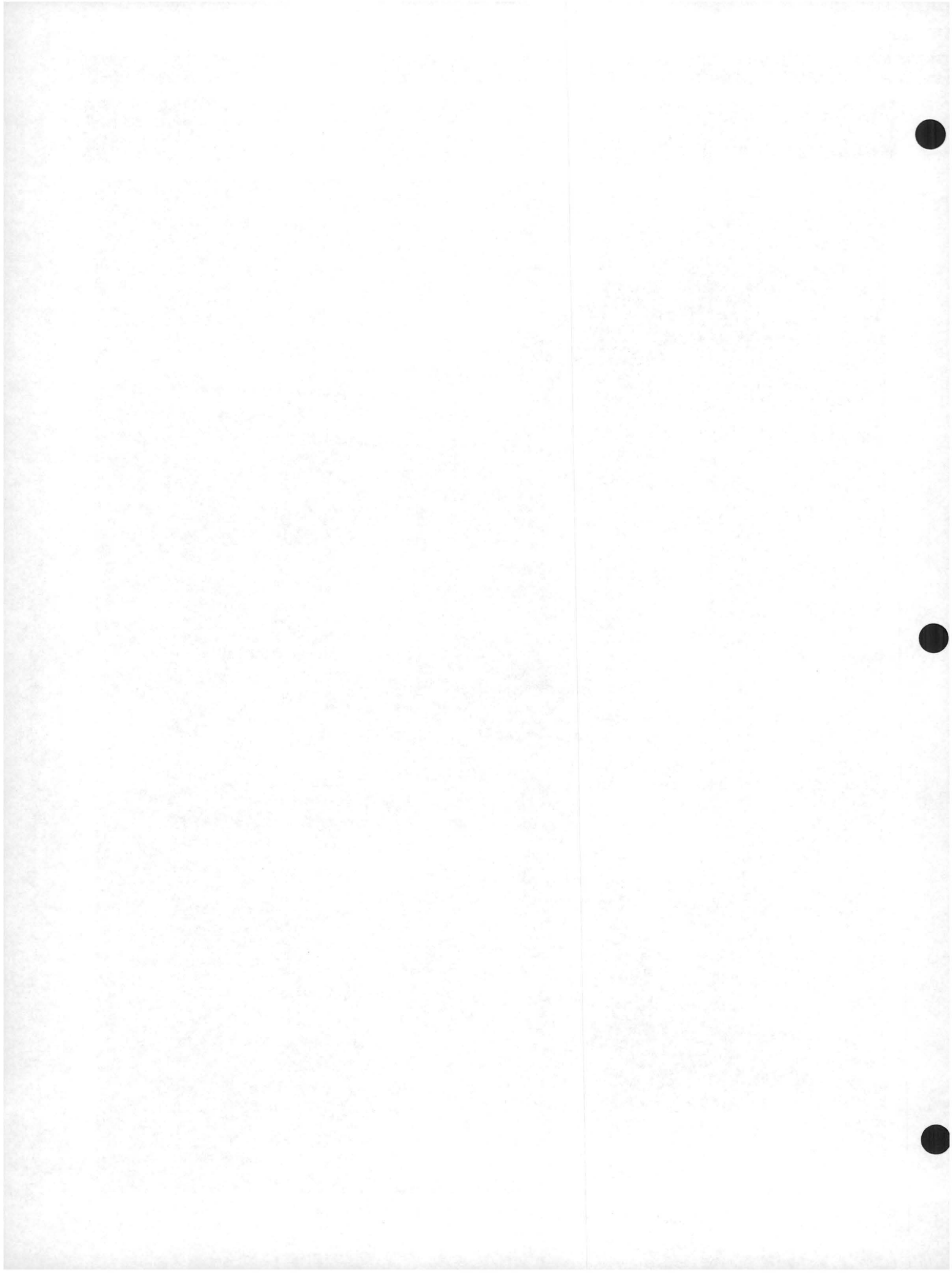


Study Guide





The Messenger Is the Message

Distribute before session 1 for use in session 1.

John 1:1–18

Opening Thought

"This is the unique, tender, genuine chief Gospel. . . . Should a tyrant succeed in destroying the Holy Scriptures and only a single copy of the Epistle to the Romans and the Gospel according to John escape him, Christianity would be saved" (Martin Luther).

Bible Verses for Memorization

"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Resources for Worship

Call to Worship

Leader: O God, our Father, be with us as we begin this new study.

Assembly: When we pray, help us to concentrate our thoughts on You.

Leader: When we read Your Word, help us to understand it and what it means for us.

Assembly: When we communicate with one another, help us to do it with love and with kindness.

Leader: So inspire us, help us to grow, to learn,

Assembly: to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing [we] may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

Prayer

Come, Spirit of the living God, mold us and shape us with Your holy Word, so that we "may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing [we] may have life in His name." Amen.

Hymn

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all.

Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all.

Crown Him, you martyrs of our God,
Who from His altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod
And crown Him Lord of all.
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod
And crown Him Lord of all.

O seed of Israel's chosen race,
Now ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace
And crown Him Lord of all.
Hail Him who saves you by His grace
And crown Him Lord of all.

Hail Him, you heirs of David's line,
Whom David Lord did call,
The God Incarnate, man divine,
And crown Him Lord of all.
The God Incarnate, man divine,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall,
Go, spread your trophies at His feet
And crown Him Lord of all.
Go, spread your trophies at His feet
And crown Him Lord of all.

Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe
On this terrestrial ball
To Him all majesty ascribe
And crown Him Lord of all.
To Him all majesty ascribe
And crown Him Lord of all.

Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song
And crown Him Lord of all.
We'll join the everlasting song
And crown Him Lord of all.

Edward Perronet, sts. 1–5, alt.; John Rippon, sts. 6, 7, alt.

Preparing to Study John's Gospel Read John 1:1–18

The Purpose of John's Gospel

1. If you are familiar with the Gospel of John, do you have a favorite chapter or verse? If so, what is it, and

why is it your favorite?

2. What is the purpose of this book according to the writer (John 20:30–31)?

3. What proof does John provide throughout the Gospel that Jesus is the Son of God? Find examples in John 2:1–11 and 11:38–44.

4. How does Jesus refer to Himself in these passages from John's Gospel?

a. John 8:58 (compare with Exodus 3:13–14)

b. John 6:35

c. John 10:11

d. John 11:25

e. John 14:6

f. John 15:1

5. The Book of John supplements the other three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), which are sometimes called the synoptic Gospels. The word *synoptic* comes from two Greek words meaning "to see together." The word is applied to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, since these Gospels share a common basic outline or structure. The eagle came to symbolize John's Gospel,

because the eagle was thought to soar higher—and closer to God—than any other bird. As we study the Gospel, we can expect not only words about eternal life but also words for our everyday living.

a. What does Jesus tell us in John 10:10b?

b. Put what you think this means into your own words.

About the Author

6. Though there has been some debate on the authorship of this Gospel, the majority of Bible scholars believe it was written by the apostle John around A.D. 90, toward the end of his life. Who was John's father (Mark 1:19–20)?

By comparing Mark 16:1 and Matthew 27:56, we may determine that John's mother was Salome. By comparing Matthew 27:56 and John 19:25, we may further conclude that Salome and Mary the mother of Jesus were sisters. This would make Jesus and John first cousins.

7. How did John and his brother respond when Jesus called them to become His disciples (Mark 1:19–20)?

8. a. What strange nickname did Jesus give to John and his brother (Mark 3:17)?

b. Why was the name fitting (Luke 9:51–54)?

Introducing the Messenger

Distribute before session 2 for use in session 2.

John 1:19–2:25

Opening Thought

There is a story about a doctor who saw an injured dog lying at the edge of the road. He stopped his car, put the large dog into his car, took him home, and mended his wounds. After a few days, the dog was well again. One day, the doctor accidentally left the door open, and before he knew it the dog ran out of the house and disappeared down the street. The doctor thought to himself, What an ungrateful dog! He could have at least waved his tail in thanks or barked to say good-bye. The next evening, the doctor heard scratching at his door. When he opened the door, he discovered the large dog had come back, and accompanying him was another dog who had been injured.

Bible Verses for Memorization

“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19–20).

Resources for Worship

Call to Worship

Leader: “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29),

Assembly: Come, Lamb of God, and through this study of Your Word may we see “heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (John 1:51).

Leader: Come, “Rabbi” (John 1:38),

Assembly: Be our teacher, our instructor, and give us wisdom, understanding, and a stronger faith.

Leader: Come, “Son of God, King of Israel” (John 2:49),

Assembly: Make us faithful disciples who follow obediently and courageously.

Leader: Come, and as at the wedding of Cana,

Assembly: Be our guest so that we might see Your glory and put our faith in You (John 2:11).

Leader: So that we might “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing [we] may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

All: Amen.

Hymn

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I’d love Thee, Truly I’d serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flow’rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
He makes our sorr’wing spirit sing.

Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration
Now and forevermore be Thine!

Gesangbusch, Münster; tr. Joseph A. Seiss

Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, move us through this study to introduce others to our beautiful Savior with our words and our actions. Amen.

Prayer Suggestions for the Week

Like a marriage, prayer life may die because of the lack of newness. Too often our prayers are the same every day—same time, same place, same words! This week, try different styles of praying. Here are a few suggestions for the week: day 1—pray a favorite memorized prayer, even one from childhood (for example, “Now I lay me down to sleep”); day 2—pray a favorite hymn (for example, “Just as I Am, Without One Plea,”); day 3—pray a favorite psalm (for example, Psalm 23); day 4—pray a prayer of a famous Christian writer (for example, Luther’s prayers or Peter Marshall’s prayers); day 5—pray an extemporaneous prayer (from the heart); day 6—pray silently, away from the maddening crowds; day 7—write out a prayer. Remember each day to include the individual members of your LifeLight Bible study.

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 2

Day 1 • Read John 1:19–28

1. What question is repeatedly asked of John (vv. 19, 22)?

2. a. John said he is *not* Elijah (v. 21). Why would people be expecting Elijah (Malachi 4:5–6)?

b. What was John's connection to Elijah (Luke 1:17)?

c. John used the words of Isaiah 40:3–4 to explain his identity. Royal officials might go before visiting royalty, making certain the route was clear and safe for the approaching royal persons. Today roads may be cleared for visiting dignitaries. How did John urge the people to prepare for the coming King, Jesus? See Mark 1:4.

3. The Pharisees believed they earned God's favor because they strictly obeyed the Law and because they were descended from Abraham. Also, Old Testament baptisms were usually reserved for Gentile converts to Judaism. Why, then, would John's command to repent and be baptized offend the Pharisees and cause them to challenge John's authority?

4. A code governing conduct among disciples and teachers during Jesus' time required disciples to perform everything the teacher requested except untying his sandal thong—this was a task reserved for slaves.

a. What attitude did John show in the statement he made in John 1:27 and in John 3:30?

b. What opportunities do you have in your own life to show humility by serving God and other people?

Day 2 • Read John 1:29–34

5. a. What does John testify about Jesus (1:29)?

b. **Challenge question.** What do these Old Testament references add to your understanding of the significance of the title John gave to Jesus?

Genesis 22:8 (If you are unfamiliar with this reference, read Genesis 22:1–13.)

Exodus 12:1–3, 5–8, 12–14

1 Corinthians 5:7

Isaiah 53:4–7

6. Why is the title "Lamb of God" appropriate for Jesus (Hebrews 9:6–7, 11–14; 1 Peter 1:18–19)?