

October 14th, 2026

DAY 1

1. Begin your study time with prayer. What is a prophecy and what is its purpose in the Bible?

2. Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22-23. What is the prophecy predicted and how is it fulfilled? What does Immanuel translate to?

3. Read Isaiah Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:1-6. What is the prophecy predicted and how is it fulfilled?

4. Read Genesis 3:15- this is known as the protoevangelium, or the first proclamation that a savior will come. Now read Galatians 4:4. What is the prophecy and how is it fulfilled?

5. Write out this week's memory verse on a notecard or a piece of paper and post it somewhere you will see often (ex: bathroom mirror, desk, bedroom, backpack, etc).

MEMORY VERSE

"And the Word
became flesh, and
dwelt among us, and
we saw His glory,
glory as of [b]the only
begotten from the
Father, full of grace
and truth."

-John 1:14

I'M PRAYING ABOUT:

GOD WITH US

DAY 2

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Luke 2:1-40.
2. What stands out to you regarding the birth of Jesus?
3. There was a man named Simeon in the temple. What had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit?
4. What did Simeon reveal to Mary regarding what would happen to Jesus?
5. Write out this week's memory verse below.

DAY 3

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Matthew 1:18-25. What does the angel who appeared proclaim about why Jesus will be born?
2. What does the name Jesus mean? What does Christ mean? (His name reveals His purpose!)
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:15, 2 Corinthians 5:21 and 1 John 3:5. What do all these verses proclaim about the purpose of Jesus' life?
4. In your own words, why is sin so serious and how can we be forgiven?
5. Write out this week's memory verse below.

GOD WITH US

DAY 4

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Galatians 4:4-5 and 2 Corinthians 5:21. According to these verses why did Jesus have to be born a human being?
2. Read Hebrews 9:22;10:4. According to this verse why did Jesus have to be born human?
3. Read Hebrews 4:15. According to this verse why did Jesus have to be born human?
4. Read 1 John 4:2-3. According to this verse, what must a Christ follower believe about Jesus' physical humanity?
5. Write out this week's memory verse below.

DAY 5

1. Begin your study time with prayer and read Philippians 2:5-8. This section of Scripture is the perfect portrayal of Jesus' divinity and humanity- time to dive in!
2. According to this passage, what ways did Jesus humble himself?
3. What does it mean that Jesus "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped"? How often do you display the opposite mindset and try to grasp at things you think you deserve?
4. How did Jesus empty Himself in vs 7? Even though Jesus made Himself a servant, does that mean He ceased to be God? What are some examples of Jesus' servitude? Of His divine abilities?
5. Write out this week's memory verse below.

October 7th, 2026

Weekly Bible Reading Plan

- John 1:6-13
- Isaiah 40:3
- Malachi 4:5-6
- Luke 7:28
- John 3:28-30
- Luke 1:17

Series Theme Verse

Hebrews 1:1-3 NASB | God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, **2** in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. **3** And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

John 1:6-13 NASB | There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. **8** He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light. **9** There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. **11** He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. **12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Isaiah 40:3 NASB | A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

Malachi 4:5-6 NASB | Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. **6** He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.

Luke 7:28 NASB | I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

John 3:28-30 NASB | You yourselves are my witness that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.' **29** He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So the joy of mine has been made full. **30** He must increase, but I must decrease.

Luke 1:17 NASB | It is he who will go *as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

Ice Breaker

Activity: The Proclaimer

Have each student write their name on a piece of paper, fold it, and place it in a pile. Mix up the papers, then have each student draw one name from the pile. It's okay if a student draws their own name. Give each student 30-60 seconds to describe the name they had drawn without actually saying their name. After they finish their description, the group will try to guess which student they were describing. Once every student has made their guess, have the student reveal the name they drew. Repeat as often as the students desire.

Connection:

John the Baptist had one mission: preparing the world for the coming of the Messiah and making Him known to the world once He revealed Himself. John preached a message of repentance and said that there would be Someone mightier that will come after him (John 1:27). John later revealed Jesus to the world saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who ranks before me, because He was before me'" (John 1:29b-30).

John had only the Old Testament scriptures and the guiding of the Holy Spirit to describe who this Savior is. In a similar way, the students only have their paper and what they see/know of the person they selected to get the group to guess who it is. This is a great opportunity for the students to get to know each other. Along with getting to know each other better, the point of this activity is to put ourselves in John's shoes; when we know who we are assigned to proclaim and we need to make their name known to the group.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What stuck out to you from the message?
2. How do you prepare the way for Jesus?
3. How do you invite Jesus to increase in your life?
4. God had a plan for the mission He put on John's life. What do you think God's mission is for your life?
5. Do you have any prayer requests?

LEADER GUIDE- Ashton speaking

Last week, we learned about the different camera angles that God gives us with the four gospels, along with the purpose that each of them serve and the audiences they're tailored to. Coming into this week, we will be leveraging these four gospels to investigate John the Baptist. Similarly to each gospel providing a different perspective to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, each gospel exposes different details to the life, ministry, and death of John the Baptist.

It was foretold through the prophet Isaiah that a man would clear a way for the Lord, roughly 700 years before the angel Gabriel came to Zechariah and Elizabeth to tell them that they would bear a son named John fulfill this very prophecy; the prophecy of the proclaimer. The Holy Spirit was in John even while he was in his mothers womb. Through the Spirit, when John sensed the presence of the conceived Jesus in Mary, he leapt in his mothers womb. We see John as the proclaimer again when he first meets Jesus during his ministry in John 1:29b saying, "...Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

This week, we will explore the bold life that John had modeled. He unapologetically led the nations to repentance and set an exceptional example of what it means to humbly live and die for Christ. In fact, John likely wouldn't appreciate the idea of a message being about him (see Mark 1:7, John 3:30). However, it is important that we do not direct our attention to John himself, but the purpose that the Lord had put on his life and his obedience through that. We should be looking at John as an example of what it means to live out the great commission - not out of obligation, but out of a love and desire to serve Jesus and point others to Him.

1. What stuck out to you from the message?

2. How do you prepare the way for Jesus?

Leader follow-up:

John models a bold example of what it means to prepare the way for Jesus by urging God's people to come to repentance. Going to the extent of publicly rebuking Herod Antipas for the sin he was living in, ultimately leading to his own death. As believers, we are called to making the gospel known to all the world. There are a myriad of ways we can do that. Use this as an opportunity with your students to identify how they're representing Jesus in their families, friend groups, classes, teams, etc.

- **Matthew 29:11** - The Great Commission (preach, baptize, disciple)
- **Philippians 1:20-21** - We will not be ashamed but will honor Christ with our bodies through life and death. To live is in Christ and to die is to gain
- **1 Corinthians 11:1** - Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ
- **Ephesians 5:1-2** - Be imitators of God, walk in love
- **1 Peter 1:13-17** - Be sober, set your mind on the grace of Jesus. Don't be conformed to the passions of your past. Be holy as He is holy
- **Hebrews 6:10-12** - God sees the work that you do for Him. Don't be sluggish, but be imitators of the faith with patience

3. How do you invite Jesus to increase in your life?

Leader follow-up:

When John's disciples were talking with the Pharisees, they noticed that great crowds were gathering to be baptized by Jesus and His disciples. Eventually, John's disciples brought it to his attention that everyone was going to Jesus. John asked his disciples to recall when he told them that he is not the Messiah,

but the one to come before Him. John revealed that Jesus is the promised Messiah. John rejoiced as the friend of the bridegroom, because the bridegroom had finally come for His bride. John concludes by saying in John 3:30 that “He must increase, but I must decrease”.

As believers, we’re ought to have this mindset as well. To humble ourselves and earnestly seek out different opportunities for God to be glorified, whether it is through us or another member of the body. Use this opportunity to ask your students how they let Jesus increase in their lives and for their fleshly desires to decrease?

- **Galatians 5:24** - For those who belong in Christ have crucified their flesh, passions, and desires
 - **Matthew 16:24** - If anyone is to follow Jesus, they are to deny themselves and take up their cross to follow Him
 - **2 Corinthians 12:9** - God’s power is made perfect in our weakness. Boast in our weakness so Christ’s power may rest on us
 - **1 Corinthians 1:31** - If we are to boast, we boast in the Lord
 - **Hebrews 13:20-21** - Through the blood of Jesus, we are equipped with everything good to do what is pleasing in His sight and within His will
 - **Colossians 1:29** - We struggle with all of our energy so God may work powerfully within us
 - **Romans 8:28** - All things work together for good, for those called to His purpose
 - **Psalms 34:1-5** - Why believers should exalt the Lord
-
-
-

4. God had a plan for the mission He put on John’s life. What do you think God’s mission is for your life?

Leader follow-up:

In the Old Testament, we see that God promised to send Elijah before the great and awesome day of the Lord (Micah 4:5-6). Gabriel confirmed that Elizabeth would birth this prophet in his message to Zechariah. All of that’s to say; God had a plan for John, and John was obedient to that plan. From spending his life in the wilderness until he was called to his ministry, to making Jesus known to the world, John was obedient to the calling the Lord had for him.

We know that the Lord has a plan and a calling for all of us. Middle and high school can be a challenging time, between the distractions of the world and the distractions of the flesh, the students can be overwhelmed. Despite the distractions and temptations we face, there is assurance that our struggles are not in vein, because the Lord has a purpose for it, and it is to prepare us for the calling He has.

Your students may not know what calling the Lord had put on their heart. And they don’t need to know what that is yet. Whether they know or not, our God has a great plan for them. Use this as an opportunity for them to reflect on that with some verses to encourage them. Until that plan is identified, they should find opportunities to bring Him glory in all areas of their lives.

- **Ephesians 2:10** - We are made for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them
- **Psalms 139:13-16** - God knitted us in our mother's womb and are fearfully and wonderfully made. When we were made in secret, we were intricately woven by Him.
- **Jeremiah 29:11** - God has great plans for us. Plans for prosperity, hope, and a future; not to harm us
- **1 Corinthians 10:31** - Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God
- **Proverbs 16:3** - Commit your work to the Lord and He will establish your plans

5. Do you have any prayer requests?

Challenge:

Hand out the homework/digging deeper.

Upcoming Events:

10/9 (Friday) Worship Night
 10/14 (Wed) War in the Woods
 10/16 (Friday) - High School Cedar Point
 10/17 (Saturday) Flint City Food Drive

