

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankston.rpca.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on John by John Calvin, William Hendriksen, and Kent Hughes. *The notes and reading this week are a repeat of the week of 26/12/2012*

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading John 1:1-5 In the Beginning

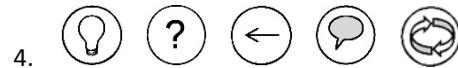
Notes John introduces Jesus as “the Word.” *A word serves two distinct purposes: a. it gives expression to the inner thought, the soul of the man, doing this even though no one else is present to hear what is said or to read what is thought; and b. it reveals this thought (hence, the soul of the speaker) to others. Christ is the Word of God in both respects: he expresses or reflects the mind of God; also, he reveals God to man.* (Hendriksen)

And, what a Powerful Word is revealed. *It is rightly said that each of the Gospels presents Christ with a distinctive emphasis. Matthew emphasizes his kingship, Mark his servanthood, Luke his manhood, and ...John is unique in his powerful presentation of Jesus as the great Creator-God of the universe.* (Hughes)

Jesus – the eternally existent God the Son – is the creator of the world. Jesus – the eternal light of the world – is the only way to escape the darkness and find true life.

Do you know this Jesus? Each time you read a bit more, study a bit more, understand a bit more, do you find yourself marvelling a bit more and loving Him a bit more?

- Questions**
1. How is Jesus the Word?
 2. When did Jesus begin?
 3. What does John reveal in these verses that Jesus has done?



Praise Psalm 128b²

- Pray**
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to know better the Word, by God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading John 1:29-34 Behold the Lamb of God

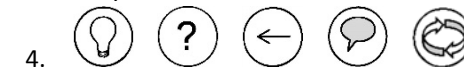
Notes Now we hear more of what John’s testimony was. Not only was Jesus coming as the conquering King, he was also coming as a lamb – as the lamb of God. What a contrast – a victorious King and a young lamb! Not merely a pet lamb, but a lamb to be offered as a sacrifice. And, even more significantly, a lamb to be offered as a sacrifice that would truly take away sin!

No one else could do it. No one else could undo the terrible curse of sin and death that Adam brought into the world by his sin. Only this King/this Lamb. No wonder those ten thousand times ten thousand who are saved will proclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing!” (Rev. 5:12)

In sharp contrast with the worthiness of the Lamb, John admitted he was not even worthy to untie His sandal straps. Yet he was committed to announcing that this One would not only give the motive to repent and believe, but also the grace required. John testifies of what he has seen, “This is the Son of God.”

John the gospel writer has the same testimony and in fact announces that the reason he wrote this account of the life and ministry of Jesus was so that his readers *may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing may have life in His name.* (John 20:31) Do you believe? Do you have this life?

- Questions**
1. Who did John announce Jesus to be?
 2. How does the Lamb of God take away sin?
 3. Why did these two Johns announce Jesus?



Praise Psalm 128b

- Pray**
1. Rejoice with your family that you have life in the Lamb
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

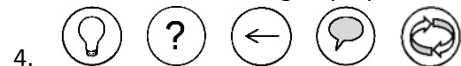
Reading John 1:19-28 Do you hear that voice?

Notes In these snapshots of the introduction of Jesus’ earthly life and ministry, John returns now to the other John, the Baptist. Who was this man, John? A lot of people wanted to know. Some suspected that John himself was the long promised Messiah (perhaps because he was sprinkling the waters of baptism on the repentant (see v.25 and Isaiah 52:15). Others thought he was Elijah (see Malachi 4:5-6) or “The Prophet” (see Deut. 18:15,18)

But each time, John answered, emphatically, “No.” So, finally they asked, “Who do you say you are?” John told them. *He did not say, “I am the Word.” He reached back 700 years to the words prophesied in Isaiah 40 (vv. 3–5) and said, “I am just a voice.” He was not the substance but just the communicator. Borrowing the imagery from that Old Testament passage, he was saying, “I am merely a workman making a road for the Messiah.”* (Hughes)

And, the implied figure is that of a king who is about to visit a province of his realm... Surely, when a king is about to visit his people, the road must be prepared so that he may enter in state, without any difficulties or obstructions. Thus also, the Baptist wishes to say, the Jews... should make straight the Lord’s highway that leads into their hearts. Genuine sorrow for sin and a prayer for mercy and pardon are required (Hendriksen) – and that of God’s grace!

- Questions**
1. Who did the Jews think John was? Why?
 2. Who did John say that he was?
 3. What was his message, “prepare the way of the Lord” saying?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 128b
1. Commit with your family to be a witness of Jesus the King
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading John 1:6-8 A man sent from God

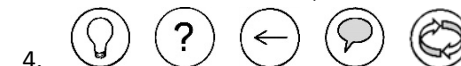
Notes John pauses a minute in his introduction of the Word to introduce another John. This John, often called “the Baptist” was sent from God. What a commendation! How we should long to be known as someone “sent by God.”

And why did God send this man whose name was John? He came for a witness – not to himself in any way (and John fulfilled that role exactly – see vs.15 and John 3:30-31) but to Jesus, the Light. As a witness, he came *to give competent testimony concerning that which [he had] himself seen, heard, [and] experienced.* (Hendriksen)

John came to tell others to come to the Light – to Jesus – to believe in Him and to find life in Him. *The Baptist’s intention was that all those who heard his testimony might embrace Christ by a living faith... Christ is the light; the Baptist is a reflector... John testifies concerning the Christ like the moon testifies concerning the sun.* (Hendriksen)

Like John, all who have come now to know Jesus as the Light of Life – who have heard, listened to, and believed the Word from God can now also bear witness to that Light. How are you doing? Do people see the Light of Christ in you? Do they know where it comes from? As we’ll see tomorrow, some will reject and some will receive, but are we telling?

- Questions**
1. What was John’s “letter of reference”?
 2. What was John’s role?
 3. How is our role similar, if we are Christians?



- Praise Pray**
- Psalm 128b
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to bear witness to Jesus, with God’s help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading John 1:9-13 Reject or Receive?

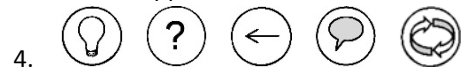
Notes John the writer gives more specifics about the Light of Whom John the Baptist was bearing witness. He is not just “a” light. He is “the” Light. And He is the “true” light.” People want there to be many lights – each as valid as the other. But the Bible claims for Jesus an exclusivity – He is the only way, He is the only true light.

But some reject Him. *Think of it! The One who said, “Let there be light,” the One whose love constrained him to shine his saving light through creation and conscience, the One who mercifully sheathed his light in a human body so that he might bring light to men, the One who set aside a special people for himself to be a light to the nations, was rejected!* (Hughes)

Yet He is still today lighting the world and some, then and now, are receiving rather than rejecting as He illuminates their heart. And those who receive Him, who believe in His name (Jesus = The Lord is Saviour) become children of God! And this becoming a child of God happens, in a way that is still a bit mysterious for us, not by man’s will, but by God’s.

So, do you receive Him? Have you become, by admitting you need a Saviour, a child of God? What wonder that God would determine to take the likes of us as His children!

- Questions**
1. What sort of light is Jesus?
 2. Why do some not receive Him?
 3. What happens to those who do receive Him?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 128b
1. Rejoice with your family if you have been made, by God’s will, God’s child through believing in Jesus’ name.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

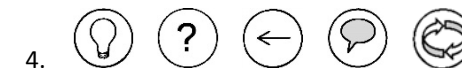
Reading John 1:14-18 The Word became Flesh

Notes As John introduces Jesus as “the Word” in verses 1-3 He is still distinctly different from the world that He had made. But here in v14 something even more dramatic happens. The Word, God the Son who was eternally from the beginning, who is the creator of all that is, became “flesh”, that is, became a human being!

God became a man! Luke tells us that He was born to Mary and His first crib was an animal feeding trough. Matthew tells us that Joseph, who would marry Mary, was not the father of Jesus, but that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary’s womb. That way, being the only human being in all of history who was not conceived through merely human means, Jesus was not merely a child of Adam, sharing in his guilt by nature. Paul writes to the church in Philippi that Jesus willingly emptied Himself of some of His glory and obeyed His Father to the point of dying on the cross to save sinners.

Yet even emptied of some of His glory, John, one of thousands of people who saw Jesus in the flesh, tells us that “we saw His glory.” *“We had a glimpse of his grace and his truth, and in it we saw the glory of God.”* (Hughes) And even though we won’t see Jesus in the flesh in this life, we can see His glory and hear His testimony of the Father. And, we can believe this grace and truth that we, as sinners by birth and by nature so desperately need. And in the Word become flesh, we can be saved!

- Questions**
1. What did Jesus becoming flesh mean for Him?
 2. What did Jesus becoming flesh mean for us?
 3. How can we see God?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 128b
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer in the Word become flesh
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member