

Homework Assignments Module 1: Gospel of John

Homework in Preparation for Learning Session 1

Welcome to FEATS! And welcome to the Gospel of John! During the next three months, our study of John will guide our learning sessions. Our goal will be to use our study and discussion of John to let God deepen our relationship with God and deepen our ministry to other people. One way to introduce you to our goals is to share a set of learning outcomes that we have for these three months.

Learning Outcomes

As a participant in this FEATS learning module, you will have the opportunity to:

- Read the Gospel of John several times and study it from several different angles.
- Deepen your personal understanding of and interaction with Jesus.
- Discover some of the key themes of the Gospel of John and apply them to your life, your relationships, and to your ministry.
- Read selections from a few additional sources in order to strengthening your learning and application processes. These additional sources will also help you observe how others' encounters with Jesus have shaped their faith and life.

Each exercise, or assignment, develops a foundation for the one to follow. And each Saturday session develops a foundation for the one to follow. So I suggest working through each exercise in order. This does not mean that you cannot be creative in the ways you approach your assignments. They are not tests for which there is a "correct" answer. So for example, if you prefer to listen to an audio of John rather than read it, or if you expand or adapt your own charts instead of using the ones I give you, you will take greater ownership of this study. Pursue the "spirit" of each assignment and allow each one to launch you into deeper discovery. Bring all of your work with you to each learning session.

Introduction to John

"The gospel of John has always been a favourite for many. At one level it is the simplest of all the gospels; at another level it is the most profound. It gives the appearance of being written by someone who was a very close friend of Jesus, and who spent the rest of his life mulling over more and more deeply, what Jesus had done and said and achieved, praying it through from every angle, and helping others to understand it. Countless people down the centuries have found that, through reading this gospel, the figure of Jesus becomes real for them, full of warmth and light and promise. It is, in fact, one of the great books in the literature of the world; and part of its greatness is the way it reveals its secrets not just to high-flown learning, but to those who come to it with humility and hope." (N.T. Wright, John for Everyone, Westminster John Knox Press, 2002, pp x-xi)

(1) Reading John Through

Set aside a 2 to 3 hour period of time and read through the Gospel of John without stopping. Leave 30 minutes at the end for the following assignment.

(2) Record Initial Observations

After reading through the entire Gospel of John, spend 30 minutes recording your observations about what you have read. You may want to use the following questions to help you with your observations: What stood out to me as I read the entire book? What are the points of

emphasis? What did I observe? How does the book cohere (connect within itself)? What are the big ideas that seem important? What literary patterns are in the book?

For this specific assignment, do not bring material in from outside: other biblical texts, sermons you have heard, something remembered from another source. Record only what you observe from this reading.

(3) Introduction to “Hearing” Scripture

Read Chapter 4 “Turning Eyes into Ears” from Eugene Peterson’s book, Working the Angles. [A copy of this chapter is available to you from the EFC office. If you have not received it, contact Carley at carleyg@friendschurchsw.org.]

After reading the chapter, write a one paragraph response, or create a two column chart, comparing the difference between reading and listening.

Spend 15-20 minutes silently, prayerfully considering the question: How should this distinction between reading and listening affect my use of scripture?

(4) Who is Jesus?

Before reading John’s Gospel again, write a one sentence personal response to the question: Who is Jesus?

(5) Read the Gospel of John again

As you read, identify how this question is answered: Who is Jesus? Chart your observations of who people think Jesus is, including the writer, John. Note any insights that occur to you and any questions that come to mind as you read through the Gospel. To assist you in your observations, a chart is provided. Or you can create your own beginning with the following columns:

<u>Text</u>	<u>Who says it?</u>	<u>What is said?</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Your Insights</u>
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(6) A Young Man Meets Jesus

Read chapter 1 of The Journal of George Fox, also called the Autobiography of George Fox. A free online version, with very helpful notes, can be found at www.ccel.org. The exact link to chapter 1 is www.ccel.org/ccel/fox_g/autobio.vi.html. This chapter recounts a young man’s search for God and truth. As you read, note what young George discovers about Jesus. List the truths young George discovered about Jesus.

(7) Read the Gospel of John again

This time, observe how Jesus identifies himself. Chart the ways Jesus identifies himself. Note the contexts of these statements and anything else in the text that gives these statements significance.

<u>Text</u>	<u>What Jesus says?</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Your Insights</u>
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After completing this third reading, review this chart of the ways Jesus identifies himself. How are they similar? How are they different? What insights or questions do you have about the ways Jesus identifies himself?

(8) Prepare for Learning Session

Before attending the first learning session, look back over your observations, charts, and other writing. Remember to bring them with you. In preparation for the learning session, write three discussion questions and be prepared to lead the entire group in a discussion of some things you have learned.