

FEATS MODULE: JOHN

Preparation Exercises for Learning Session 2

Introduction

Welcome back to FEATS! You are learning a lot from the Gospel of John and experiencing how to apply God's truth to your life and ministry. God is deepening your relationship with himself and strengthening your ministry to other people.

Our goal this month is to work through John three times, twice with specific focuses, the third time using a different version or format. A suggested order of exercises is presented below. For these weeks of study and reflection, we will use a story – and really a single verse – as our launch pad. The story is found in John 2:1-11, and the single verse is the final one of this story, “What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples put their faith in him.” One time through John will focus on his “signs,” another will focus on faith.

(1) How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth

You do not have to begin with this book excerpt. You may work it in at any convenient time during this month. But read it at some time before our next Learning Session. This book is one of my [Kent's] favorites. I use it often as a resource. Read through the Preface and the Introduction. We will review some of the principles at our Saturday session.

(2) Commentary on John 2:1-11

Read John 2:1-11 and then read Kent's commentary on this passage. If you need a copy of this commentary, or any of the readings listed here, please contact Carley at carleyg@friendschurchw.org.

(3) Signs in the Gospel of John

Quickly skim the Gospel of John and identify each of the miracles reported. [I find eight.] Then read through each miracle – or sign – carefully and studiously. Create a chart to help you compare and contrast them. Include at least the following in your chart:

What is the sign?

Who is impacted?

What is the impact?

Note any emphasis that heightens the sign's impact.

Example from John 2:1-11

<u>Sign</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>Emphasis</u>
Water to Wine	servants, family, disciples	Faith of Disciples	Saved best til now

Try to identify how each sign reveals something of Jesus' glory. [Review “Glory” from the commentary on John 2:1-11 to help you.]

Add any other insights you gain or questions that arise from studying the signs.

Choose one of the signs in the Gospel of John – only one, any one – and prepare a short lesson to share with the other FEATS participants.

(4) Miracles in Everyday Life

Miracles happen in our lives and around us today. Listen for references to miracles in conversations around you and in news stories. Make note of these references. In what ways do these miracles you are hearing of reveal the nature of God? Or, to put it another way, what characteristics of God are revealed in these miracles?

(5) Seeing and Believing

Read through the Gospel of John and note the many references to seeing and believing. Look for other key words like trust, faith, accept, witness, or testimony. If you like to highlight in your Bible, highlight all of these words in your Bible as read. You can be creative and highlight references to seeing in one color and references to believing in another color. Make a list of at least all the references to believing. If you want to include a list of the references to seeing, you may, although it can become a very long list. Here is an example from John 1.

References to believing in John 1:

John came from God as a witness to Jesus, so that all might believe. 1:7

To those who believed in Jesus' name, they were given the right to become children of God. 1:12

Jesus said Nathanael believed only because Jesus saw him under the fig tree. Nathanael would see greater things, even heaven open and angels attending Jesus. 1:50-51

Note any observations from this exercise. What does Jesus teach us about faith in this Gospel?

(6) The Pursuit of God

Find a quiet few moments to read the two chapters from Tozer's book, *The Pursuit of God*. Spend a few moments praying the prayers at the end of each chapter and meditating on them. What questions or observations do these chapters raise for you? The second chapter especially references seeing and believing. How do Tozer's thoughts help inform your study of seeing and believing in John's gospel?

(7) One Final Read

For your third reading of John, use an altogether different format or version. The idea here is to simply experience it in a fresh way. Here are some ideas.

Option 1: Read the Gospel of John in another version, preferably one quite different than the one you normally use. A paraphrase is a great option, something like *The Message* or *The Living Bible* or *The Contemporary English Version*. You do not need to buy a new Bible. Use what you have or check your church library.

Option 2: Listen to the Gospel of John on audio. Look for one that is dramatized. Zondervan offers a dramatized NIV version. They also offer a newer one called *The Bible Experience*. These can be expensive, so this may not be your best option. If you do not have access to a dramatized version, a simple audio version can bring a fresh hearing to the Spoken Word of God.

Option 3: Watch a video of the gospel of John. Hollywood released one a few years ago that has been released on video by Buena Vista Home Entertainment. It is simply called *The Gospel of John*. It is available for less than \$10 online at Amazon.com.

After reading, hearing, or watching John in this way, make notes of your reflections or observations. What insights did you have while experiencing the scriptures in this way?