

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

## GROUP GUIDE: WEEK 9

### CONVERSATION STARTER

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If you could sit down with any one person and have a conversation with them, who would you choose and why? What would you want to talk with them about?

### JESUS OFFERS LIFE

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In the ancient world, God was the author and sustainer of life. But in this week's reading, Jesus claims to be equal with God in this ability. Jesus says he, too, can give life to whomever he will. And while certainly, Jesus is talking about literally being able to raise someone from the dead, more importantly, Jesus is talking about life in the present—a way of living that leads to a rich, abundant life. This is the kind of life the religious leaders in Jerusalem were failing to uphold because of the many rules and regulations they'd instilled around the Sabbath. Instead of leading people toward life, they made it harder for people to connect with and experience God and find wholeness.

We, too, are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps and offer life to everyone we meet. This is what it means to follow the way of Jesus. When we obey his Word, when we heed his teachings, not only do we have life, but we are living models for how others can also have life. Do the decisions we make, the things we prioritize, our values, the way we conduct ourselves, do these offer those around us life? Or do we make life harder for them?

Discuss this together with your group. How are we called to offer life in the name of Jesus to the people we encounter, including our friends and family?

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What stuck out to you about the reading from this week? Was there a verse or idea that was particularly meaningful or challenging for you?
2. Read John 5:31-47. What are the different types of witnesses Jesus claims validate his ministry? Which do you find the most compelling and why?

3. What does it mean for us that Jesus claims to be equal with God?
4. Are there any religious rules or rituals that you think actually keep you or someone else from fully connecting with God? Why do you think that is the case?

## WEEKLY PRACTICE

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In this week's reading, Jesus talks about all the different people and things that testify to the validity of his ministry. Take a moment to reflect on your own life and experience. What five things can you point to that testify to who Jesus is for you? These can be people who have guided your faith journey, an experience you've had, the Bible, or anything else that made Jesus real to you in a new way.

After you have your list, consider how Jesus might want to use you to be a witness about him to other people. What are one or two ways you might be that witness to someone else this week?