

‘Come and See’



Reading John through Lent

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The opening verses of John reveal this Gospel to be one that is very different from the other three, but its voice has to be heard to give us as full a picture of Jesus as possible. It is full of signs, sayings and stories that open our eyes and minds to a deeper understanding of the One who has been sent from God – and who is God.

Lent (from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day, 40 days plus Sundays, which are weekly feasts of the resurrection) is a good opportunity for us to take time to reflect on this Gospel and allow its witness to speak to us. We can look for the ‘signs’ that John records to point us to Jesus; we can sense the ‘glory’ he reveals as he ‘pitched his tent’ among us as one of us – and yet he was before Abraham and with God in the beginning. John is full of mind-blowing themes and language.

Yet this is not a text that is only about the past. The Light of the World still shines; the Word still speaks; the Bread of Life still gives life in its fullness. Read, reflect and listen to the voice of the text as it speaks to you of Jesus, and think about how it encourages and challenges you to be a follower of Jesus in a world of darkness that needs his light. And remember that you have been sent by him, just as he was sent by his Father (20:21).

As you read the text each day, take time to slow down to think. Let its words sink in and use the comment to prompt further reflection. Then take a few moments to pray over your response to the message, asking what it might mean for you as you seek to follow Jesus today.

Jared Hay, January 2013.

Ash Wednesday 13 February

DAY 1

John 1:10-13

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

God wants us in his family through Jesus. Receive him and belong.

Thursday 14 February

DAY 2

John 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

In Jesus, God became human. In him we see God's glory, grace and truth walking around in flesh and blood.

Friday 15 February

DAY 3

John 1:29

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

The Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world. Ask him to take yours.

Saturday 16 February

DAY 4

John 2:11

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

The disciples saw the sign pointing to Jesus and believed. What signs of him can you see? Believe.

Sunday 17 February

John 11:27

"Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

Make Martha's confession yours: Jesus, Messiah and Son of God. King and Saviour.

Monday 18 February

DAY 5

John 2:23-25

Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.

We can be fickle and sometimes signs are not enough for us. Might Jesus see ambivalence within you? Keep believing.

Tuesday 19 February

DAY 6

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Revel in the greatness of God's love for you – he gave his Son for you and offers life to you.

Wednesday 20 February

DAY 7

John 3:34-36

For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

God has entrusted Jesus with salvation and judgment. What might this mean for you? Receive his life.

Thursday 21 February

DAY 8

John 4:10-14

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

To a world that is thirsting for love and meaning, Jesus offers living water. Drink it.

Friday 22 February

DAY 9

John 4:23-24

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

Come to God as you are, without pretence. He knows you anyway. Offer your worship.

Saturday 23 February

DAY 10

John 4:39-42

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world."

Samaritans and Jews, Jesus is Saviour of all – including you. Believe him.

Sunday 24 February

John 13:1

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The full extent of his love is seen in the cross. Thank Jesus for that love.

Monday 25 February

DAY 11

John 5:16-18

So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. In his defence Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.” For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

Where can you see Jesus at work? Join in.

Tuesday 26 February

DAY 12

John 5:20-23

For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.

Dishonouring Jesus dishonours God. How might we honour him in our lives?

Wednesday 27 February

DAY 13

John 5:36-40

"I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

The Scriptures point us to Jesus as the Messiah. Do you read them and find him? Keep reading and looking.

Thursday 28 February

DAY 14

John 6:14-15

After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

Jesus does not embrace the political power the people wanted him to take. Be careful of seeking it.

Friday 1 March

DAY 15

John 6:35, 51

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

These sayings point us to the Eucharist. As you eat the bread may you feed on Christ.

Saturday 2 March

DAY 16

John 6:66-71

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

Then Jesus replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

Following Jesus is hard, not easy, but he has the words of life. There is nowhere else to go.

Sunday 3 March

John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Our following Jesus takes us beyond death to the presence of the Father. Jesus is Way, Truth, Life.

Monday 4 March

DAY 17

John 7:12-13

Among the crowds there was widespread whispering about him. Some said, "He is a good man."

Others replied, "No, he deceives the people." But no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the leaders.

Jesus divided people's opinion. What do you think of him?

Tuesday 5 March

DAY 18

John 7:37-39

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

The Spirit is given to us, to flow through us to others.

Wednesday 6 March

DAY 19

John 7:45-46

Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?"

"No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards replied.

The words of Jesus were compelling. Listen to him.

Thursday 7 March

DAY 20

John 8:9-11

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

However great our sin, Jesus stands with us to forgive and restore us.

Friday 8 March

DAY 21

John 8:28-30

So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." Even as he spoke, many believed in him.

Fulfilling the will of his Father God was Jesus' aim. How are we seeking to please God?

Saturday 9 March

DAY 22

John 8:57-59

"You are not yet fifty years old," they said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"

"Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Greater than Abraham in the story of salvation; older than Abraham in the life of God – Jesus is one with ‘I am.’ Worship him.

Sunday 10 March

John 14:15-17

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.”

The Spirit lives within us, and through that Spirit we can love Jesus and obey him. Live it out.

Monday 11 March

DAY 23

John 9:13-16

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man’s eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” the man replied, “and I washed, and now I see.”

Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”

But others asked, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So they were divided.

Those who are blind to Jesus are spiritually blind. Let him open your eyes.

Tuesday 12 March

DAY 24

John 9:35-38

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

"Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."

Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped him.

To encounter Jesus leads us to worship him. Pray for that encounter today.

Wednesday 13 March

DAY 25

John 10:7-10

Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Jesus is the entry point to the fullness of life. Follow him and find it.

Thursday 14 March

DAY 26

John 10:11, 14-16

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep". . . . "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

One flock, one Shepherd: what might this mean for the Church? Thank God that Jesus gave his life for you.

Friday 15 March

DAY 27

John 10:27-28

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand."

We are secure in this Shepherd's safekeeping. Listen for his voice calling you to follow him.

Saturday 16 March

DAY 28

John 10:37-39

"Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

Why should we believe in Jesus? Because we see in him the actions of God. Trust him.

Sunday 17 March

John 15:1-4

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

Pruning is painful, but it's the way to greater fruit-bearing. As you experience the pain, think also of the fruit.

Monday 18 March

DAY 29

John 11:5

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

Jesus not only loves the world, he loves individuals with names. He loves you.

Tuesday 19 March

DAY 30

John 11:21-26

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

In the sorrow and anger of bereavement, our hope is in Jesus who is resurrection and life.

Wednesday 20 March

DAY 31

John 11:32-37

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept.

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus cries our tears with us out of his great love for us. Feel his embrace.

Thursday 21 March

DAY 32

John 11:45-48

Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

"What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation."

The transformation Jesus brings challenges the systems in which we live. How is he challenging us in today's cultures?

Friday 22 March

DAY 33

John 12:3, 7-8

Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. . . "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of

my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.”

With discernment and sacrifice, Mary anoints Jesus in anticipation of his death. What can you offer to him?

Saturday 23 March

DAY 34

John 12:4-6

But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, “Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

Judas stole from the community purse and demeaned the poor. Do we imitate him?

Palm Sunday 24 March

John 12:16

At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realise that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

Sometimes it is only in hindsight that we see the hand of God. Where have you see it in your story?

Monday 25 March

DAY 35

John 12:20-23

Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with

a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

Greeks pave the way for our inclusion among the people of Jesus. Who do we need to include today?

Tuesday 26 March

DAY 36

John 12:24-25

"Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.' Jesus shows us the way and the cost, and it leads to life and harvest.

Wednesday 27 March

DAY 37

John 12:44-46

Then Jesus cried out, "Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."

In the darkness of this world, Jesus is the light. Let him reveal to you the One who sent him.

Maundy Thursday 28 March

DAY 38

John 13:13-15

"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

Cleansed and forgiven – as Jesus has washed us, so we are to cleanse the sins of others in his name.

Good Friday 29 March

DAY 39

John 19:28-30

Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Lifted up on the cross, Jesus finishes the work his Father has sent him to do. It is complete, and the price has been paid. Thank him.

Holy Saturday 30 March

DAY 40

John 19:38-42

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and

in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Joseph gives Jesus his tomb; Jesus gives Joseph life that overcomes his fears. A good exchange.

Easter Sunday 31 March

John 20:21

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

The Lord is risen! He gives us his shalom and sends us out into the world as the Father sent him. Go.

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