



# Week 1 Study Sheet

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## The Most Famous Conversation in the Bible

### Consider

If you could go back in time, what would you change? Hindsight—it's 20/20. Regret—it's plentiful. But in our finite bodies on this finite planet and in our finite timelines, we know going back to the past just isn't possible. So we can't blame Nicodemus for his confusion when Jesus said in John 3:3 (NIV), "No one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." Be born again? "How can someone be born when they are old?" he asked (v. 4). Nicodemus may not have understood it in the moment, but what he received from Jesus that night was hope. A hope to start over, be new, be clean. We can be born again in this life and be born again into eternity with the God who loves us. What's more, our rebirth is not up to us. If it were, there's no guarantee we would do it right the second time. It is made possible only by the power of God and through the saving grace of Jesus. When he is in charge of the do-over, the do-over is always done right.<sup>1</sup>

### Pray

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to hear what God wants to share with you from his Word. Ask God to provide you with grace, understanding, and resolve to put into practice the things you have learned.

### Read

[John 3:1-21](#)

### Observe

- Who are the main people in this story? Where and when does this story take place?
- What words repeat throughout the passage? What phrases stand out and why?
- What are the themes? Are there any contrasting thoughts?
- What message is being shared in this passage?

### Interpret

- Why does Nicodemus come to Jesus at night?
- What did Jesus mean that Nicodemus must be "born again"?
- What struggles does Nicodemus share?
- What does Jesus' reference to Moses' point to? Why must Jesus be "lifted up"? (v. 14)
- What is God's desire for humanity? (v. 16)

### Apply

- How does belief guide you in your journey with Jesus?
- How is God speaking directly to you through this passage?
- What is God revealing about who he is, who he says you are, and what his will is for you?

### Practice

Is there someone you can share this famous conversation with? Create a list of people that don't yet believe in Jesus. Spend time in prayer every day asking God to provide opportunities for you to share the Gospel with them. Invite them to attend your group or worship together with you at church one Sunday.

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from 3:16 *The Numbers of Hope. Study Guide* pages 1-2. Used by permission. ©Max Lucado, Harper Collins Christian Publishing, 2007, 2022.



# Week 2 Study Sheet

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## Hope for the Hard Heart

**Consider**

You've heard it said that "it is better to give than to receive." When it comes to humans and love, the saying could be similar: "It is easier to give love than to receive it." Often, the only thing standing in the way between you and God's love is you. This is a divine love—the essence of God represented in the person of Jesus Christ. It is only agape—a love that can pull us out of the shame that causes our very rejection of that love. Agape answers yes when we ask, "Can God love me even though I hurt that other person with my words?" It responds yes when we fear, "Can God love me even though I am divorced, scarred, a victim, a failure...?" Yes, yes, yes. Allowing God to love us can be more difficult than hardening our hearts toward that love. But if we harden our hearts, we miss the promise of John 3:16—a promise that isn't earned or deserved but freely given. So, instead, let's soften our hearts and receive this gift!<sup>2</sup>

**Pray**

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to hear what God wants to share with you from his Word. Ask God to provide you with grace, understanding, and resolve to put into practice the things you have learned.

**Read**

[Romans 5:1-11](#)

**Observe**

- Who is writing and who are they addressing? When and where does this take place?
- What words repeat throughout the passage? What phrases stand out and why?
- What are the themes? Are there any contrasting thoughts?
- How does this passage reveal the promises of Jesus?

**Interpret**

- What grants us access to God's promises?
- What does Paul mean by "glory in our sufferings"? (NIV, v. 3)
- How has God proven his love for us? How should we receive that love? (v. 8-10)

**Apply**

- How has your hope in Jesus not disappointed you?
- What does it mean personally that you have been reconciled to God?
- How is God speaking directly to you through this passage?
- What is God revealing about who he is, who he says you are, and what his will is for you?

**Practice**

Memorize Romans 5:8 (NIV), "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Repeat it multiple times each day to ingrain the words in your mind and allow the message to penetrate your heart.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpted from 3:16 *The Numbers of Hope. Study Guide* pages 23-24. Used by permission. ©Max Lucado, Harper Collins Christian Publishing, 2007, 2022.



# Week 3 Study Sheet

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## The Heart He Offers

### Consider

What is your “one and only”? An item of which you only own one? Your one and only treasured keepsake from a parent or friend. How much more valuable are these one-and-onlys as compared to your one-in-severals? Shoes, socks, pens—these are all easily replaced. In John 3:16, we read that Jesus is God’s “one and only Son.” He is God’s only begotten Son, the only way to the Father, and the only truth (see [John 14:6-7](#)). This makes Jesus invaluable not only to God but also to us. There are some people who say that Jesus was just a good teacher, a good leader, and a good person all around. But if you truly believe the words of John 3:16—that Jesus was God’s one and only Son—then it changes every-thing. The Son. The way. The truth. The life. The one and only. If we want to be saved, if we want to be healed, and if we want to know the way to eternal life, then we must believe in the one and only— and that one and only is Jesus.<sup>3</sup>

### Pray

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to hear what God wants to share with you from his Word. Ask God to provide you with grace, understanding, and resolve to put into practice the things you have learned.

### Read

[John 14:5-14](#)

### Observe

- Who are the main people in this story? What are they doing? Where and when does this take place?
- What words repeat throughout the passage? What phrases stand out and why?
- What are the themes? Are there any contrasting thoughts?
- How does this story connect to Jesus being the Son of God?

### Interpret

- What does Jesus mean by saying, “I am the way and the truth and the life”? (NIV, v. 6)
- How do the disciples respond to his claims?
- How do we know the Father by knowing Jesus?
- Why is it important for God to be the Father of Jesus?
- How do we know that Jesus and the Father are one? (v. 11)

### Apply

- How do you respond to this claim?
- How is God speaking directly to you through this passage?
- What is God revealing about who he is, who he says you are, and what his will is for you?

### Practice

Paul reminds us in Romans 10:9 (NIV) that, “If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Take time this week to make Jesus Lord of your life actively and practically. Confess, surrender, and allow him to rule your decisions, your schedule, your finances, and your relationships.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpted from 3:16 *The Numbers of Hope. Study Guide* pages 43-44. Used by permission. ©Max Lucado, Harper Collins Christian Publishing, 2007, 2022.



# Week 4 Study Sheet

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## Heaven's Whoever Policy

### Consider

In this life, to get where you want to go, you typically have to be somebody— a person with desirable skills, talents, abilities, degrees, and intelligence. Perhaps this is why the policy of heaven laid out in John 3:16 (NIV) seems too good to be true: “Whoever believes in him shall not perish.” It sounds like all the other too-good-to-be-true promises out there. But not so with the offer that Christ makes—the offer of who gets to receive his eternal life. It is an uncomplicated and freeing promise. He takes us as we are—in the current state that he finds us—and then begins to make us born-again creations in him. The promise of John 3:16 is we can receive life if we put our faith in Christ. We can experience God’s abundant life in our everyday lives . . . right here on this earth. The Bible states in 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV), “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession.” Think about what would change if you believed what God’s Word says is true— and how it would change your behaviors, priorities, and the way you felt about yourself, others, and God.<sup>4</sup>

### Pray

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to hear what God wants to share with you from his Word. Ask God to provide you with grace, understanding, and resolve to put into practice the things you have learned.

### Read

[John 10:22-42](#)

### Observe

- Who are the people or groups in this story? Where and when does this take place?
- What words repeat throughout the passage? What phrases stand out and why?
- What are the themes? Are there any contrasting thoughts?
- What is the conversation about?

### Interpret

- What is the significance of the question by the Jews? (v. 24)
- What makes someone part of Jesus’ flock?
- Why does Jesus use sheep to represent his followers?
- Where else does the Bible use the sheep/shepherd metaphor to teach us about our relationship with God? How can those passages help us understand what Jesus is saying here?
- Why were the Jews ready to stone Jesus for claiming that he and the Father are one? (v. 30-31)

### Apply

- How does this passage help you understand God’s love for you?
- How is God speaking directly to you through this passage?
- What is God revealing about who he is, who he says you are, and what his will is for you?

### Practice

Go on a prayer walk and listen for God’s voice. He is your good shepherd. Tune your ear to his voice. Keep from talking over him or growing impatient. Simply listen for him to speak to you.

<sup>4</sup>Excerpted from 3:16 *The Numbers of Hope. Study Guide* pages 63-64. Used by permission. ©Max Lucado, Harper Collins Christian Publishing, 2007, 2022.



# Week 5 Study Sheet

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## Love In Action

**Consider** We love things, we love doing things, we love the way things are. However, in the English language, the word love is primarily used as a verb - an action. If God so loved the world, what is the action God takes to show us his love? His action is revealed in John 3:16 (NKJV), “he gave his only begotten Son.” His Son later demonstrates the fullness of this love-action when Jesus willingly dies on the cross for our sins. Atoning for our sins by giving his life is the culmination of Jesus’ mission, God’s gift, so that we might be reconciled to God. But Jesus also exemplified love-in-action through his lifestyle of serving others. By serving others, we too, express the love of Jesus. When we serve others, we express the love of God for the world.

**Pray** Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to hear what God wants to share with you from his Word. Ask God to provide you with grace, understanding, and resolve to put into practice the things you have learned.

**Read** [Matthew 25:31-40](#)

**Observe**

- Who is speaking and who are they addressing? Where and when is this story happening?
- What words repeat throughout the passage? What phrases stand out and why?
- What are the themes? Are there any contrasting thoughts?

**Interpret**

- Why is Jesus using the Son of Man title to start this story?
- How do these actions connect to the love of God? (v. 35-39)
- Why does Jesus call those who do these things his sheep?
- Why does Jesus connect himself to “the least of these”?

**Apply**

- Who do you consider to be the least of these?
- How is God speaking directly to you through this passage?
- What is God revealing about who he is, who he says you are, and what his will is for you?

**Practice** Join OHC in serving others on our campus, in our local community, and around the world. Serving others in tangible ways – providing food, water, shelter, clothing, care, and companionship – allows us to express God’s love for humanity. Ask God to help you see and serve “the least of these” this week.



# Week 6 Study Sheet

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## The Last Word on Life

**Consider**

What comes to mind when you think about heaven? Puffy clouds, cherubs, and harps? What comes to mind when you think about hell? Fire, brimstone, and horned demons? While a plethora of Scripture offers us guidance on these questions, we often jump to so many conclusions of our own that it can be difficult to separate fact from fiction. If you've been a Christian for a while, you will likely have some baggage around both words. Perhaps someone used the fear of hell to shame you into belief. Perhaps heaven was reduced to the place your dog or goldfish went. If so, use this time to explore what being in God's presence will be like. Consider the harshness with which Jesus talks about hell as well as the profound promise of an eternity with God. Don't shy away from the words that can scare, confuse, and upset you. Instead, see this as safe place to put it all on the table and walk away with the clarity, comfort, and hope that Jesus offers.<sup>5</sup>

**Pray**

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to hear what God wants to share with you from his Word. Ask God to provide you with grace, understanding, and resolve to put into practice the things you have learned.

**Read**

[1 Corinthians 15:1-19](#)

**Observe**

- Who is writing and who are they addressing? Where and when is this story happening?
- What words repeat throughout the passage? What phrases stand out and why?
- What are the themes? Are there any contrasting thoughts?
- How does this story explain the resurrection?

**Interpret**

- What Gospel do you think Paul is speaking about?
- What makes the preached Word so important in Paul's time? (v. 2)
- Why is it important to connect Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection to the Scriptures? (v. 3-4)
- Why are witnesses of the resurrected Christ important? (v. 5-8)

**Apply**

- How is belief involved in your understanding of the resurrection?
- How is God speaking directly to you through this passage?
- What is God revealing about who he is, who he says you are, and what his will is for you?

**Practice**

Define your belief about the afterlife. Capture your thoughts about heaven and hell and see if they align with Scripture. Share your new insights with others and be a witness to the power and hope of the resurrection.

<sup>5</sup> Excerpted from 3:16 *The Numbers of Hope. Study Guide* pages 83-84. Used by permission. ©Max Lucado, Harper Collins Christian Publishing, 2007, 2022.