



## READING PLAN FOR WEEK OF June 20, 2021

### DAY 1

#### READ ► John 6:25-40

The moment Jesus said “bread” his listeners would have been transported back thirteen hundred years into their national history. Each day, during a forty-year exile in the wilderness, God would have provided bread from heaven to feed the Israelites. This heavenly bread was such a big deal that they made a point of celebrating it every year during the Passover meal. What people needed was not food but life, and life is a gift. Jesus’ contrast was that food only sustains life, but Jesus gives eternal life.

Today, more than two thousand years after these words, we’re still starving. There is a hunger that lies within each of us and if we are not careful, we will look to be filled by something that could never satisfy. As with all hunger, what is quickest and easiest, may not be what is best.

Jesus’ bold declaration “I am the bread of life” connects the miracle of the loaves and the fish, to the significance of his purpose. Jesus is the “bread of life” as he nourishes people spiritually and satisfies the deep spiritual longings of their soul. In that sense, those who trust in him shall not hunger; their spiritual longing to know God will be satisfied.

**When was a time you looked to something that you truly thought would satisfy and left you still wanting more?**



### DAY 2

#### READ ► John 8:2-20

When Jesus refers to himself as the light, a direct claim to being the Messiah is made. The teachers of the law and others present in the temple court would not have mistaken the meaning of his word. This is even more evident by the conversation that follows and the emphasis on the word “witness”. The use of witness, when in reference to light as it testifies of the sun, who Jesus himself just referred to himself as, is incredible. Light bears witness to itself. Every day when the sun rises, it makes itself known.

To follow Jesus means to believe in and trust him, which leads to, as Jesus himself said, light and life. Those who follow Jesus are like travelers who follow the light in a dark night. You shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. The light shows what we could not see, and guides our every step. We shall never be left alone as Jesus guides our way. Our part is to follow him, to submit ourselves to his guidance, and respond to his direction. It is not enough to look at his light, and to gaze upon it. We must follow it, and walk in it, for it is a light to our feet, not only our eyes.

**What is the brightest light you have ever seen? What is the darkest dark you have ever experienced? Take note of your emotions and experience for both. How does this help you connect to Jesus’ statement?**



## DAY 3

### READ ► Psalm 139:13-14; Ephesians 2:10

Our identity is formed and shaped through our individual experiences, our families, relationships, culture, media, and the world around us. Oftentimes we feel the pressure to define ourselves through our successes, abilities, grades, talents, or what other people say about us.

The problem with that is when you fail a test, or you can't play basketball well, or people's opinions of you change, then how do we identify ourselves?

We can't place our identity or our purpose in the things that are around us. We have to and need to base our identity on the way that God sees us. This means that when we think of who we are, the first thing that should come to our mind is how God sees us. We should see ourselves as someone who is deeply and unconditionally loved by Him.

**How do you define yourself? What does it mean to you to know that God created you fearfully and wonderfully and you are so loved by Him? What is dangerous about finding your identity is something other than God?**



## DAY 4

### READ ► Romans 8:31-39

God's Word tells us we are loved, a child of God, forgiven, not alone and strong, gifted, and called. Oftentimes, however, there is a gap between what we know is true about us based on what God says and living them out. This can be affected by how we see ourselves, life experiences, and the ways we allow the world to define us. We need to believe what God says about who we are and let go of what those around might say we are or what the world says we are. We may not always feel like we are forgiven by God or loved by Him, but that is where our faith comes in. God always sees us that way. We can believe it because He does. We must guard ourselves with God's Word, the only place to discover our true identity in Jesus.

**Why is it important to know how God identifies you? How would seeing yourself as God sees you change the way you live?**



## DAY 5

### READ ► Acts 1; 1 Thessalonians 1; 2 Timothy 2; John 15

Have you been to Splash Cove yet? The new water park features several cool attractions, including Water Slides and the Lazy River. Think about the difference between those two things: On the Lazy River, you sit or lay on a tube and just float along with the current. It is relaxing, it's easy, and it doesn't require any intentionality. But the water slides are different. They require you to do some things. You must climb up the stairs, wait in line, exert energy, choose which slide you are going to go on, and you have to have the courage to go down (especially for the green slide). The slides require a lot, but it is worth it in the end. The only thing the Lazy River requires is. . . to be lazy.

In **Matthew 7:13-14**, Jesus tells his followers that the path that leads to destruction is wide and many people enter it, but the path that leads to life is narrow and few find it. The reason the path to destruction is so wide is because it is easy to just float along in life and go with the flow of everyone else. If something is easy and a majority of people are doing it, it probably leads to destruction. But the path to life is like climbing a mountain (or the stairs to a waterslide). It takes effort to climb. It takes courage. Instead of just floating along, it requires intentional choices. Sometimes it is lonely because people don't want to wait for the reward at the end. Following Jesus and living for him is a difficult journey. But it is all worth it in the end.

**In what ways do you find yourself floating along in life? How does staying connected to the vine (John 15) relate to the narrow path?**

