

Group Study: The Light of the World (John 1:1-18)

Discussion Questions

1. This is a difficult situation for many of us (although not all) to put ourselves in, but if you had never heard anything about Jesus, what can you imagine some things you would take away if John 1:1-18 was the first introduction you had to him?
2. Do you prefer the introduction to Jesus in John or in the other gospels? Why?
3. The author Lauren Winner writes about a practice she calls “dislocated exegesis,” which is reading particular Bible passages in places where it doesn’t make sense, or where it makes perfect sense. She invites her students to read the “love chapter” of 1 Corinthians 13 at a protest for the death penalty or passages where Jesus speaks about money in a bank lobby. What do you think would be interesting places to read John 1:1-18?

Good Faith Bible Study

Guest: Craig Nash

June 29, 2025

"The Light of the World"

John 1:1-18

<https://goodfaithmedia.org/bible-studies>

I'm Craig Nash, senior editor of Good Faith Media. On the last Sunday of each quarter in 2025, the Maxwells will step away from their curriculum duties and hand the pen over to a guest writer.

Today's lesson comes from Andie Pellicer, pastor of University Baptist Church in Waco, Texas. Full disclosure up front: Andie is my pastor, and I'm thrilled to share her with the Good Faith Media audience.

Andie grew up in the Pacific Northwest. She received her M.Div. from Fuller Seminary. She lives with her husband, Jeremy, and their four daughters.

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In today's lesson, Pastor Andie explores the opening lines of the book of John and how they give a grand, sweeping and poetic introduction to the work of Jesus—in contrast to the more earthbound genealogies and birth stories that Matthew, Mark and Luke give us.

“In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” As Andie shared, the introduction in John is a mirror to the opening lines of Genesis: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Andie says that she kind of wishes John's prologue were the entirety of Scripture, because it avoids all the messy complications and drama that unfold in the Bible.

On one hand, I get that. Poetic language can pull us out of the anxiety and confusion of our lives and remind us who we are, who God is, and what God made us for.

On the other hand, I mostly feel different about this. As I said before, Andie's my pastor and friend, so any disagreement I have with her is with respect and love.

I actually prefer the gritty details of the Synoptic Gospels—which are Matthew, Mark and Luke—over the soaring language of John.

There's a reason why Linus, in “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” doesn't recite John's prologue, but instead opts for Luke's.

Where John paints a picture of a God who pulls us out of our mess, Luke shows us a God who joins us in it.

Of course, both are true, and this is the beauty of having multiple accounts of Jesus in the Bible. We get all of it: the epic stories of adventure, and the mundane details surrounding things like birth and sickness and cooking fish and attending weddings.

Which one do you prefer?

If you have time before this week's lesson, read the opening chapters of each gospel and think about what they have in common.

What's different about them? What does each say about God, about you and about the world you inhabit?

Thank you for reading and participating in Good Faith Bible Studies. In the coming days, you'll be receiving the July-September issue of the magazine. Also, be on the lookout later this summer for some exciting news about Good Faith Bible Studies in 2026.

Thanks again for listening.