

# Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading  
Giving Time, Talents & Resources  
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

January 1, 2023

## Day 1: John 1:1-3

***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.***

In Genesis God spoke and something came into life. The creative force was the Word and the Word is Jesus Christ. John states at the beginning of the Gospel that when one sees Jesus one sees God and when one hears Jesus one hears God (see John 5:37-38 & 14:9-11). Before Jesus was born into this world He was with God and involved with creation.

**Question:** Can you think of a beginning that was also an ending?

**Challenge:** Think of the last time you started something new. How did you feel? Now think of something you ended. How did you feel? Which do you prefer, endings or beginnings?

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:18-25

## Day 2: John 1:4-5

***What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.***

One of the earliest beliefs of Judaism was that God is a God of life, not death. God in Christ created life and life will not be denied. Verse 5 is a snapshot for the whole book of John. Jesus comes into the world and the forces of evil tried to cancel Him out. But just as darkness cannot overcome light, so the forces of death could not overcome Jesus.

**Question:** Do you enjoy the daytime or the nighttime more, and why?

**Challenge:** Sit in a dark room for 5 minutes then at the far end light a candle and sit for five more minutes. Write down all you could see in the room when it was dark & then by candle light.

**Scripture:** Isaiah 42:1-10

## Day 3: John 1:6-8

***There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light***

John was a person who was greatly respected and his one important job was to witness to the true light. We, like John, are called by God to witness to the light. We become a better witness if we also are respected in our communities and in our circle of friends.

**Question:** How would you explain to someone who had never seen light what it was?

**Challenge:** Share with someone this week why you have hope.

**Scripture:** Mark 1:1-8

## Day 4: John 1:9

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***The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.***

The Gospel is for everyone. Just as light does not shine in just one direction so the love of God is spread abroad for all. Jesus acted out of love in all that he did for people. Even when he told people things they did not want to hear and things that were hard to hear he said them out of love. I think that we spend too much time trying to figure out Jesus or decide if he really did all those things. We need to spend more time accepting Him and experiencing the love of God.

**Question:** Can you say exactly why the lights come on when you flip the switch? Do you think the sun has disappeared at night?

**Challenge:** Come up with five proofs that God exists and that Jesus is His son.

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:1-12

## Day 5: John 1:12-13

***But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.***

To receive Jesus is like opening a gift. The gift is for us but we need to open it to receive it. We become a part of the family of God - children - with all the rights and responsibilities. Right after love the next most powerful force in the universe is belief. Belief is not magic, it simply gives us the power to accomplish great things. By believing we become children of God and being children of God we can change the world.

**Question:** How do you feel about adoption?

**Challenge:** Besides your belief in God, what other beliefs have changed you life?

**Scripture:** Acts 8:26-40

## Day 6: John 1:14

***And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.***

The eternal (the Word) now moves to the temporal (time). The glory of God is seen fully in Jesus; not in a sunset or a mountain or a starry sky (though all of these are stirring to the soul). The glory is seen in Jesus because He demonstrated what God is like. A beautiful sight can inspire us but the hand of God will enliven us. Jesus in life and death and resurrection, all for us, fully demonstrated the love of God.

**Question:** How do you feel when you have helped someone else?

**Challenge:** Give your gifts this year because God came to us.

**Scripture:** Luke 2:1-20