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Bible Study Guide

Following Jesus in a Divided
and Changing World

This one-hour Bible study will be offered four times each week, both in person and on Zoom, and led by Zoar members. Come and go as your schedule permits!



April 20–May 21

Study Options:

Bible Study Zoom Link:
<https://bit.ly/3Q9OaWL>

- **Wednesdays at 8:30 AM — In Person / Zoom**
- **Wednesdays at 7:00 PM — Zoom**
- **Thursdays at 10:00 AM — In Person, Rooms L1–L2**
- **Saturdays at 10:00 AM — In Person, Conference Room**

Bible Study Options Calendar April 20-May 21, 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
19	20	21	APRIL 22 8:30 AM - In Person / Zoom 7:00 PM - Zoom	23 10:00 AM - In Person, Rooms L1-L2	24	25 10:00 AM - In Person, Conference Room
26	27	28	29 8:30 AM - In Person / Zoom 7:00 PM - Zoom	30 10:00 AM - In Person, Rooms L1-L2	MAY 1	2 10:00 AM - In Person, Conference Room
3	4	5	6 8:30 AM - In Person / Zoom 7:00 PM - Zoom	7 10:00 AM - In Person, Rooms L1-L2	8	9 10:00 AM - In Person, Conference Room
10	11	12	13 8:30 AM - In Person / Zoom 7:00 PM - Zoom	14 10:00 AM - In Person, Rooms L1-L2	15	16 10:00 AM - In Person, Conference Room
17	18	19	20 8:30 AM - In Person / Zoom 7:00 PM - Zoom	21 10:00 AM - In Person, Rooms L1-L2	22	23



Bible Study Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/3Q9OaWL>

NOTE: There is one study each week, offered at four different times. You are welcome to attend whichever day and time works best for you each week. If you would like the Zoom link emailed to you, please call the church office: 419-874-4346

Bible Study Guide

Participant Guide 1

Crossing Boundaries



John 4:1–26 — Jesus and the Samaritan Woman at the Well

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” ⁸ (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)^[a] ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” ¹

¹ The woman said to him, “Sir,^[b] you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹² Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?”

¹³ Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”

¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir,^[c] give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.” ¹⁷ The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband,’ ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!”

¹⁹ The woman said to him, “Sir,^[d] I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you^[e] say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” ²¹ Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you^[f] will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You^[g] worship what you^[h] do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

²⁵ The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” ²⁶ Jesus said to her, “I am he,^[a] the one who is speaking to you.”

Bible Study Guide

Participant Guide 1 Continued

Crossing Boundaries



John 4:1–26 — Jesus and the Samaritan Woman at the Well

What Do You Notice?

1. What barriers or differences exist between Jesus and the woman?
2. How does the conversation change as it unfolds?
3. What does Jesus say about true worship?

Reflect:

- Why do you think Jesus begins with a simple request (“Give me a drink”)?
- What might this story teach us about talking across differences?
- Where do you see God crossing boundaries in our world today?

Key Insight:

In this story, what is the connection between relationship and conversation and deep cultural and religious divisions. Why might that be important for us as readers?

Be
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Bible Study Guide

Participant Guide 2

When Jesus Faces Conflict

Mark 2:13-17 — Jesus Calls Levi



¹³ Jesus^[a] went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. ¹⁴ As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.

¹⁵ And as he sat at dinner^[b] in Levi’s^[c] house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting^[d] with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the scribes of^[e] the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, “Why does he eat^[f] with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹⁷ When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

What do you observe?

1. What are we told about the setting/s for this encounter?
2. Who are the main groups of people in the story? Who “sees” or “hears” — and what do they see or hear?
3. What action by Jesus causes controversy?
4. What assumptions do the religious leaders seem to have about holiness or righteousness?
5. What response does Jesus give to their criticism?

Reflect:

- What does Jesus mean by comparing himself to a physician?
- What does this say about the purpose of his ministry?
- How can we embody this purpose today?

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Participant Guide 3

Compassion and Conflict



Mark 3:1–6 — Healing on the Sabbath

3 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. ² They were watching him to see whether he would cure him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

³ And he said to the man who had the withered hand, “Come forward.” ⁴ Then he said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent.

⁵ He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

What Do You Notice?

1. When and where does this take place? Why does this matter?
2. Why are the religious leaders watching Jesus?
3. What question does Jesus ask them?
4. How do the leaders respond? How does Jesus respond to this?

Reflect:

- Why might Jesus' action have felt threatening to the religious leaders?
- What does this story suggest about the purpose of religious rules?
- When can rules help people flourish? When might they get in the way?

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Participant Guide 4

When Faith Comes from an Unexpected Place

Gospel of Mark 7:24–30 — The Syrophenician Woman



²⁴ From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁸ But she answered him, “Sir,^[b] even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹ Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰ And when she went home, she found the child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

What Do You Notice?

1. Where does this event take place? Why is that important to what happens?
2. What does the woman ask Jesus to do?
3. How does Jesus initially respond?
4. What stands out about the woman’s reply?

Reflect:

- Why do you think the woman refuses to give up?
- What does this story reveal about faith and persistence?
- What might it teach us about listening to voices outside our usual circle?

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Participant Guide 5

Living with Differences in the Body of Christ

Romans 14:1–13

Opening Thought:

Christians do not always agree on every issue. In this passage, Paul the Apostle offers guidance for how to live faithfully in the midst of disagreement.

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith^[a] but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables.³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them.⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord^[b] is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds.⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves.⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.^[c] ¹¹ For it is written,

*“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to^[d] God.”*

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.^[e]

¹³ Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother or sister. ¹⁴ I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who considers it unclean. ¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not let what you eat cause the ruin of one for whom Christ died.

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Participant Guide 5 Continued

Living with Differences in the Body of Christ

Romans 14:1–13

Read Romans 14:1–13

As you read, notice:

- A word or phrase that stands out
- Anything that challenges or surprises you

What Do You Notice?

- 1.What kinds of disagreements are happening in this passage?
- 2.What instructions does Paul give about how to treat others?
- 3.What stands out to you most?

Reflect:

- Why do you think people sometimes judge others' beliefs or practices?
- What might it mean to "welcome" someone you disagree with?
- How does this statement shape your thinking?
- "We do not live to ourselves... we are the Lord's." (v.7–8)
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Connect to Today:

- Where do you see disagreement in the church today?
- What makes it difficult to stay united in those situations?
- What might this passage be inviting us to do differently?

Personal Reflection:

Take a quiet moment:

- Is there someone you have struggled not to judge?
- What might it look like to approach them with more grace?