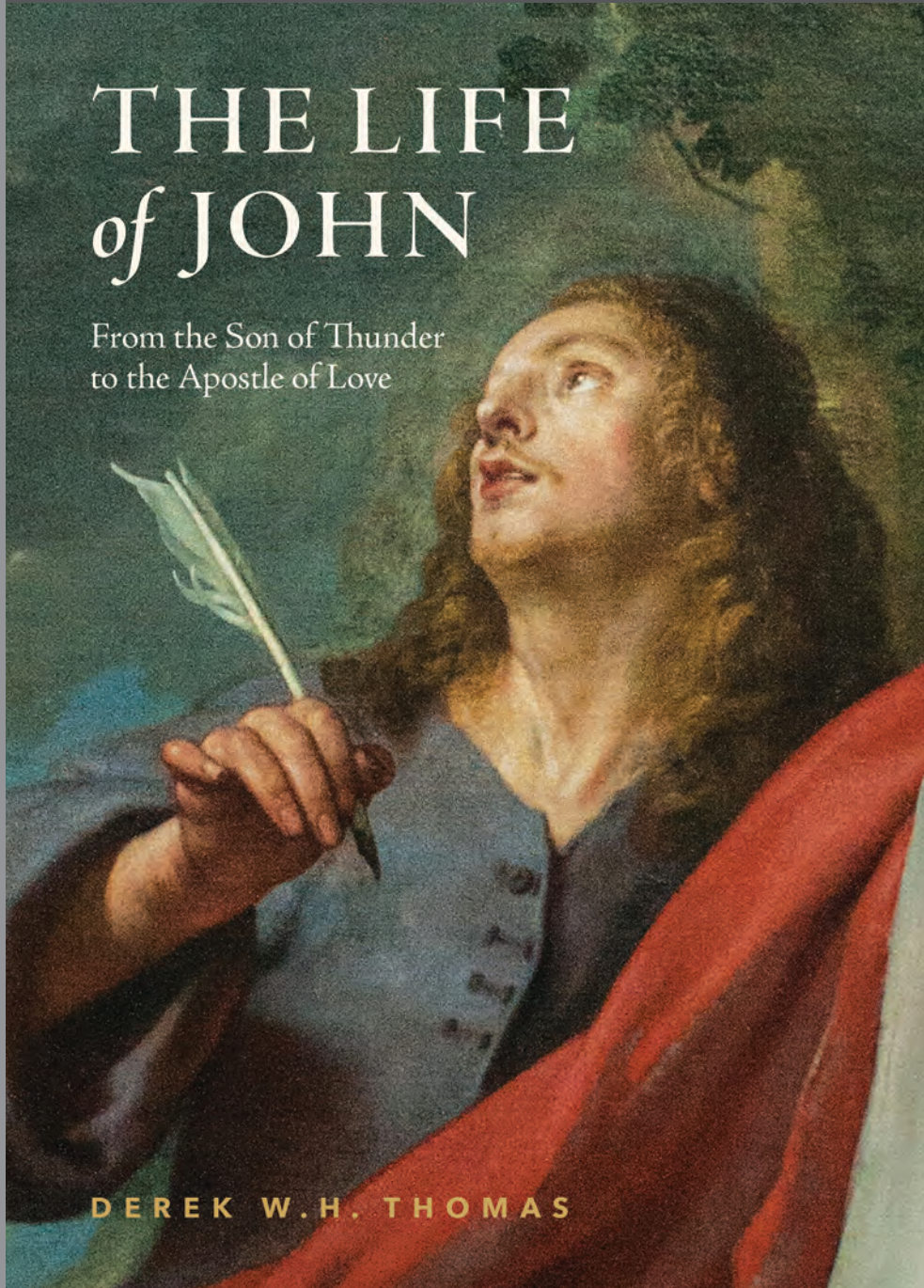


S T U D Y G U I D E

THE LIFE *of* JOHN

From the Son of Thunder
to the Apostle of Love

DEREK W.H. THOMAS



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to the Apostle of Love

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Introduction

Five books of the New Testament Scriptures were composed by the Apostle John. But who was John? How was he transformed from a Galilean fisherman into a leading Apostle in the early church? In this teaching series, Dr. Derek Thomas conducts a biographical study of the Apostle John. From the Gospels' narratives to John's own letters, Scripture gives us much insight into John's character and growth as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

This study guide is a companion to the video teaching series. Whether you are using the DVDs, streaming the videos on Ligonier.org, or going through the course in Ligonier Connect, this resource is designed to help you make the most of the learning experience. For each message in the series, there is a corresponding lesson in this guide. Here is what you will find in each lesson:

INTRODUCTION	The introduction is a brief paragraph that summarizes the content covered in the lecture and considered in the study guide lesson. How to use: Use the introduction to each lesson to get a sense of the big picture before watching the video. Refer to these statements as you work through the study guide to remind yourself of what you have already covered and where you are headed.
LEARNING GOALS	The learning goals are the knowledge and skills that the study guide lesson will endeavor to equip you with as you work through the lecture content. How to use: Familiarize yourself with the goals of each lesson before engaging its contents. Keeping the overall purpose in mind as you watch each video and reflect on or discuss the questions will help you get the most out of each lesson.
KEY IDEAS	The key ideas are the major points or takeaways from the lecture. How to use: Use these ideas to prepare yourself for each lesson and to review previous lessons. They describe specifically the knowledge that each lecture is communicating.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	The questions are the guided reflection and/or discussion component of the lesson that is intended to help you prepare for, process, and organize what you are learning. How to use: Reflect on individually or discuss in a group the questions in the order in which they appear in the lesson. The time stamps in the right margin indicate where the answers to questions during the video can be found.
PRAYER	The prayer section offers suggestions for how to close the lesson in prayer with respect to what was taught in the lecture. How to use: Consider using each lesson's prayer section as a guide to personal or group prayer. These sections follow the ACTS prayer model, which you can learn more about in R.C. Sproul's Crucial Questions booklet <i>Does Prayer Change Things?</i> This helpful guide is available as a free e-book at Ligonier.org.
REVIEW QUIZ	The review quiz is a set of six multiple-choice questions that appears at the end of each lesson. How to use: Use each quiz to check your comprehension and memory of the major points covered in each lecture. It will be most beneficial to your learning if you take a lesson's quiz either sometime between lessons or just before you begin the next lesson in the study guide.
ANSWER KEY	The answer key provides explanations for the reflection and discussion questions and answers to the multiple-choice questions in the review quiz. How to use: Use the answer key to check your own answers or when you do not know the answer. Note: Do not give in too quickly; struggling for a few moments to recall an answer reinforces it in your mind.

Study Schedules

The following table suggests four plans for working through the *The Life of John* video teaching series and this companion study guide. Whether you are going through this series on your own or with a group, these schedules should help you plan your study path.

	Extended 19-Week Plan	Standard 17-Week Plan	Abbreviated 8-Week Plan	Intensive 6-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
1	*	1	1 & 2	1–3
2	1	2	3 & 4	4–6
3	2	3	5 & 6	7–9
4	3	4	7 & 8	10–12
5	4	5	9 & 10	13–15
6	5	6	11 & 12	16 & 17
7	6	7	13 & 14	
8	7	8	15–17	
9	8	9		
10	9	10		
11	10	11		
12	11	12		
13	12	13		
14	13	14		
15	14	15		

	Extended 19-Week Plan	Standard 17-Week Plan	Abbreviated 8-Week Plan	Intensive 6-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
16	15	16		
17	16	17		
18	17			
19	*			

* For these weeks, rather than completing lessons, spend your time discussing and praying about your learning goals for the study (the first week) and the most valuable takeaways from the study (the last week).

A Disciple of John the Baptist

INTRODUCTION

The Apostle John is recognized for his New Testament writings, for his love of Christ, and for his desire to have people believe in Jesus. But where did John's story begin? How did he first become a disciple of Christ? In this lesson, Dr. Thomas examines the beginning of John's story.

LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Identify who John was before he became Christ's disciple
- Explain the ministry of John the Baptist
- Recall how John became a disciple of Jesus Christ

KEY IDEAS

- The Apostle John began as a disciple of John the Baptist.
- John the Baptist was preparing the way for Jesus' ministry.
- While John had long believed in God and the Old Testament Scriptures, there was a particular day on which he was converted to Christ.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- Why should we be interested in a study of the life of the Apostle John?
- How were you converted? Did you learn about Christ and believe in a moment? Or was there a long process of learning about God and Jesus before you were converted?

Scripture Reading

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.

—Malachi 4:5–6

- What imminent reality defines the ministry of this prophet whom God promised to send? How is this fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist?

During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

A Disciple of the Baptizer

0:00–11:39

- Who was John before he became a disciple of Christ?
- What was the word or the message of the baptism of John the Baptist?

A Disciple of the Lamb

11:39–23:04

- The Apostle John left John the Baptist to become a disciple of Jesus. But what became of John the Baptist?

- The Apostle John had always believed in Israel's God and in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. What changed at his conversion?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- How did John become a disciple of Jesus?

If you are in a group, ask the members what this teaches them about providence. Ask: How did God prepare you to come to Christ before your own conversion?

- Why did John the Baptist call Jesus the Lamb of God?

If you are in a group, have the members defend the importance of the Old Testament for understanding Jesus' work. Ask: How do we see the New Testament using Old Testament categories to tell the story of Jesus?

- Why is it significant that the Apostle John records his question to Jesus about where He was staying?

If you are in a group, have the members explain why the historical accuracy of the gospel account of Jesus is important. Ask: Can the hero of a fictional story take away your sins before a just God?

PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God that He is the promise-keeping God of the Old Testament.
- Confess your own apathy or slothfulness in seeking to be a faithful disciple of Christ.
- Thank God that He sent Jesus Christ to take away the sin of the world.
- Ask God that His Spirit would help you pay much closer attention to the teaching of Jesus.

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. In his later life, what title was given to the Apostle John?
 - a. The Apostle of Hope
 - b. A Son of Thunder
 - c. The Apostle of Love
 - d. A Son of Abraham
2. In what city did John spend the final years of his life?
 - a. Ephesus
 - b. Philippi
 - c. Patmos
 - d. Galilee
3. What was the baptism of John the Baptist a symbol of?
 - a. Israel's exodus from Egypt
 - b. Israel's wandering in the wilderness
 - c. Preparation for Passover
 - d. Ceremonial cleansing
4. According to our best estimates, when did Jesus' ministry begin?
 - a. AD 9–10
 - b. AD 24–25
 - c. AD 29–30
 - d. AD 42–43
5. By what name did John the Baptist call Jesus?
 - a. The King of kings
 - b. The Lamb of God
 - c. The Son of David
 - d. The Messiah of Israel
6. Following a teacher around as his disciple was a unique practice started by Jesus.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answer Key—A Disciple of John the Baptist

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

These are personal questions. The answers should be based on your own knowledge and experience.

Scripture Reading

- What imminent reality defines the ministry of this prophet whom God promised to send? How is this fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist?

God's impending judgment—the destruction of sinners—is the imminent reality that Malachi says will define the ministry of God's future prophet. As Dr. Thomas explains, John the Baptist was warning Israel about the coming judgment. He was the Elijah promised by Malachi, and his ministry was characterized by commanding the people to flee from the coming wrath.

During the Video

A Disciple of the Baptizer

- Who was John before he became a disciple of Christ?

John was a fisherman in Galilee. He, his brother James, and their father Zebedee owned a fishing business. When Jesus met John, however, he was a disciple of John the Baptist, who was preaching and baptizing at the Jordan River.

- What was the word or the message of the baptism of John the Baptist?

Dr. Thomas notes that no gospel is proclaimed in the baptism of John the Baptist. Instead, the message behind his baptism is a word of warning. John the Baptist proclaimed the people's need to flee the coming judgment, so that while John did not baptize people into Christ, he was baptizing them out of sin.

A Disciple of the Lamb

- The Apostle John left John the Baptist to become a disciple of Jesus. But what became of John the Baptist?

Shortly after Jesus began His ministry, John the Baptist was arrested and imprisoned by King Herod. After some time, at the request of his relative, Herod had John the Baptist beheaded in prison.

- The Apostle John had always believed in Israel's God and in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. What changed at his conversion?

While John had always believed that a Redeemer would come, there was a day when John met the Savior. On that day, John no longer looked forward to the coming of the Savior. Instead, he looked upon the Savior, and John trusted Him for his own salvation.

After the Video

- How did John become a disciple of Jesus?

John had been a disciple of John the Baptist. John heard John the Baptist say of Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). Hearing that Jesus was the Lamb of God, John and his brother James both left John the Baptist and began following Jesus. From then on, John was Jesus' disciple.

- Why did John the Baptist call Jesus the Lamb of God?

For John's audience, the title "Lamb of God" immediately called to mind the events of the Passover. During the original Passover in Egypt, every Israelite family was commanded to offer a lamb as a sacrifice and then spread the lamb's blood over their doorposts. The shed blood of the lamb symbolically covered the sins of God's people, and judgment did not come to those houses. By calling Jesus the Lamb of God, John the Baptist presented Jesus as the sacrifice whose shed blood would atone for sin.

- Why is it significant that the Apostle John records his question to Jesus about where He was staying?

First, John's question proves that John was an eyewitness of the events he describes. This question is a small detail that would be recalled only by someone who was present, asking the question. Second, this question was a key part of the day of John's conversion. The question where Jesus was residing proceeded from John and Andrew's desire to follow Jesus, listening to and learning from Him.

REVIEW QUIZ

1. C.

Jesus called John and his brother James "Sons of Thunder" during His ministry (Mark 3:17), but in his later life, John was called "The Apostle of Love." According to early historians, in his last years, John was known for being carried around the city and simply declaring to Christians, "Love one another."

2. A.

John was exiled to the isle of Patmos for a time. That is where he saw the visions recorded in the book of Revelation. After his exile, however, he reportedly returned to Ephesus, where he lived out his final years.

3. **D.**

John the Baptist did not administer Christian baptism. His baptism did, however, symbolize ceremonial washing. For the people whom he baptized, then, this baptism was a picture of their being cleansed from their sinful stains.

4. **C.**

Jesus began His ministry around AD 29 or 30. This was likely near the end of John the Baptist's ministry, a short time before John the Baptist was arrested and imprisoned by King Herod.

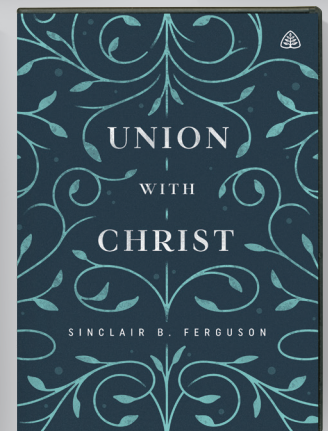
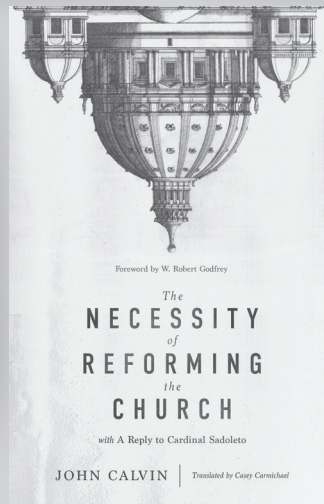
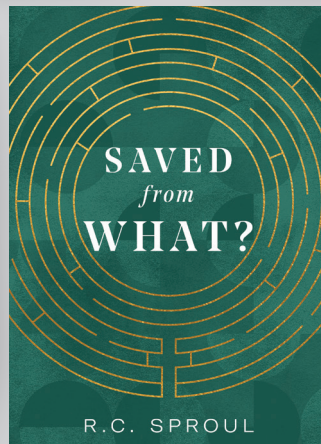
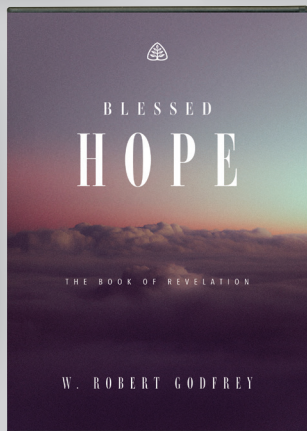
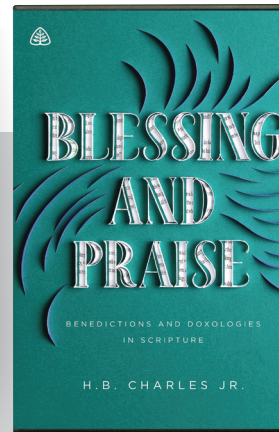
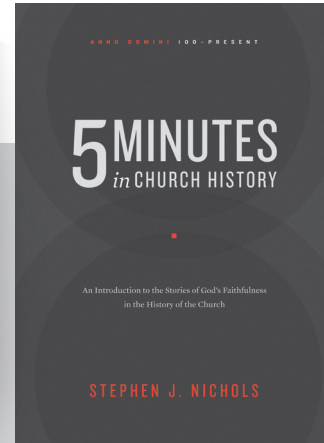
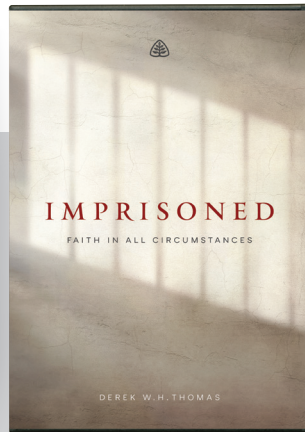
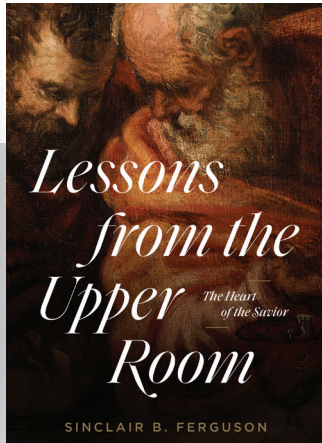
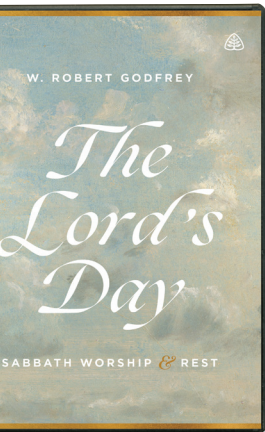
5. **B.**

John the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). This reference to Jesus as a sacrificial lamb implied that His death would atone for the sins of His people.

6. **B.**

By the first century, the pattern of a disciple's following his teacher around had already been practiced by Greek philosophers. Aristotle and Plato had disciples who followed and learned from them.

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