
UCM @ UBC Fall 2011 Core Study:

GOSPEL OF JOHN

“Miraculous Signs and the ‘I Am’ statements”

UCM’S VISION FOR CORES:

Our desire is that Core would be a place where students can grow in their relationship with Jesus and journey together in seeking to be more like Him. That’s why we call it CORE, because it’s central to who we are becoming. Our vision is that there would be Core groups in every corner of campus pursuing spiritual growth and transformation in community with one another.

COMPONENTS OF CORE:

Every Core will be made up of a unique small group of students, and consequently every Core will be different and have it’s own identity. At the same time, our Cores are committed to these 5 core values that that keep us balanced and on track as we follow Jesus: discipleship, fellowship, outreach, prayer and worship.

With approximately 11 available weeks for group meetings in the Fall 2011 term, it’s important that each Core leader and Co-leader plan ahead and through out the term to keep a balance in their Core. It’s easy to fall into a routine of only studying scripture together and closing in prayer. But remember: this isn’t just a bible study, this is CORE!

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE:

First semester is a critical time for forming authentic and spiritually transformative Core groups.

Every Fall semester we choose a book of the Bible that all of our Cores will study. This semester your UCM Staff have prepared 10 Core studies on the book of John. We have purposely chosen only to prepare 10 studies so that there is space for you as leaders to ensure your Core is balanced and pursuing all the essential components that make up Core.

We have prepared the following schedule as an example of how to plan to roughly incorporate our five values of prayer, worship, discipleship, outreach and fellowship in your Cores:

Week:	Core Focus:		Passage:
1. (Sep 19-21)	Study #1	Core Vision & Share Personal Stories	John 20: 27-31
2. (Sep 26-28)	Study #2	& Stories	John 1
3. (Oct 3-5)	Study #3	& Community Building Activity	John 3
4. (Oct 10-12)	Study #4	& Stories & Prayer focus	John 4:1-41
5. (Oct 17-19)	Study #5	& Stories	John 4:43- 5:14
6. (Oct 24-26)	Study #6	& Prayer focus	John 6: 1-71
7. (Oct 31- Nov 2)	Study #7	& Worship focus	John 8:12-59
8. (Nov 7-9)	Core Date		
9. (Nov 14-16)	Outreach		
10. (Nov 21-23)	Study #8	& Prayer focus	John 10: 1-21
11. (Nov 28-30)	Study #9	& Worship focus	John 11: 1-57
12. (Jan 4-6)	Study #10	First Core back from Christmas	John 14: 1-14

PLANNING YOUR CORE SCHEDULE:

Trust me, these first 11 weeks will go by fast. Sit down with your co-leader, take time to pray and discuss the visions you have for your Core and schedule it out. Take a look at some of the suggestions below and then use this calendar to roughly plan your semester of Core meetings:

Week:	Core Focus:	Passage:
1. (Sep 20-22)	_____	_____
2. (Sep 27-29)	_____	_____
3. (Oct 4-6)	_____	_____
4. (Oct 11-13)	_____	_____
5. (Oct 18-20)	_____	_____
6. (Oct 25-27)	_____	_____
7. (Nov 1-3)	_____	_____
8. (Nov 8-10)	_____	_____
9. (Nov 15-17)	_____	_____
10. (Nov 22-24)	_____	_____
11. (Nov 29-Dec 1)	_____	_____

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES IN CORE:

Over the years students have found the following practices and experiences to be an essential part of a Core:

- Reading and studying scripture together with the purpose of personal and communal application.
- Authentically getting to know one another by sharing our personal stories/history and testimonies of coming to follow Jesus.
- Challenging one another and keeping each other accountable in our walks of faith and obedience to Jesus.
- Serving or planning an outreach project to do together each term (e.g. being a welcome team at a Thursday Night, dorm outreach, or serving at a mission downtown).
- Praying for one another, relationships in dorm, and for the campus.
- Incorporating time and space for worship.
- Connecting with another guys/girls Core (i.e. a “Core date”).

5 PRACTICAL IDEAS:

1. Make time in the first 5 weeks of your Core meetings for each person in your Core to share their story. (One or two people each week depending on the size of your Core).
2. Take time to pray for the person right after they share their story.
3. Book one night early on in the semester to do a community building activity together, like eating dinner together, playing sports, or a game that allows getting to know each other.
4. Plan to have one or two Cores where there is space to worship together (e.g. through music or time of silent contemplation) or to have an extended time in prayer for one another (e.g. laying on hands and praying for anointing in mission and our callings).
5. Meet somewhere accessible in dorm and pray about a practical way to purposefully engage your dorm or neighborhood.

PASSAGES & THEMES:

Below are the titles, passages, and themes of the bible studies we are preparing as a resource that will be available on the website this fall semester (week by week):

[Intro and short devotional]

Passage: John 20: 28-31

[Jesus as the Light]

Passage: John 1:1-14

[Jesus and Nicodemus]

Passage: John 3

[Love and Compassion of Jesus]

Passage: John 4:1-42

[Healing hand of Jesus]

Passage: John 4:43- 5:14

[Jesus as the Bread of Life]

Passage: John 6: 1-71

[Claims and Challenges]

Passage: John 8:12-59

[Jesus as the Good Shepherd]

Passage: John 10: 1-21

[Jesus raising Lazarus]

Passage: John 11:1-57

[The Way, Truth and Life]

Passage: John 14: 1-14

READING STORY BY STORY:

Selecting these passages to focus our study time in Core is in no way to imply that this is all we are going to read. John is a great book to be reading through out the week, story by story. The best way for your Core members to engage the text during the Core meeting is if they have been reading the context through out the week. Encourage this by modeling it yourself.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Taken from "John: The Way to True Life Bible Study Guide" by Douglas Connelly

The most significant fact in history can be summed up in four words: Jesus Christ is God!

The great declaration of the Bible is that God in human flesh was born in Bethlehem. It was God in the person of Jesus Christ who astonished the people of his day with his miracles and amazed them with his teaching. It was God who lived a perfect life and then allowed himself to be put to death on a Roman cross for humanity's sins. It was God who broke the bonds of death three days after he died and came out of the grave alive. The deity of Jesus – the fact that he was God in human form – is the bottom line of the Christian faith.

When the apostle John sat down to write his Gospel, he was not interested simply in adding one more account of Jesus' life to the three already in existence. John wrote his book with a very specific purpose in mind:

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31)

John's book is not a biography; it's a theological argument. John wants to convince us that Jesus of Nazareth is God the Son. Then he wants to show us how that fact will change our lives in some amazing ways. It is by believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God that we find life – real life, eternal life, a whole new kind of life!

Every event John records is designed to show us that Jesus is God. John pulls from the life of Jesus specific incidents that demonstrate his majesty and deity. Of particular interest to John are the sign miracles of Jesus. In the first twelve chapters of his book he records seven miracles. These miracles were not performed simply to relieve human suffering or to meet human needs; they were 'signs.' They pointed to the truth of Jesus' claim to be the Son of God.

John was the last Gospel writer. The best evidence points to a date around A.D 90 for the composition of his Gospel. The other Gospels had been in circulation for some time. John wrote to add his unique perspective and to fill in some of the details not recorded by the other writers. He assumes his readers are familiar with the other Gospels. John does not mention, for example, the anguish of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. The other writers had adequately described that incident. John does, however, give us the details of Jesus' conversation with his disciples on the night before his crucifixion. The other writers mention it only briefly.

John never mentions himself by name in the Gospel; he refers to himself simply as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' We have in this Gospel the memories of an intimate friend about Jesus. Jesus had transformed John's life. I hope you are prepared to have that happen to you! If you will respond to what John writes in faith and obedience, you, like John, will experience a whole new kind of life.