

The only thing that matters is that you are reading God's word regularly. While that is still true with this schedule, the goal with this one is to get a better understanding of the entire story of the bible. There is no substitute for reading God's word. Keep reading! My website is at <http://graceofourlord.wordpress.com>. I encourage you to get the actual reading plan I am currently following. You can get it from the same place I do - at [this link](#). They have some great guidance for the reading plan there as well, and they have it all in both PDF and in Kindle format!

September 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 (Week 36)	3 John 12	4 Matt 24	5 Matt 25	6 John 13	7 John 14	8
9 (Week 37)	10 John 15	11 John 16	12 John 17	13 John 18	14 Matt 26	15
16 (Week 38)	17 Matt 27	18 Matt 28	19 John 20	20 John 21	21 Luke 24	22
23 (Week 39)	24 Acts 1	25 Acts 2	26 Acts 3	27 Acts 4	28 Acts 5	29
30 (Week 40)	Oct 1 Acts 6	Oct 2 Acts 7	Oct 3 Acts 8	Oct 4 Acts 9	Oct 5 Acts 10	Oct 6

September Week 2 (Week 37) Summary

John 15, 16, 17, 18, and Matthew 26 - Click the chapter below to go to the ESV Bible passage for that chapter and read or listen.

[John 15](#) - The vineyard references are deeply embedded in the Old Testament as a symbol for Israel, especially in two vineyard songs in Isaiah ([Isaiah 5:1-7](#) and [Isaiah 27:2-6](#)). But Israel failed in bearing fruit. God as the vinedresser is taken from the first vineyard song. In that passage, God is depicted tending His vineyard, but the vineyard produced wild grapes

(unrighteousness). Jesus is the true vine, and His disciples are the branches. The fruit is the outward signs and effect on the world of the Christian life in those branches. Those who do not bear fruit are not abiding in Jesus - not being true disciples, perhaps just going through some of the motions. Verse 7 ("If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you") is another important point to remember about prayer - but abiding in Him means that our prayers reflect His will.

As Jesus again commands them to love each other as He has loved them, He tells them they are His friends, not just servants; and because of that He has made known to them the things of the Father, and the Holy Spirit will come to guide them. He also warns that just as He was persecuted they will also be persecuted. The "word that is written in their Law" Jesus referred to being fulfilled in verse 25 comes from [Psalm 69:4](#) and [Isaiah 35:19](#).

[John 16](#) - Jesus continues His farewell discourse in chapter 16, adding to His warning of the persecution they will face noting that they will be put out of the synagogues. Then, the shocking statement that people will kill His disciples in the belief that they serving God by doing so. Indeed, one who will do that very thing (Saul of Tarsus) will become an apostle.

He acknowledges their coming sorrow that He is leaving, but says that He must go for the Helper - the Holy Spirit - to come and guide them. "And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment" - means that many who do not believe will be given hope because of their repentance. In verse 21, Jesus makes the analogy of a woman giving birth ("she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world"). The statement that their sorrow will turn into joy means that once Jesus is resurrected and the Holy Spirit comes, their full realization of what has been born will replace their sorrow with joy (compare verses 20-21).

[John 17](#) - In this chapter, Jesus prays first for himself (verses 1-5), for His disciples (verses 6-19), and then for all believers to come (verses 20-26). He states in verse 4 that He has glorified God on earth "having accomplished the work that you gave me to do" (meaning that He did not fail to setup His kingdom as some have claimed - or anything else for that matter). He gave up the glory that He had with God since before the world existed (verse 5), and now asks God to glorify Him in His presence (after the resurrection), which will also achieve the result of the Son glorifying the Father.

As He prays for His disciples, He notes in verse 12 that He has guarded them and not one has been lost other than "the Son of destruction" (Judas) - which fulfilled the Scripture ([Psalm 41:9](#)):

*"Even my close friend in whom I trusted,
who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me."*

Verses 6, 11 and 26's use of God's name is the manifestation of His character and will that Jesus made known to them through His teaching and His actions. In verses 20-26, He prays for all who believe in Him, so that they may be with Him to see the the glory that He had "before the foundation of the world" (for all eternity). Those who believe know that God sent Him. They will know God through the Son; and the love God has for His son will be in them through Jesus.

[John 18](#) - Having finished the Farewell discourse, including His prayer, Jesus and His disciples went across the Kidron brook into a garden. John does not identify Gethsemane as Matthew and Mark do ([Matthew 26:36](#) and [Mark 14:32](#)). But he does say in verse 2 that Judas knew the place where Jesus would be because He often met there with His disciples. And we know from several scriptures ([Luke 21:37](#) and [Luke 22:39](#), for example) that it was His custom to go to the Mount of Olives at night. Knowing that this was the time, Jesus came forward to the soldiers and officers of the Pharisees that Judas had brought. Much commentary has been written about verse 6 ("When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground") - but we just do not know exactly what happened there. Clearly however, this was a significant response that we would not have expected from Jesus' captors. But it really does seem appropriate for the Son of God at this hour in His life.

Verses 15-17 contain the account of Peter's denial. Though we are not told, the "other disciple" mentioned in verses 15-16 is probably John himself (the disciple that Jesus loved - as in [John 20:2](#)). John is the only one of the four gospels that gives us the account of Jesus going first to Annas. He had been High Priest from 6-15 A.D., but had been deposed by [Valerius Gratus](#), the former Roman prefect of Judea (Josephus Antiquities 18.26, 34, 95). But the position stayed in the family - currently his son-in-law, Caiaphas. Since the position had traditionally been one that was life-long, Annas was still considered a High Priest by many Jews. Jesus was then taken to Caiaphas. John does not record the events of that encounter, but the synoptic gospels do ([Matthew 26:57-68](#), [Mark 14:53-65](#), and [Luke 22:66-71](#)). It was Caiaphas that had suggested that Jesus should die back in [John 11:49-51](#).

From there, Jesus was taken to the praetorium - the Roman governor's residence - to appear before Pilate. In verse 31, Pilate wants them to "judge him by your own law." But the Roman government had supposedly taken away the Sanhedrin's right to capital punishment (though clearly they exercised exceptions to this, as with Stephen in [Acts 7:57-60](#)), and they wanted Him put to death. Besides, as verse 32 reminds us, it was the Roman method of execution that would fulfill the scripture ([Isaiah 52:13](#), [John 12:32-33](#)). When Pilate speaks with Jesus asking what He had done and whether He was a king, Jesus lays aside all doubt as to what type of Kingdom He had come to establish in verse 36:

"My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."

Pilate still tries to avoid the responsibility for their blood lust, but he lacks the courage to go against the crowd. So he offers to free either Jesus or the known criminal Barabbas, no doubt thinking they would choose the latter.

But such was not to be. Jesus took the place of all of us, including Barrabas.

[Matthew 26](#) - Having read John's account, we now move to Matthew's account of the last supper and Jesus' arrest. Since the audience of the gospel of Matthew is the Jews, it makes sense that he would give full attention to certain details of the trial before the Sanhedrin. Unlike John, who gives the event in more chronological order, Matthew includes the account of the anointing of

Jesus by Mary (sister of Lazarus) here in verses 6-13. he also gives us the details in verses 14-16 of Judas' conspiracy with, and payment from, the chief priests for his promise to deliver Him. We also read in verses 17-20 of Jesus sending disciples to a "certain man" to prepare to have Passover at his house.

But it is in verses 3-5 that we read of chief priests and the elders plotting in Caiaphas' palace to "arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him." They were fearful of arresting Jesus openly because of His popularity; and the Feast of Unleavened Bread brought thousands of Pilgrims to the city. The last thing they wanted was an uprising. In verses 20-25, Jesus foretells His betrayal by one of them, culminating in an actual exchange between Jesus and Judas. What was it like to be told by the son of God that it would be better if His betrayer had never been born - knowing that you had already begun that process? And Jesus' confirmation that He knew in verse 25 must have been chilling, especially after the fact.

In verses 26-29, Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper. The Passover, begun so long ago in [Exodus 12](#) with the sacrifice of a lamb had pointed to this day. Now this memorial would remind us of the sacrifice of "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" ([John 1:29](#)). Verse 28 ("...this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" is the fulfilling also of the new covenant promise of [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#).

The hymn that they sung in verse 30 is most likely [Psalm 113-118](#), which is known as the Hallel (meaning "praise"). The scripture Jesus quotes in verse 31 is from [Zechariah 13:7](#), telling the disciples that they will all fall away that very night. He also predicts Peter's denial, at which point they all declare that they will remain with Him even if they must die. His prayer in Gethsemane occurs in verses 36-44. The traditional site for this now holds the "Church of All Nations" (or "Basilica of the Agony"), which was built over a 4th century Byzantine church. Note Jesus' sorrow and fervent petition to God in verses 38-39. Although He was divine, for our benefit He had the same emotions any man would have knowing the suffering that He was about to endure.

Judas betrays Him with a kiss in verse 49. We know from John 18:10-11 that it was Peter that cut off the ear of one of Jesus' captors (Malchus) in verse 51. When Jesus rebukes him, He says "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?" (we sing the song "He could have called Ten Thousand Angels"). Jesus was of course not going to call for help, but a Roman legion was 6,000 - so twelve of them would be 72,000. As predicted, all of His disciples fled the scene.

Matthew skips past the meeting with Annas ([John 18:12-14, 19-24](#)) and begins next with the appearance before Caiaphas the High Priest and the Council (the Sanhedrin). They had many witnesses coming forward, but none would give the false testimony they wanted in order to have Him put to death until at last two came and, in verse 61, misquoted Jesus' actual statement of [John 2:19-21](#). He remained silent, making no correction, when Caiaphas questioned Him about it. But when asked if He was the Christ, He confirmed it with the Greek expression "you have said so" that He had also used with Judas in verse 25. Then He added that they would see him at the right hand of "Power." Caiaphas declared this to be blasphemy, and they spit on Him and slapped Him, saying that He deserved death. The outcome was assured now.

Peter's denial in verses 69-74 went just as Jesus had said; and remembering the words of the Lord, Peter's grief was intense. Though this apostle would come to understand the necessity of what Jesus was to endure, we can only try to imagine the guilt he would bear.