

The 21-Day Challenge

What causes someone to fall in love with Jesus? Often, it's seeing Jesus' magnetic life, penetrating words and transforming perspective, especially in stories of what he said and did.

The 21-Day Challenge is **an outreach opportunity like few others**. Relying on natural relationships already in place, we invite a friend to read the 21 chapters of the Gospel of John in 21 days, and to get together to talk about what we're getting out of it as we go. In three short weeks, something profound happens through daily exploring who Jesus is and what he said, and his relevance today. This requires **very little from us - some prayer, some love, a step of faith – but the impact goes far beyond what we can imagine**.

Getting together to discuss insights from the chapter can happen **however the friendship and relationship naturally allows**. If you're classmates or co-workers, you could meet up before or after classes or work to chat about what you're seeing. If you never normally see the person, you could schedule a lunch, Zoom or FaceTime to connect once a week for the three weeks. If you're roommates or family, you could discuss it or even read it together every day, or every other day.

We encourage people to ask three questions of the chapter as we read each day:

- 1. What is something interesting Jesus did?**
- 2. What is something interesting Jesus said?**
- 3. How did people respond? How do you respond?**

Pray and ask God whom he'd like you to invite. Then invite your friend; **you could say something like this**: "You know, I really appreciate how you've always been a friend who respects my faith. You know I'm a follower of Jesus and go to church and stuff, but you never made me feel weird about it or anything. I so appreciate that. But one thing that's always bothered me is that very few friends understand **why** I choose to follow Jesus and what I love most about him. Many of my friends don't understand and I long for them to; it feels isolating sometimes. Recently, I was given the 21-Day Challenge, and I think it would be a great way for a friend to understand where my passion for this is coming from. For this challenge, I have to read with a friend the 21 chapters of the Gospel of John - a brief biography of Jesus that one of his early followers, John, wrote - in 21 days, and discuss it together along the way. The chapters are not like normal chapters in a book; they're super-short and take like 5-10 minutes to read, each. **Would you do this challenge with me?** I would really enjoy getting your perspective, and I'd love to hear your insights on it. We could meet up [after class/in the morning/on Tuesdays for coffee/a meal, on Zoom once a week] to discuss what we're getting out of it. Would you be up for doing this with me?"

As outreach expert Becky Pippert has highlighted, **reading the Scriptures with a friend is one of the most powerful things you can do** – and it's easier, more important, and more rewarding than you think it is. **It's easier**: it's easy to set up and you're letting the Word of God speak – you're letting your friends decide for themselves what they think of what Jesus said and did. **It's more important**: the power of the Word has enormous impact (Isaiah 55:9-13) and God can use it to change the eternal destiny of your friend! **It's more rewarding**: you may be making the connection for this person to experience God's love for them for the first time. That joy will help you and them realize your dignity and purpose in this life. **Have fun with this! It will be an amazing adventure and so worth it!**