



# SHADOW MOUNTAIN LEADER

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**We do not have an outline this week.**

We hope you had a fantastic first week in your groups! As we persist in prayer for Pastor Jeremiah as he continues to heal and get stronger, our plan for the Small Group Questions and Leader Packets until Pastor is back in the pulpit is to do a quick stand-alone series, beginning this week. You will notice there are a lot more Red Notes here than you are used to - this is intentional. Since this series will not have an accompanying “lesson” separate from your group discussions, we are providing you enough content to lead your groups in the “lesson” during the week’s discussion.

## Getting Started

1. Read John 3:16 out loud, together as a group. When did you first hear, or read, this passage? If you don’t have a memory of this, how do you now view this verse in connection to your own journey of faith? **This may be the most known, memorized, and recognizable passage from the entire Bible. It is a simple summary of one of the central doctrines of Christianity: the relationships between God (the Father) and Jesus Christ (the Son).**
2. When have you read the book of John from beginning to end? What about this book stood out to you? If you have not read it all the way through, what parts do you remember about it from books you may have read, sermons you may have heard, or conversations you may have had with others? **For many new Christians, John is the first book of the Bible they read through. Why? It is easy reading. It’s been said that “Anybody, no matter if they know anything about the Bible at all or don’t have any idea about Jesus Christ, if they sat down with their Bible and decided to read the Gospel of John, they could understand that book.” You don’t need a commentary. You don’t need an updated translation. All you need is the book of John. And if you really sincerely want to read it and understand it, it’s simple enough to understand.**

## Going Deeper

3. Read John 20:30-31. *Why* did John write this book? What does he tell his readers? **The Scripture says that John had a very basic purpose in mind: to prove to us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.** John says that he chose the specific material that he wrote in this book out of all that he knew by personal experience to illustrate the truth that Jesus Christ was indeed God, that He was the Son of God, the very God-man Himself. And the purpose was that the Jews (and all other people down through history) might **believe in Him.**
  
4. Re-read the verse above. Now look at the words “believe” and “believing.” How does belief play into these two verses? How has belief factored into your own journey of faith? When did you first believe? How did your belief change the way you viewed God, yourself, the world, and history? **As a group, it might be helpful to write out a list entitled “what we believe (or believe in).” Make a simple list of those things each of you believes. It might have such entries as: God, the Bible, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, eternal life, God’s love, forgiveness of sins, Jesus’ resurrection. The list may end up being long, so allow a little more time for this.**
  
5. Read the following verses. What do these verses teach us about Jesus’ humanity? How does this impact your understanding of Jesus’ human experience on earth? Describe your ability to relate to Jesus being a human being...like you.  
John 1:14 **Jesus became flesh**  
John 4:6 **He felt the human phenomenon of weariness**  
John 11:35 **He expressed emotions through tears and crying**  
John 19:28 **Jesus felt thirsty**

It's interesting to note that the human name for Jesus is *Jesus*. The human name for the *Son of God* is Jesus. *Christ* is His divine name. As you go through the Gospels, you discover that in the book of Mark, the Lord is called Jesus only 13 times. And in Luke, He's called Jesus 88 times. In Matthew, He is called Jesus 151 times, but in the book of John, which is supposed to be teaching us of His deity, His human name is found 247 times. And we stop and ask, "Why?" Perhaps the reason John does this is God wants us to know that, though He is indeed God the Son, He is still the Son of Man. He was God, 100%. He was man, 100%. He was God and man fused together in one person, and when you read John's Gospel, you see all of that so very clearly. Jesus was the Son of God.

6. If these concepts are new to you, what are you thinking about Jesus right now? What are you thinking about His humanity and His divinity? It's one thing to look at these concepts and think, "That's interesting." It's another thing to meditate on them and dig into your own beliefs about Jesus. While the Bible is forthright about Jesus and His dual identity (i.e., both humans and divine), there are some strong, practical implications each person can take away. For instance, "My God is also someone who knows what it's like to be human...to be like me." How does knowing that Jesus experienced the same things you have challenge your view of Him and His ability to relate to your life?

7. If they are known concepts to you, describe your process from learning these truths for the first time and then growing in your understanding of them over time. There is real power in going over the powerful truths in Scripture. The more time we spend learning and re-learning these concepts, the deeper we feel connected to the content and Jesus. After all, Jesus is the Word that became flesh.

## Applying the Message

8. Of the four statements below, which one best describes you?

1. You are a Christian and working through this lesson has drawn you closer to Jesus than ever before. He is more meaningful to you. **Many people report that they fall in love with Jesus all over again as they connect with the deeper truths surrounding His humanity and divinity. Like looking at a diamond as it refracts light, continually looking at Jesus refracts our faith in all sorts of powerful ways.**
2. You are not yet a Christian or you are a new Christian. This lesson has helped diminish (or minimize) some of the intellectual doubts that you've struggled with. **Perhaps it has even given you a reason to take a new step of faith toward Jesus.**
3. You are Christian but have not (historically) been concerned for the lost. With this lesson, you have become aware of 1) Jesus' love for you and 2) Jesus' love for the lost, as well. With that awareness has come a love for those who are lost. **Jesus was intimately in love with those who were yet to meet Him. We see Him, every time we turn around, in an encounter with somebody like Nicodemus, the religious ruler. And then the next chapter, He's done with Nicodemus, and here He is with a prostitute, the woman at the well of Sychar who had been living with so many different husbands and now was living with somebody who wasn't her husband, and Jesus is telling her about the Lord. Everywhere I see the Lord in the book of John, I see Him reaching out to those around Him who need the truth of eternal life.**

9. In what way will you take what you have learned here today and live differently? How might you show love, in a more Christlike way, to those in your family, your friends, the strangers in the grocery store, or at work? **Jesus went into the world to love others. We now have the opportunity to do the same.**