

# What Do You Seek?

## Take-Home 1: The Thirst

*Keep this sheet. The sealed box below stays folded until the final session.*

### What We Found

A quarterback with three championship rings told a national audience there had to be more than this. Then we met a woman in Samaria who had run the same experiment five times, coming to a well at noon, the hottest hour of the day. A tired stranger asked her for a drink, and by the end of the conversation she had left her water jar behind and was telling that same town, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did” (John 4:29). We found God’s oldest diagnosis behind the scene: forsaking the fountain of living waters and digging broken cisterns that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:13). And we put the first piece of a larger message on the table: you were made for God, and the ache when everything else falls short is a homing signal, not a malfunction.

#### The Story So Far

Piece One: You were made, on purpose, for a relationship with God. Restlessness is what being made for something feels like before you have it.

#### MY ANSWER (private, sealed)

In a sentence or two: What am I actually seeking? Write it below, fold this box closed, and keep the sheet. Nobody will read it but you. We open it, privately, at the final session.

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### Voices Worth Keeping

#### St. Augustine *Confessions, Book 1*

“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”

#### St. Augustine on the well *Tractates on John, 15*

He who was asking for a drink was thirsting for the faith of the woman herself.

#### St. Teresa of Avila *traditionally attributed, from her breviary*

“Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you... God alone suffices.”

### Live It This Week

1. Complete and fold the sealed box above. Keep the sheet safe.
2. Once this week, sit with the ache for ten minutes instead of numbing it. Notice what it is actually asking for.
3. Optional: read Mark 2:1-12 before next time. Watch what gets blocked, and what Jesus says first.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*“Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.” John 4:14*

**Before Next Session**

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Read **Mark 2:1-12**. A crowded house, a blocked door, four friends, and a sentence nobody expected.

**Catechism references from tonight:** CCC 27, 30, 2560.

# What Do You Seek?

## Take-Home 2: The Deeper Paralysis

*Keep your Week 1 sheet safe, box folded. We will need it.*

### What We Found

The novelist David Foster Wallace told a graduating class at Kenyon College in 2005 that everybody worships something, and that most of the available options eat you alive. Then we watched four friends dig through a roof because the door was blocked, and heard Jesus say the strangest sentence in Mark's Gospel: with a paralyzed man in front of Him, "My son, your sins are forgiven" first, and "rise" second. We found the pairing already waiting in Psalm 103, the God who forgives all your iniquity and heals all your diseases, and we took the scribes' logic seriously: only God can forgive sins, because sin is finally against God. Jesus then healed the man in public, on the record, as evidence for the part nobody could see. Piece Two went on the table: something in us is genuinely broken, and calling it sickness is the hopeful option, because sickness is the one category that allows for a physician.

#### The Story So Far

Piece One: You were made, on purpose, for a relationship with God; the restlessness is a homing signal. Piece Two: Something real stands between us and what we were made for. The Bible calls it sin, an offense against God and a failure in love that separates us from Him, and it treats sin as a disease with a physician, not a verdict without appeal.

### Voices Worth Keeping

**St. Ignatius of Antioch** *Letter to the Ephesians, 7 (c. AD 107)*

"There is one Physician, of flesh and of spirit... Jesus Christ our Lord."

**St. John Chrysostom** *Homilies on Matthew (summary)*

Preaching on this healing, he points to the order of Christ's words: the soul is treated before the body, because its disease is older and deadlier.

**St. Augustine** *Confessions, Book 2 (summary)*

His famous analysis of a pointless teenage theft: sin is love bent out of shape, which is why information alone never cures it.

### Live It This Week

1. One week, your own standards only. Just notice.
2. Thank the person who once carried you, in any form you like.
3. Optional: read Matthew 16:13-20 before next time.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” Mark 2:17*

**Before Next Session**

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Read **Matthew 16:13-20**. Jesus asks the one question this whole study has been circling, and He asks it directly.

**Catechism references from tonight:** CCC 1849, 1850, 1421.

# What Do You Seek?

## Take-Home 3: The Question He Asks Back

*Keep your Week 1 sheet safe, box folded. We will need it.*

### What We Found

Even Bart Ehrman, a leading agnostic scholar, grants the floor: a real man, really crucified under Pontius Pilate. On that floor, at pagan Caesarea Philippi, Jesus took a poll and then refused to leave it there: “But who do you say that I am?” We found His favorite self-title in Daniel 7, where one like a son of man rides the clouds into God’s throne room and receives an everlasting kingdom; the title sounds modest to modern ears, but Daniel’s scene is a coronation. We cashed in last week’s premise, only God can forgive sins, against a man who forgave sins and staked public evidence on the authority, and we heard “before Abraham was, I am” land in a crowd that reached for stones because they understood. The “great moral teacher” option did not survive contact with the sources. Piece Three went on the table: the answer to the ache is not a technique; it is a person, and He asks each of us the question directly.

#### The Story So Far

Piece One: You were made, on purpose, for a relationship with God; the restlessness is a homing signal. Piece Two: Something real stands between us and what we were made for; the Bible calls it sin and treats it as a disease with a physician. Piece Three: The answer is a person. Jesus claimed the identity only God can hold, and He asks you directly: who do you say that I am?

### Voices Worth Keeping

**St. Ignatius of Antioch** *Letter to the Ephesians, greeting (c. AD 107)*

Writing within living memory of the apostles, he speaks plainly of “Jesus Christ our God.”

**St. Athanasius** *On the Incarnation, 54*

“For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.”

**St. Leo the Great** *Tome to Flavian (summary)*

One and the same Christ, truly God and truly man: the Church’s enduring grammar for what Peter confessed.

### Live It This Week

1. Write your honest one-sentence answer to His question. Date it. Keep it private.
2. Bring one question about Jesus you have always wanted a straight answer to; we collect them next week, no names attached.
3. Optional: read Luke 23:32-43 before next time.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*"He said to them, But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter replied, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* **Matthew 16:15-16**

**Before Next Session**

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Read **Luke 23:32-43**. Three crosses on a hill, and a conversation between two of them.

**Catechism references from tonight:** CCC 424, 464, 151.

# What Do You Seek?

## Take-Home 4: The Man Beside Him

*Keep your Week 1 sheet safe, box folded. Two sessions to go.*

### What We Found

A dying man told a stadium of graduates that remembering death was the most useful tool he ever found. Then we stood at the story's hardest place: three crosses, and on the outer two, identical men making opposite answers. One demanded escape; the other brought the only two things he had left, honesty about his guilt and one free ask: "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power." The answer outran the request: not remembered someday but accompanied today, "with me in Paradise." Behind the scene we found Isaiah 53, written centuries early: wounded for our transgressions, numbered with the transgressors. Piece Four went on the table: the wall between us and God was not explained away; it was paid for, in person, and the payment was love. Forgiveness always costs the forgiver; the cross is God absorbing that cost Himself.

#### The Story So Far

Piece One: You were made, on purpose, for a relationship with God; the restlessness is a homing signal.  
Piece Two: Something real stands between us and what we were made for; a disease with a physician.  
Piece Three: The answer is a person, who asks each of us directly who we say He is.  
Piece Four: On the cross, God paid for the wall in person. Two men hung the same distance from Him; only one asked.

### Voices Worth Keeping

#### St. Ambrose *Exposition of Luke (summary)*

The thief asked only to be remembered and received Paradise, today, with Christ: the Lord always gives more than He is asked.

#### St. Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechetical Lectures (summary)*

Teaching converts within sight of Calvary: a man entered Paradise from a cross, on a single believing sentence.

#### Commonly attributed to St. Augustine *attribution uncertain*

"Do not despair: one of the thieves was saved. Do not presume: one of the thieves was damned."

### Live It This Week

1. Make one decision this week as if your time were short. Notice what it clarifies.
2. Read Isaiah 53 in full, alone, once.
3. Optional: read John 3:1-21 before next time.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*“Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power. And he said to him, Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”* **Luke 23:42-43**

**Before Next Session**

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Read **John 3:1-21**. A respected teacher comes to Jesus at night, with the questions he could not ask in daylight.

**Catechism references from tonight:** CCC 601, 604, 1021.



# What Do You Seek?

## Take-Home 5: Born Again at Night

*One piece of homework: find your Week 1 sheet, keep it folded, bring it next week.*

### What We Found

A man who sold his game for 2.5 billion dollars posted from the far side of the jackpot that he had never felt more isolated: the reset arrived and the new life did not. Then we met the most credentialed man in John's Gospel carrying his real questions through the dark, and heard Jesus offer him something no reset can deliver: not a renovation but a birth, "anew" and "from above" at once, of water and the Spirit. We found the strange old story Jesus chose as His own diagram: the bitten in the wilderness who looked at the lifted image and lived, faith as a wound turning its eyes to the remedy. We heard the engine behind everything: God so loved the world that He gave, sent not to condemn but to save. And we watched the light arrive uninvited while the coming-to-it stayed free. Piece Five went on the table: the gift, and how it is received: grace first, faith that looks, a new birth Catholics have always found in baptism, and full permission, straight from John's Gospel, to arrive at Nicodemus speed.

#### The Story So Far

Piece One: You were made, on purpose, for a relationship with God; the restlessness is a homing signal.

Piece Five: What He did is offered to you as a gift: grace, faith, new birth of water and the Spirit. It can be received slowly.

Piece Four: On the cross, God paid for the wall in person; two men, same distance, only one asked.

Piece Three: The answer is a person, who asks each of us directly who we say He is.

Piece Two: Something real stands between us and what we were made for; a disease with a physician.

### Voices Worth Keeping

#### St. Justin Martyr *First Apology (summary, c. AD 155)*

Explaining the faith to a pagan emperor: converts are brought to water and reborn, and baptism is called illumination, for the newly born receive light.

#### St. Cyprian of Carthage *To Donatus (summary)*

His own adult conversion, from the inside: the new start he had thought impossible for a man already formed by his habits, actually happening in the water of rebirth.

#### St. Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration 40 (summary)*

His names for baptism: gift, grace, illumination, garment of incorruption, bath of rebirth, seal. The vocabulary of baptism is the vocabulary of gift.

### Live It This Week

1. Find your Week 1 sheet. Keep it folded. Bring it next week.

2. Reread John 3:16-17 once, slowly. Let it say what it says.
3. No advance reading for the finale. Come as you are.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16*

### **Before Next Session**

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Next week we go back to the very beginning of the story, and we finish what we started in Week 1. Bring your sealed sheet.

**Catechism references from tonight:** CCC 1996, 1257, 2002.

# What Do You Seek?

## Take-Home 6: The Door

*The study ends. The question, rightly heard, was His first. Keep this sheet.*

### What We Found

The last voice from the top was the oldest: a celebrated professor who ran the whole experiment, pleasure, ambition, applause, philosophy, and wrote the conclusion as a prayer: you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you (St. Augustine, Confessions 1.1). Then the reveal six weeks in the making: “What do you seek?” is the first sentence Jesus speaks in the Gospel of John, aimed at two seekers whose answer was an address, “where are you staying?” They wanted to be where He is; so did every ache we inventoried in Week 1. We traced all six encounters and found one pattern without exception: the initiative was always His, down to Psalm 27:8, where even our seeking turns out to answer a voice that spoke first: Seek my face. And we finally read the verse this study was built on: He stands at the door and knocks, He does not pick the lock, and the promise behind the door is a meal, like the one we have shared for six weeks. The handle is on the inside.

#### The Whole Message

Piece One: You were made, on purpose, for a relationship with God; the restlessness is a homing signal. Piece Two: Something real stands between us and what we were made for; a disease with a physician. Piece Three: The answer is a person, who asks each of us directly who we say He is. Piece Four: On the cross, God paid for the wall in person; two men, same distance, only one turned to Him and asked. Piece Five: What He did is offered as a gift: grace, faith, new birth of water and the Spirit, receivable at Nicodemus speed. Piece Six: All of it stands at your door and knocks. The handle is on the inside, and the invitation is three words: come and see.

### Voices Worth Keeping

#### St. Augustine *Confessions, Book 10*

“Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new; late have I loved you!... You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness.”

#### Pope Benedict XVI *Deus Caritas Est, 1*

“Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”

#### St. John Paul II *Inauguration homily, 1978*

“Be not afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ.”

### Where the Path Continues

- This group: ask your host what the next study is; you are already invited.

- A conversation: your host, or a priest, will take your questions privately; no signup sheet exists.
- A Mass: come as a guest, with a friend beside you; watching is a legitimate way to seek.
- The Church's path for those who decide to enter: it begins whenever you do.
- Not yet: also honest. Nicodemus got three chapters; Jesus asked him one pointed question (John 3:10), then kept teaching him into the night.

**SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE**

*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."* **Revelation 3:20**

## **One Last Line**

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Keep this sheet with your Week 1 sheet. If the knocking does not fade by Tuesday, you know what it was, and you know the three words: **come and see**.