



All Saints Bible Study and Discussion Group

Our All Saints Bible Study and Discussion Group meets on **Tuesdays every week from 7:30 to 9pm in the church wing—starting September 19**. Leo Lazaris leads our group and Fr. Haridimos oversees and offers spiritual guidance. We read and discuss the scriptures in an easy-going way, host topical and multimedia presentations, and welcome lessons on the history and tradition of our faith. We enjoy time together and have potluck parties throughout the year.

This year, we will read through the gospel of St. John and his three epistles. Our goal will be to deepen our faith by examining the Person of Christ. How do we “abide” in Christ? How do we make Him at home in our hearts? Then, what becomes of us when we do grow closer to Christ? The psalmist answers thus: “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” (16:11)

Christ Himself says, as recorded by St. John (10:10): “I have come that [people] may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” This abundant life comes from Christ’s providing grace for our souls and in our situations, but it also comes when we follow God’s path – doing what is loving and true. We become whole, the best we can be, in mind and body. Yet we sin.

While God desires the holiness of all believers (1 Thessalonians 4:3), He also allows sin and can even use our sins to eventually bring about good. When Christ predicted St. Peter’s denial, He did not pray that St. Peter wouldn’t fall but that his recovery from that fall would be used to strengthen others (St. Luke 22:31-32), as he fully repented (St. Matthew 26:75), and with mercy and love, Christ fully restored him (St. John 21:15-17). We pray, *Thy Kingdom come*, yet don’t always know His will and His purposes in every situation. We therefore seek a close relationship with Him, speaking to Him and hearing Him in prayer, striving to be the salt and light of our culture.

Ultimately though, the truth is, we do not understand ALL that God is doing, and thus we may die without knowing why He apparently didn’t answer some of our fervent prayers. We only see a small slice of what God is fulfilling in His eternal purpose. Yet, we still have to make it through our experience in the world, with all its challenges.

St. John’s gospel, with all its miracles and themes, equips us for the journey. As we read, we will seek helpful insights on love and truth, the dual between light and darkness, the living water, the ultimate fulfillment of prophecy in Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the seven “I Am’s” showing Christ’s divinity. We will seek to apply this content to our times and understand how we have drifted into a postmodern world.

The All Saints Bible Study Group uses THE ORTHODOX STUDY BIBLE, Conciliar Press.

Here are some of the questions and issues we will be covering, examining current affairs and cultural developments and our personal spiritual growth:

What is our cultural identity? Is it our role to promote good values politically or to sidestep the system?
What government is best suited for humankind?—Do religion and politics mix?
When are we tempted to compromise our faith?
How does science relate to faith?
How do we respond to the many challenges we regularly face?
What do we need to do to grow spiritually?
What are the benefits of worship and the sacramental life?
When and how often should we pray?
Where can we be of service? How can we know our purpose?
How do we gain confidence in our relationships with God and everyone around us?
How should Orthodox Christians respond when culture clashes with Church and Bible teaching?
What should we think of modern films and the entertainment industry, and the thousands of networks and websites begging and competing for our attention and subscription?



Additional (Optional) Resources: *The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to John* by Blessed Theophylact (Bible Commentary); *Improbable Planet* by Hugh Ross (Science); *The Benedict Option* by Rod Dreher (Society); and, *Movies are Prayers* by Josh Larsen (Culture).

For info visit our website: www.all-saints.ca/bible_study1.html **or email us:** biblestudy@all-saints.ca