

Small Group Discussion Questions
The Gospel of John, Week 7
"Jesus, Son of God"

By the time we get to the middle of John 5, we've learned plenty about Jesus from what others have said and done...and even from what Jesus himself has done. John (the best friend of Jesus, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and the writer of this gospel account) has told us about Jesus (1:1-18). John told us, in his own words, that Jesus is God, the Son of God, the living Word and the Way to the Father.

And Jesus has done some amazing things to tell us about Himself: turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana, plus cleansing the temple (both in John 2); the "you must be born again" encounter with Nicodemus (John 3); meeting the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4); and even the "38 special," when he healed the invalid of 38 years by the pools of Bethesda (John 5:1-15). Thus, we've learned plenty *about* Jesus...but we've yet to hear directly, flatly, boldly from Jesus himself, about who He is.

That all changes right here. In John 5:16-24, Jesus makes a MONSTER claim: that He is one with the Father...that He is God. And Jesus issues a MIGHTY call: to honor Him as we would honor the Father.

For those of us who *accept his claim* (that He is God), we must *answer his call* -- to put Him first in our lives.

Warm it up

Share about a time when someone made a ridiculous claim (whether or not it ever proved to be true☺). What happened as a result of his or her claim?

-or-

Share a time/situation when could truly see that God was working. Describe the situation (including what came of it all) as best you can.

Talk it Over

Read John 5:16-24.

1. Look at v16-18. What things was Jesus doing on the Sabbath? Why was that a big deal? Why do you think the Jews wanted to kill Jesus so badly?
2. Look at v19-24. Try (as a group) to name and describe all the different ways Jesus is saying "*I am God.*"
3. Why did the Father entrust all judgment to the Son? (Hint: someone turn to Philippians 2:5-11, and read it for the group. ☺)

- a) If we are in Christ, how are we judged by Jesus? Read John 5:45. How is that Moses is our accuser (the Pharisees, and ours as well)...yet Jesus is our advocate?
 - b) How might this make you feel differently about being judged, if you are “in Christ” (that is, if you have believed on Jesus for forgiveness of sins and eternal life, and strive to find your identity in Him)?
4. Why is Jesus either Lord, a liar, or a lunatic? (If you get stuck on this as a group, feel free to consult Day 1 in this week’s devotional, or Google “C.S. Lewis -- Lord, Liar or Lunatic.” (*If you don’t have the devotional guide, or access to a computer...feel free to skip this question...and you’ll get to dessert sooner! ☺))

Work it Through

1. Why should we feel compelled to “honor God” -- to put Him first in our lives? How is that an appropriate response to what He has done for us?
 - a. Read Matthew 26:36-46, and discuss how Jesus modeled (painfully yet perfectly) how to “put God first,” by submitting his will to the will of his heavenly Father.
2. Of the “3 T’s” (Time, Talent, Treasure), which is the easiest for you to put God first? Which is most difficult, and why? How and where might God be leading you to trust Him more by putting Him first?
3. Why is putting God first a struggle? Share a personal example of where/how/why you struggle with this.
4. Explain why putting God first is (ultimately) a *decision*...to trust God. Share a personal example from one of the following areas: marriage, singleness, your future, your finances, your past, relationships in general, the workplace, etc.
 - a. Can you think of a situation from the past where God has proven trustworthy? Share it.
5. Share an example where the struggle to PUT GOD FIRST – or a similar trial – really became a matter of *right perspective* (or, in other words, a struggle for a new “vantage point” ...that was more Gospel-centered).
 - a. How can you relate to this principle: ***“God is not doing something TO you, but IN you, so that He can do something THROUGH you.”***

Pray it Through

Pray for one another. Please be sure to thank God for His judgment of righteousness, based on His grace and mercy. Also, pray for one another’s courage and strength to honor Jesus by putting Him first in all areas of our lives.