

The Gospel Of John
Discussion Questions

Westlake Church Lausanne

Sunday 14th June: The woman caught in adultery.

Read the passage together: John 8:1-11

Consider the following questions:

1. Why are others' faults more obvious than our own?
2. How can you walk the narrow line between a judgmental/critical attitude and appropriate discernment?
3. Why is forgiveness so necessary and yet so difficult?

Other areas you might like to pursue:

Specks and Planks: Matt 7:1-5

Jesus as both just and the justifier: Rom 3:26

Suggested worship songs:

Praise is Rising

Jesus, My Only Hope

Homegroup Discussion Starters for John 8:31-47

Optional icebreaker:

Who was your childhood hero? What did you do to be like them?

Questions:

1. What are the marks of a true disciple? (v31; 42; 47)
2. What do you think it means to abide in Jesus' word (v31)
3. How can we do that? What practices have you developed to help you do that/to walk with Him daily? On a scale of 1-10 how happy are you with this area?
4. What does true Christian freedom look like? What does it mean for Christ to set you free? How can truth set you free?
5. Think of a situation you face or are struggling with: how does the truth of God's word speak to that?
6. In what ways can you discern the devil at work today?

Small Group Discussion Starter Questions

John 9: The man born blind

Optional Icebreaker: What do you like to do on Saturdays?

Read the passage together

Discussion Starters:

1. What do you make of this story?
2. So why was the man born blind? How should that affect how we see the tough times we go through?
3. In the context of this story, what does it mean for Jesus to be the light of the world?
4. What do you make of the different responses of the man and his parents? How much does the fear of man influence you?
5. Why don't the Pharisees see it?

Suggested songs

Here I am to worship/Light of the world

Amazing Grace

Small Group Discussion Starter Questions

John 10: Jesus the Good Shepherd

Optional Icebreaker: Tell us something about farming in the part of the world where you come from

Read the passage together: John 10:1-18

Discussion Starters:

1. What do you know about sheep? What do you know about shepherds? And what does this tell you about what Jesus is talking about here?
2. Re-read v10. In the context of this passage and what we've been looking at in John to date, what does Jesus mean by 'life' and 'abundant life'? What stuff squeezes that life out of you?
3. Considering this passage and Acts 20:28-31a and 1 Pet 5:8 can you pull out any common themes?
 - In what ways can you be watchful for yourself/the others in the group/others outside the group?
 - How do people live differently in wartime than peacetime?
 - How should knowing there is an enemy affect how you live?

Suggested Song:

The Lord's my shepherd (Townend)

Homegroup Discussion Starters for John 12:1-8

Questions:

1. Imagine you were set an essay title “Mary and Judas, compare and contrast”. With reference to this passage, what would you write?
2. What else do we know about Martha and Mary? (bring their attention to Luke 10: 38-42)
3. What else do we know about Judas than is written here?
4. It would appear that Judas had a problem with money. How can we keep ourselves free from the love of money?

(For this last question turn their attention 1 Tim 6: 6-10. Here Paul gives some guidance: v6-7: develop an eternal perspective; v8: cultivate contentment)

Homegroup Discussion Starters

John 13: 31-35

(Sunday Aug 23rd)

Optional Icebreaker: It's a very hot day. What cooling or refreshing drink would you either buy or make?

Read the passage

Questions:

V34: Jesus says His disciples should love one another as he loved them.

1. How has Jesus shown His love for them?
2. What does that tell us about how we should love one another?
3. Can you think of a time when you have experienced love from another Christian? What form did it take?

V35: Jesus says His disciples will be known by the love they have for each other.

4. How do people know someone is a Christian today? What distinguishes Christians from non-Christians?
5. You talk to your non-Christian friends about Christianity/the church. How much does a perceived lack of love play a part in their negative thinking about church/Christians?
6. Why could a combination of self-sacrificing service and unconditional love be so powerful in attracting others?

Suggested worship songs:

Light of the world you stepped down into darkness

I will offer up my life

Small group discussion Questions

(Sunday 30th August)

John 14:1-14

Optional Icebreaker: when did you last ask for help?

Passage: John 14:1-14

Suggested Discussion Starters:

v1-4: The disciples are troubled at the thought of Jesus leaving them. He reminds them that one day they will be with Him in His Father's house.

- How much do you think about death? Does the thought of death trouble you? (encourage them to try and explain why they respond the way they do.)
- How much do eternity and heaven figure in your thinking?
- How might thinking **more** about heaven affect your life **now**?

(living with a sense of joy/peace/assurance/hope/ability to make the sacrifice now etc)

v5-7: In response to Thomas asking Jesus to show them the way to the Father, Jesus replies that He is the way and the truth and the life.

- Why do some people who are not yet Christians struggle with the idea that there is only one way to God (Jesus) and that only one religion is true?
- Can you give some examples of conversations you have had with others and how you answered them? If you haven't had any real conversations (!) how would you answer them if you did have such a conversation?

V12-14: Jesus makes an astonishing promise here about the power of prayer: whatever you ask in my name, this I will do.

- But what is the condition Jesus puts on this promise in v13? (It's in His name)
- What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus? (not just a tag line on the end of a prayer, but our desires, wills, lives and words come in line with His. And it's focus is that the Father may be glorified)
- Why is that so challenging to us?

Suggested worship songs:

Jesus my Only Hope (I come into your presence)

My Saviour, Redeemer

Homegroup Discussion Starters
For week of Sunday 20th September
John 14:15-31

Optional icebreaker: what's the story behind your name?

Read the passage: John 14:15-21

Suggested discussion starters:

1. What sort of things motivate people in their lives?
2. Considering v15 and v31, what motivates you in your Christian life?
3. How do you grow in your love for Christ?
4. What does the Holy Spirit mean to you? What does Jesus teach us here about the Holy Spirit?

Potential worship songs:

Light of the world

You reign (When I walk)

Small Group Discussion Questions

John 15:1-17

(Sunday 27th September)

Optional Ice-breaker: what is your favourite thing about your home town

Read the passage: John 15:1-17

Suggested Discussion Starters:

1. Pool your knowledge: what do you know about vines and vineyards?
2. What are the main points Jesus is trying to communicate through this allegory/parable?
3. Why does the Father prune us? What's the point?

(Note: your initial reaction to when things get tough is 'what have I done wrong?' Whereas, if we follow Jesus here, it is the fruitful branches that get pruned, so perhaps we should ask 'what am I doing right?')

4. What form does this pruning take? How does He prune us? Can you give examples of how he has done this in your life?

(Note: v3 – the word 'clean' is the same as the word 'prune'. So Jesus says these disciples have been pruned by His word. That is a major way God prunes us: through His word –challenging us, convicting us, bringing things to our attention.)

5. What does it mean to abide in Christ? How do you do it? What keeps you close to Christ? (Other references: 1 John 4:15; 1 John 2:24)
6. What do you think a fruitful Christian life looks like?
7. What fruit are implied in this passage?

(Love for God and others, obedience, prayer, joy, friendship with God)

Suggested Songs

My Saviour, Redeemer

Jesus My Only Hope

Homegroup Discussion Starter Questions

Message: Sunday 4th October

Passage: John 15:18-16:4

Optional Ice-breaker:

“What was your worst holiday or part-time job?”

Read the passage: John 15:18-16:4

Suggested Discussion Starters:

1. Does the world hate Jesus (v18). If so, why?

Explore the idea that whilst it likes/respects it's version of Jesus it hates the Jesus of the Bible with the demands it makes on their lives etc

2. Does it hate Christians?

Why? What reasons does Jesus give?

- It hates him (v18)
- Christians are set apart/separate (v19)
- Ignorance of God (v21)
- Exposure of sin (v22)

3. What form does this opposition take? What have you encountered?

4. Given what Jesus says here about the opposition His disciples will face, do we accurately present the gospel?

5. Jesus says that the Helper is coming (v26-27). What help is the Spirit in the face of opposition?

Suggested songs:

Before the throne of God above

Jesus Hope of the Nations

Prayer

Home Group Discussion Questions

Sunday 11th October

John 16:4-33

Optional Ice-breaker: what is your favourite sport (to watch or play) and why?

Read the passage: John 16:4-33

Suggested Discussion Starters:

1. v5-7: Jesus says it is better that he goes and the Spirit comes. Why?

What implication does that have for us?

2. v18: The disciples are confused and struggling to understand Jesus. How do you handle a passage of Scripture that you don't understand? What do you do to try and understand it?

v12-15: what do these verses encourage us to believe?

3. v8-11: This is a tricky passage. What does Jesus mean here?

In what ways have you experienced the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in your life.

4. v20-24: Jesus talks about joy. What brings you joy?

How do you respond to situations that sap your joy – like difficulties or sorrows? How do you fight for joy?

Jesus is talking here about the resurrection. How can understanding the resurrection help you to maintain joy in the midst of difficulty?

Suggested song:

Wonderful Saviour

Homegroup Discussion Questions

(Sunday 25th October)

John 17

Optional icebreaker: if you could spend 15 minutes talking with any living person, who would you choose.

Read the passage: John 17

Suggested Discussion Questions:

1. What occupies your prayers? What do you pray about?
2. Jesus prays for some specific issues. What are they?

The glory of God/His glory: v1,5; that the disciples might see his glory v24

v9: I am praying for them; 'keep them' v11, v15

unity: v11,21; their joy fulfilled v13; sanctify them v17

3. What does that tell us that we should pray about?
4. Look at v14-19. What do these verses tell us about how we should live in the world? (v15: engaged; v17: holy; v18: mission)
5. What does it mean to be 'in the world but not of the world.'

(Look up John 18:36; Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 5:10; 1 John 2;16)

6. Jesus prays that we will be sanctified by the word of truth. How does that happen? Can you give some examples of how that has worked in your life?
7. Jesus prays for unity. What are the things that make or break Christian unity?

Song: All Heaven Declares

Home Group Discussion Starter Questions

John 18: 1-40

Optional Icebreaker: what is your best scar? And tell the story of how you got it.

Read the passage: John 18:1-40

Suggested Discussion Starter Questions

1. In this passage a number of the people involved have decisions to make or trials to go through. How do they respond?

2. v4: Jesus knows what is going to happen to Him. But you and I don't know the future like Jesus did. How do you cope with uncertainty?

What can Jesus teach us here?

3. Peter denies knowing Jesus. What's Peter's problem? Why does he do that?

How can you avoid doing the same thing?

4. v36-37 Jesus talks about His Kingdom and His purpose. What are they? How are they in conflict with the world? How do you experience that conflict?

Suggested Song:

You Reign (Though I walk) – Simon Brading

Homegroup Discussion Questions

Sunday 8th November

John 19:1-42

Optional ice-breaker: What sort of thing pushes you out of your comfort zone?

Read the Passage: John 19v1-42

Suggested Discussion Starters

1. What is the conflict going on in Pilate's mind? How does he resolve it?

What does that tell us about how others (and ourselves) treat Jesus' claim to be King?
2. v25-27: Even in his suffering Jesus thinks of the needs of His mother. When things are tough for you, how easy do you find it to keep from becoming too self-focused?
3. What evidence is there in this account of the crucifixion that God was in sovereign control of events?

[If they are not forthcoming consider: v11; the fulfilment of prophecy in v24, v28, v36, v37; and Jesus giving up his spirit in v30]

What lessons can you learn from that for your life?
4. v31: The religious leaders don't want the bodies on the crosses during the Sabbath. Why does religion make people self-righteous and blind them to their sin? What warning is there for us in this?

Song:

Your blood speaks a better word

Homegroup Discussion Questions

Sunday 22nd November

John 20

Optional Icebreaker: what CD is in your CD player at the moment, and why?

Read the passage: John 20

1. How did the disciples, and Mary respond to the events of this resurrection morning?
2. What was Thomas struggling with?
3. Why do you believe in the resurrection?
4. Why does the resurrection matter?

(It vindicates Jesus; we can be certain of our own resurrection; the same power is at work in us -Ephesians 1:18-20; it is the foundation of our witness to the world)

5. Verses 28-29 give Thomas' response and Jesus' response to Thomas' response. What's so important about these verses?

(Think divinity of Christ, cults, necessity of faith)

6. Look at v30-31. This is the conclusion of the gospel. Chapter 21 is the Epilogue. Why has John written the book? Has he achieved his purpose? Looking back, what are some of the highlights of this gospel for you?

Homegroup Discussion Questions

John 21

Theme: Restoration

Optional Ice-breaker: who was your favourite school teacher and why?

Read the passage: John 21

Discussion Starters:

1. John doesn't tell us why Peter decides to go fishing. But from the events which follow, and how Jesus handles Peter, what do you think is going on in Peter's mind that sends him back to his boats and nets?

2. Peter is wrestling with unresolved issues in his heart – guilt and failure – and he drifts back into his old life (fishing). How much does heart-stuff (the stuff that goes on in your inner life) affect the external stuff of your life? Can you give some concrete examples?

3. How does Jesus restore Peter?

(1. He walks him through his three-fold denial – he doesn't sweep it under the carpet; forgiveness. 2. He gives him hope for the future (feed, care...); 3. He gets him back on track – 'follow me' – he knows who he must imitate, in whose footsteps he must follow; 4. As Jesus and Peter separate from the disciples they almost certainly spend personal time alone with each other (the necessity of our private, devotional life); 5. Ultimately it is the Holy Spirit who empowers Peter to live as he should.

Having seen how Jesus restored Peter, can you give any examples of when Christ has graciously restored you?

4. In v17 Peter is grieved that Jesus asks him 3 times whether or not he loves him. Why is it painful to come face to face with our failures? How is the cross of Christ the answer to that?

Suggested Song: Wonderful Saviour