



Week 9: John 3-5

Study Guide for the week of February 28 – March 6, 2011

Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week spend time reflecting on John 4:1-42.

List the characteristics of the Samaritan woman that made her an unlikely candidate for a conversation with Jesus. What does Jesus say to indicate why these characteristics did not create a barrier for Jesus? You may want to spend some time learning the historical background of the conflict between the Jews and Samaritans. Where does Jesus make a jump into spiritual truth and the woman does not go with him? What do you think Jesus means by “living water?” What was the surprising outcome of this woman and her conversation with Jesus? (verse 39). Does this knowledge change your perspective on the “right” traits needed to be an evangelist, a person who shares the story of Jesus with others? If so, how? What did the woman “do” to lead others to Jesus? Jesus answered the Samaritan woman’s question about the correct location for worship by replacing her concern for location with a teaching on the motivation for worship. Reread John 4:19-24. How do you prepare for worship? What do you expect from worship? Is worship about you (critiquing the music or sermon) or about God where we come into his presence and serve him? What is a change that God may be calling you to make so that you will grow more towards worshipping “the Father in spirit and truth?”

Discussion starters

1. Ice Breaker Question: Who is the person that most showed you the love of Christ by the way he/she loved you?
2. Was there something that jumped out at you, surprised you, encouraged you, or disturbed you from the readings this last week (or two)? Why?
3. John 3:1-21 One of the interesting and often humorous aspects of John’s gospel is illustrated here in verses 3-4 when Jesus makes a jump into spiritual truth and Nicodemus does not go with him. As you read through John pay attention for when this happens when Jesus is talking with others. What are some of the spiritual truths that Jesus teaches in verse 3-21? How have you felt a little confused or left behind like Nicodemus as you try to understand what Jesus is teaching? Is there a Biblical teaching that you struggle to understand?
4. John 3:22-31 The gospel of John goes to great lengths to show that John the Baptist was not the Christ (Messiah). What does John the Baptist teach in this passage to declare who Jesus is and who he (John) is not? What do you learn about Jesus from John’s teaching here?
5. John 3 The gospel of John has been called the “Gospel of Love” because of the profound expressions of God’s love that John reported. Where do you see this expressed in John 3? On the other hand, where do you see expressions of God’s judgment in this chapter? How do you react to all this?
6. John 4:46-54 What do you find unique about this miracle of Jesus? What do you learn about Jesus from this account?
7. John 5:1-15 There is much to think about in this story. You may want to spend the majority of the session answering the following questions. What jumps out at you? Discuss the actions and words of Jesus in verses 6,8,14. What do you learn about Jesus? Do you wonder why Jesus picked this man to heal from the many disabled who were there? What about verse 10? How do you understand that Jesus has chosen you? Where has Jesus made it possible for you to “pick up your mat and walk?” Like in verse 10, are there religious

people or others trying to hold you back from doing what Jesus has told you to do? Where is there sin “crouching at your door” (Genesis 4:7) that wants to throw you back into “something worse”?

8. John 5:16-47 How do these verses enhance your understanding of the Holy Trinity?

Bible verse to memorize: John 3:16-17

Caring Time

It is important to make time in your group to care for each other. Sometimes that happens during the discussion and sometimes it is best to end the time together with a question like this:

- Jesus asked the invalid man, “Do you want to get well?” (John 5:6). Is there some way that you would like the group to pray for you to “get well?”

Also encourage people in the group to get together outside of the group time to foster deeper friendships with each other. Remember that small group is primarily about sharing life together. It has been said that the most important time in small groups is the time people connect outside of the meeting time.