

What do you believe Jesus wants you to “be” for Him?

Describe underlying motivations that are self-serving, and motivations that are God-honoring. What does God do with our tainted motives? What do we do with our tainted motives when we recognize them? What does God do with our confession of tainted motives?

7. Following Jesus is a response to his grace. Describe some of the most difficult aspects of following Jesus. How do we overcome these difficulties?
8. Andrew immediately told Peter about Jesus, and Philip immediately told Nathanael. Who have you told about Jesus, and what did you tell them?

How did they respond?

9. Jesus changed Cephas’ name to Peter. “(Jesus) knows people thoroughly (*cf.* vv.43-51), and not only ‘sees into them’ (*cf.* 47-48) but so calls them that he makes them what he calls them to be.”²

What does this imply about the transformation process—the way God works in our lives to change us to be who he wants us to be? (*God works to change us in identity and behavior through the work of the Holy Spirit, his Word and spiritual community.*)

What is our hope?

¹ *The Gospel According to John*, D. A. Carson, pg. 151-152

² *The Gospel According to John*, D. A. Carson, pg. 156

John 1:19-

Lesson 2
For September 28, 2008

Dr. Jerry Nelson

LEADER’S GUIDE

For discussion following the sermon on September 28, 2008

John the Baptist

Key Points

In the Prologue, John the Baptist revealed Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate. In that day, there was widespread expectation of the coming Messiah. John the Baptist’s teaching and practices drew the attention of the religious leaders. In the presence of many witnesses, the Pharisees questioned John the Baptist’s purpose, authority and teaching. Who is John? Who is Jesus? In this passage we will discover:

The identity of John the Baptist

The identity of Jesus Christ

The response to belief: following Jesus (discipleship) and bearing witness (evangelism)

The Pharisees questioned John the Baptist extensively about his purpose and mission. He told them; I am not the Christ, or Elijah, or a Prophet, but a man, appointed by God, sent to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. John the Baptist introduced Jesus to be the Lamb of God, baptized by water *and* the Spirit, the very Son of God! Although the Pharisees would reject these claims, others present that day would believe. Among them were Andrew and John. They changed their allegiance, not to follow the next new leader but to follow the direction of their leader as John the Baptist pointed them to Jesus. Their belief was followed by action as they literally began

to follow Jesus. And to their surprise Jesus invited them to “come and see.” Ultimately, we are invited to do the same.

If we believe the truths proclaimed by the Apostle John that John the Baptist was truly sent by God as “the voice of one calling in the desert,” then do we also believe him when he said that Jesus is the “Son of God”? If so, then why do you follow Jesus?

Jesus often used thought-provoking questions to reveal the hearts of men—penetrating questions that exposed hidden (or not so hidden) motivations and sin. In his first recorded words in this fourth Gospel, John captures one of Jesus’ most important questions, a compelling question all of us must answer: “What do you want?” Or stated a different way, “What do you really want out of life?” and implied, “What do you expect Jesus to do about it?” It would take a lifetime for John (as it will for us) to discover the ramifications of that question, but the impact was immediate. Andrew told others, who in turn told others. When we truly believe Jesus Christ to be who he says He is, as we become transformed by his redeeming work, following (discipleship), and bearing witness (evangelism), are natural responses to God’s amazing grace.

Leader’s Guide

Personal Preparation

- What do you want from Jesus? Write your thoughts below. As you review your answers, what do you discover about your desires? Take time to discuss your observations with a friend.

Group Preparation

- The revelation of Jesus Christ, along with our response, is at the heart of this passage. If you have unbelievers in your group, or those who are new to the faith who still may not understand or believe the claims of Christ, you may want to focus on the first four questions. Pray especially that the

Spirit will grant them understanding. Pray, too, for others in your group who may struggle with the ramifications of following God wholeheartedly. May the Spirit be present to grant you wisdom and clear communication.

Discussion Questions

1. The author, John, begins the defense of his thesis that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God by reminding his readers of the testimony of several key eye-witnesses (John the Baptist, Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathanael). What testimony do these men give?

How do their testimonies contribute to John’s assertion that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God?

2. Whether John the Baptist understood the full significance when he said Jesus was the Lamb of God, what did the author John mean by those words and what do they mean to you?
3. What does the account of the questioning by the Levites, Priests and Pharisees lead us to believe about their motives? Were you ever at that same point, questioning the truth of the gospel? If so, what (or who) convinced you of the truth?
4. What is the significance of Jesus’ baptism by the Spirit? *“The Spirit not only descends upon Jesus, but remains (v. 32, 33) on him. To Jesus ‘God gives the Spirit without limit’ (3:34). Some, like King Saul, experienced the Spirit’s presence and power temporarily; Jesus, the great antitype of David, never displeases his Father (8:29), whose love and whose Spirit rest on him permanently...that Jesus would baptize his people in the Holy Spirit is therefore simultaneously an attestation of who he is, and an announcement that the promised age is dawning.”¹*
5. Describe what it means to follow Jesus.
6. Why do you follow? What do you expect Jesus to “do” for you?