

John: More Questions

Here are some additional questions for each chapter in the book. You can use these questions for personal study or for group discussions.

Chapter 1:

- John is referred to as “the beloved disciple” (referring to Christ’s feelings toward him). Knowing this, how might you expect John’s gospel to be different than the other three?
- John’s Gospel features the dialogues of Jesus in the way that the other Gospels don’t. The conversations with Christ in John’s Gospel often follow a pattern. First, someone asks Jesus a question; then, He answers briefly and obscurely; next, the confused person reveals his or her misunderstanding; and finally, Jesus explains the concept in greater detail. What is the benefit for you, as a reader of John’s Gospel, of “eavesdropping” on these expanded conversations?
- What do you hope to learn from this study of John? Do you expect that your life will change? In what ways?

Chapter 2:

- How might John’s experiences as a fisherman affect the writing of this biography of Christ’s life?
- John was one of the elder statesmen of Christianity at the time that he wrote his Gospel. How you think that position, and experience, impacted his writing?
- What are some characteristics that you would require of an eyewitness? Do you think that John satisfies those requirements?

Chapter 3:

- Did Jesus reflect God’s “light,” or was He the source of God’s light? Is your answer different or the same for the followers of Christ (Christians)?
- Read John 1:1-12. What do the references to “receive” mean? Are they distinguishable for “believe”?
- Discuss the concept of “children of God” as found in John 1:12-13. In a sense, aren’t all humans the “children” of God because they are part of God’s creation? Is this the concept that John was getting at, or did he mean something else? What is the difference between: (a) someone who wants “all of the privileges but none of the responsibilities of following God; and (b) a true child of God?

Chapter 4:

- Why didn’t Jesus just perform one huge, gigantic miracle – in a way that the entire population could see – so there would be no doubt that He was the Son of God?
- What do you think attracted the disciples to Jesus?
- Based on Christ’s reaction to the moneychangers in the temple, what is the contemporary equivalent of that type of behavior, which must tick God off?

Chapter 5:

- Read John 5:19-24. What does this passage tell you about the unity of the God the Father and of Jesus the Son?
- In what ways can the physical feeding of the people (i.e., John 6:1-15) symbolize the spiritual feeding that is available to us through Jesus Christ?
- Read Peter’s words in John 6:68. Do you think he was truly interested in eternal life and willing to do whatever was necessary to obtain it? What about the people you know? Are they truly interested in having eternal life, or are they more concerned about enjoying their temporal existence? What about you?

Chapter 6:

- What are the similarities between being physically blind and being spiritually blind? Describe how the blind man's life was changed when Jesus gave him sight (John 9:1-12). How is a sinner's life changed when he or she receives spiritual sight by accepting Christ as savior?
- Read John 10:10. What does it mean to have "abundant life?" Read Psalm 23:5 to get a different perspective. How is it that Christ can give this type of life to us? Why do you suppose that so few people actually experience such a life on a consistent basis?
- The sickness and death of Lazarus must have been tough on Mary and Martha, but God used that situation to bring glory to Himself. The same is true in your life. You may go through tough times that God can use for His purposes. Read each of the following verses and explain their significance to your life: Romans 5:3-5; Hebrews 12:4-11; 1 Peter 1:6-7; and James 1:2-4.

Chapter 7:

- What do you think the disciples thought about Christ's coming Kingdom at the beginning of the Last Supper? Do you think that they had any idea of what was to come? Are there any clues that they were clueless?
- Read John 13:17. The difference between "knowing" and "doing" is obvious. Perhaps what isn't so clear are the reasons why our actions aren't always consistent with our knowledge. What do you think is the problem?
- In John 13:33-35, Jesus said that people would know we are His followers by our love for each other. To be visible, it must be more than warm feelings. What kind of visible behavior does think Jesus had in mind?

Chapter 8:

- Suppose that Jesus gave his disciples a pop quiz at the end of this famous Upper Room discourse. How do you think they would respond if He asked them to name 4 things that were going to happen in the future? Even if they had answers, do you think they really understood what was about to happen?
- Jesus made it very clear that He is the only way of salvation (John 14:5-6). Why are people so resistant to Christ's claim to be the only way to God?
- Elaborate on Christ's analogy that He is "the vine" and we are "the branches" as mentioned in John 15:1-8.

Chapter 9:

- How do you define the word "glory" when use in the context when Christ prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your son so he can give glory back to you" (John 17:1)? How can you bring glory to God?
- What does Christ's prayer in John 17 teach you about your own prayer life? Are you going to pray differently from this point forward?
- Describe the relationship that you think Jesus had with His heavenly Father. Now read John 17:21. Christ wants Christians to be as close and intimate with each other as He is with His Father. How does that work out in real life?

Chapter 10:

- The disciples had seen Jesus perform miracles. Why did they become so scared when He was arrested in the Garden? Identify some instances when God has provided for you in miraculous ways. Have there been subsequent times when you doubted God's ability or willingness to help you?
- Why were the Jewish authorities totally prejudiced against Jesus? Why didn't the Roman authorities insist that Jesus be freed when His innocence had been acknowledged? Do similar feelings and pressures ever influence you when you are identified in some way with Christ?
- Peter denied Christ verbally. But sometimes we can deny Christ without ever speaking a word. Give some examples.

Chapter 11:

- Do you get the sense that the events leading up to Christ's crucifixion were spinning out of control or were part of God's plan? Substantiate your answer with some examples.
- Why do you suppose that Christ's death had to be so brutal and graphic? Could He have fulfilled God's will by dying from a dose of poison? What about hanging from a noose? What was a necessary part of His death to fulfill the prophecies that had been made about the Messiah?
- Read John 19:38-42. Joseph of Arimathea was a secret believer, and Nicodemus had come to Jesus at night because he didn't want anyone to notice (refer back to John 3). Yet these two men boldly stepped forward to take care of Jesus' burial. What do you think motivated them to be so bold? Do you think that there is a lesson for us in teamwork? Give a contemporary example of taking a bold stand for Christ.

Chapter 12:

- Nobody seemed to be startled to see the angels. Do you think there is less of a chance of seeing an angel today? Just because angels aren't visible to you, do you think they are any less active now than 2000 years ago?
- How do you think that the Jewish authorities explained the reports that the tomb was empty? (For a little help, read Matthew 18:11-15.) Why would the Jewish leaders want to squelch reports that Jesus had risen from the dead?
- Thomas didn't let his skepticism prevent him from believing when he had additional proof. Are there times when your skepticism about God has turned into stubbornness?

Chapter 13:

- Describe how you think the disciples were feeling while they were fishing on the lake prior to seeing Jesus in John 21. Why do you suppose they were so slow to recognize Jesus on shore?
- Sometimes people who are ministering for Christ get discouraged. Sometimes they feel like they are fishing but their nets are empty. How can this passage in John 21 be a comfort to them?
- What does John 21:20-23 teach you about comparing yourself to others?