

Belmont Exeter House Group Notes

w/c 7th May 2023

Come and See – Darkness and light

We're working our way through the gospel of John in our Sunday morning services. Our home group studies will pick up the topic from the Sunday before the meeting. This means we won't cover the whole of the Gospel of John in these outlines. Feel free to adapt this content, or to study other passages.

John wrote his gospel so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20 v 30&31). As we study John together, keep that purpose in mind and ask, "How does this passage help me believe that Jesus is the Messiah and so live life to the full (eternal life)?"

This study is for the passage from the morning service on 7th May. If people aren't able to be at the service then please encourage them to catch up online via YouTube or the talks page on the Belmont Exeter website.

This outline is the bare bones of the study: more thought needs to be given to the way you start and finish the evening, use (or don't use) the questions themselves, and think about the way this passage may affect your own group members. Think about the big ideas and how to apply them to everyday life. Here are three book titles you may find helpful to have available for study leaders through the series.

John for Everyone by Tom Wright, pub. SPCK, (short 'daily' chapters on each section)
The Message of John by Bruce Milne, pub. IVP (more in depth analysis and explanation)
John for You by Josh Moody, pub. Goodbook Co (sermon style & with focus on application)

BIG IDEA: Jesus is a king like no other. His glory is different to expectations – this is a glory we are called to copy.

WAY IN: This week we saw the coronation of King Charles III. What ideas and thoughts do you associate with someone being a king?

Jesus has just been praised by the crowds as he entered Jerusalem on a donkey. Here was the Messiah ('anointed one' – see John 12:1-8) they hoped for. Verses 20 – 50 are an explanation of the sort of king Jesus is, how he will be crowned, and why it is not everyone who believes.

READ: John 12 : 20 - 36

DIG IN

1. What part of the text or sermon had the greatest impact on you? Did you learn anything new about Jesus? The Bible? God? *This is an open question to see if there are particular themes to explore which are on the minds of the group.*
2. What does Jesus describe as the way he will be glorified? (v23,24,31-32). This is the coronation of Jesus. How does this idea of the gospel about Jesus as king bring a different aspect of the Christian message into the spotlight?

3. John gives a couple of the reasons for people not believing in Jesus – what are they? Are these familiar to us today? How does Jesus explanation of judgments (v 47 – 50) provide a challenge and comfort?

LIVE IT OUT

1. The Christian life is defined by giving up what is temporary for that which is eternal. Are there areas of our life which need to be given up to 'fall to the ground and die'?
2. What inaccurate expectations have you put on Jesus?
3. What does Jesus mean when He says that we must lose our life? What is the fruit that we should expect as a result?

PRAYER

Jesus is the king who we serve.

- Pray for an aspect of your life to come more under his rule.
- Pray for an opportunity to live obediently on your frontline even when it will cost.

Background

Notice the echoes of chapter 1. In chapter 1, Andrew shares with his friends / relatives his encounter with Jesus (Peter, Philip, and Nathanael). And here in John 12 we have a similar 'chain of witnesses' enquiring about Jesus but this time it's not the true Israelites who want to see Jesus but rather the Greeks who come to find Jesus. The good news is for the whole world, not just for the Jews (see Romans 1:16 – 17)

Jesus points us back to the prophet Isaiah in v 32 (Isaiah 6:1), v35 (Isaiah 9v2), and then John's commentary in v38 – 41. To better understand all that Jesus says he is doing we find an explanation by looking at these passages scriptures that speak of Yahweh's work through His anointed servant.

John continues his themes of darkness (unbelief) and light (faith), and these being about recognising who Jesus is. This is not about having special knowledge or practice but about seeing who is the real, high and lifted up' king.