



Believe

JOHN

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Community Group Material:

Bible Reading: John 2:13-22

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

Bible Reading: John 2:13-22

Sermon Summary:

John's 'Gospel of Signs' begins with two defining episodes: the Cana wedding signifies blessing and abundance; Jesus is the (secret) hero. In contrast, Jesus' Temple action arouses opposition and hostility. Psalm 69:9ff portends his rejection, shame, and death. The Jewish leaders oppose Jesus; they misunderstand and reject his enigmatic 'sign'— 'Destroy this temple and I'll raise it up in 3 days.' Jesus lost this public honor/shame contest; he's shamed before everyone—going from hero to 'zero.' Will his disciples follow him, sharing both his blessing and his shame? Resurrection vindicates Jesus and enables the disciples' understanding. But, until then, they follow Jesus by faith, lacking full understanding. Even today we don't have all the answers—why did this happen (or not happen)? One day there'll be answers; until then let's walk by faith in the risen Jesus

Discussion

1. Think about the 'Wedding in Cana' (2:1-11) and this week's topic—the 'Temple Cleansing' (2:13-22).
 - a. How do they compare & contrast? What are the similarities & the differences?
 - b. Scholars suggest these 2 episodes portray principles that apply throughout Jesus' ministry. What do you think those 'principles' might be? Discuss.

2. When Jesus “cleansed” the Temple, driving out animals, flipping tables, etc what “message was Jesus trying to convey? What did Jesus hope to achieve—to end the OT sacrificial system? Or to reform it? Or what?
3. The only OT quote John gives is Psalm 69:9—“*Zeal for your house will devour/consume me.*” (in Jn. 2:17)
 - a. How should we understand this verse in the context of Jn. 2?
 - b. Looking at the wider context—e.g. Psalm 69:6-9—what does this add to our understanding of Jn. 2?
 - c. How do terms: ‘*disgrace, shame, humiliation, dishonor*’ in Ps. 69 anticipate the “fallout” in John 2?
4. Read Jn. 2:18-20. Is this a ‘friendly discussion’ between Jesus & ‘the Jews’? Is it an argument, a debate?
 - a. Viewed as a ‘contest’/debate—Jesus vs. ‘the Jews’—Who “won”? Who “had the last word”?
 - b. Read the (later) “Temple Cleansing” (Matt. 21:12-17). Who “won” here? Who had the ‘last word’ here?
5. The Jews demanded a ‘sign’; Jesus responded “*Destroy this temple & in 3 days I’ll raise it up...*” (2:19)
 - a. How did the Jews understand/interpret Jesus’ statement?
 - b. How did the disciples understand Jesus saying?
 - c. Are there any indications (‘hints’) Jesus’ saying might have an alternative meaning?
 - d. How does this show: “Misunderstanding & not understanding are important themes in [John]”?
 - e. Read 2:21-22. What does the narrator tell us was Jesus’ actual (true) meaning?
 - f. When &/or how did Jesus’ disciples come to realize Jesus’ actual (true) meaning (of his saying)
 - g. In the interval between seeing/hearing the Temple event & coming to realize its ‘true meaning’ what was (or might have been) the disciples’ attitude towards this event? What might we learn from this?

End with Prayer.

1. Pray for people who you would like to see be ambushed by his abundance.
2. Pray for one another’s needs