



Believe

JOHN

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Community Group Material:

Bible Reading: John 14:15-20, 25-27

Community Group Material for week of November 26th, 2023

Believe: John's Fresh Perspective on the Spirit

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 14:15-27

Sermon Summary:

By the time John wrote his Gospel the church had been in existence for 60 years. Certain trends or patterns were starting to emerge among the believers that John was concerned about. That's why he writes his Gospel the way he does, to help believers see how the Paraclete/Spirit can take them in a much healthier & inclusive way. At CIT we want to be more like a Johannine church, where *"Truth is communicated in order to free people from bondage to sin (8:32), to awaken authentic worship of God (4:23-24), & to shape actions that are truly life-giving (3:21)."* (Craig Koester).

Discussion:

1. Jesus has made it clear earlier in Jn. 13 & 14 that he is returning to the Father. How is he preparing his disciples for life without him? What are his promises to them?

2. Jesus says that he will ask the Father to send the Paraclete (14:16). How does the Paraclete function for believers (vv. 17, 26)?
3. John wrote his Gospel some 30 to 40 years after Paul & the Synoptic Gospels. Why would he present the functions of the Paraclete/Spirit in the way he did? What had he seen in the trajectory of the churches, or among believers that led him to do so? Consider this quote from Gail O'Day together:

“By speaking of the Spirit as the Paraclete, John seems to be attempting to free his portrait from early Christian preconceptions of the nature of the Spirit in order to get a fresh hearing for the role the Spirit plays in the life of the believing community. For example, John does not identify the presence of the Spirit...with specific spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-11, 27-28; 14:1-33; Ac. 2:4)...[nor] as actively directing the activities of the believing community (Ac. 8:29, 39; 10:19; 11:12; 13:2, 4), nor does it point to the role of the Spirit in baptism (Ac. 2:38; 8:16-17; 10:44-48).”

4. How has the Spirit brought you into truth, reminded you of things Jesus said or taught you? How is he doing it from week-to-week?
5. How does John steer believers away from the forming institutional, hierarchical, & sacramental trends in the overall church of his day, & the inequality of genders? How is the Paraclete vital in carrying this out?
6. Discuss what a church led by the Paraclete (a Johannine church) would look like.

End with Prayer.

- Pray for our eyes to be open to the Spirit's work & for us to be willing to follow Him.
- Pray for one another.