



DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Fourth Gospel – Part 2

God's Love In Us

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Main Idea – The Gospel of John gives guidance and encouragement to anyone who has ever felt alone or isolated. When we accept Jesus as our personal savior, we are automatically joined to a family; we immediately become a family member to other believers. From that point forward, we never need to be alone again.

We were created to have relationship with others

- Our brothers and sisters in Christ (fellow believers) are more than just other people to us. Each of them is infinitely loved by God.
- Early in his life the 5th Century bishop Petricius (otherwise known as St. Patrick) felt isolated and alone. He would spend hours at a time praying to God; seeking a relationship with Him.
- God did not create us to be isolated and alone. **Genesis 2:18 – And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”**
- There is something powerful and heroic about individuals coming together as a group and working as a unit.

Jesus provides for us and keeps us from isolation

- It is Satan's objective to isolate us. **John 10:10 – The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.**
- Feelings of isolation, loneliness, or rejection can lead to feelings of victimization, not fitting in, addictions, anger, judgmentalism, or self-sabotaging blessings from God.
- Jesus is here to provide for us in times of need or want. Examples from the Gospel of John include:
 - **John 21:11 – Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three, and although there were so many, the net was not broken.**
 - **John 6: 5-14 – the feeding of the 5000.**
- It is Jesus' desire for us to be provided for, and to experience joy. **John 17: 13 – But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.**

The Gospel of John mirrors the seven-day creation story in Genesis

- **John 1:1 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Genesis 1:1 – In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**
- The first part of the Gospel of John identifies a seven-day sequence of events, culminating in a celebration (or day of rest.)
 - **John 1:1** – Day 1
 - **John 1:29** – Day 2
 - **John 1:35** – Day 3
 - **John 1: 43** – Day 4
 - **John 2:1** – Day 7 (three days after the previously mentioned day in John 1:43)
- The miracle at the wedding in Cana on Day 7 (**John 2: 1-11**) reflects God's intention for us to celebrate and experience joy together, just as God relaxed and had joy on the 7th Day in **Genesis 2:2 – And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.**

Jesus reestablished the relationships Satan ruined

- In the garden, Satan destroyed the family relationship God had provided for Adam & Eve.
- Jesus reestablishes those family relationships for us.
- “Jesus uses whatever is accessible to fix whatever is regrettable in our lives.” Jesus used six empty water pots, and simple water, to make new wine (**John 2: 6-7**).
- “Jesus uses ordinary things to accomplish extraordinary feats.” The wine that resulted from Jesus' miracle was of extraordinary quality (**John 2: 9-10**).
- The miracle of water into wine at the wedding in Cana is a miracle of relationship. God created life for His, and our, enjoyment.
- Satan tries to ruin that enjoyment and relationship thru feelings of isolation.

Jesus is like an older brother

- In the First Century it was customary for the oldest son to be responsible for the well-being of the family when the father patriarch died. This ensured the family would continue to function across generational transitions.
- When Jesus was crucified He ensured the well-being of both Mary and John by proclaiming them as members of the same family. **John 19: 25-27 – Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” Then He said to the disciple, “Behold**

your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

- In the same way, when we “stand at the cross” and accept Jesus as savior, we become part of Jesus’ family, and become brother or sister to all other believers.
- Through Jesus we are able to re-establish the relationship and celebration with God – and with each other - that had been lost through sin.

Simply call on Jesus

- We do not have to know anything, or perform any task or good deed, to be part of Jesus’ family.
- All that is necessary is to call on Jesus; to ask Him to come into our heart.
- “Home is not where you are from, but where you are loved.”
- **John 1:12-13 – But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**
- Jesus lived a perfect life, but was punished on the cross so we can live and be called children of God.
- The family of Jesus experiences a life of rich relationships and celebrations.

Reflective Questions for The Fourth Gospel – Part 2

1. All of us have experienced times of isolation and feelings of loneliness. When you have felt that way, what happened to bring you out of that mood? Was it something common and accessible, like the six empty pots and water at the wedding at Cana?
2. Why is it dangerous to remain in a mindset of feeling alone?
3. Jeff Garner compared Jesus to a family’s oldest son (and, therefore, to being our older brother). Using that analogy, describe an instance where Jesus has provided for your happiness and sense of acceptance during a time of loss.
4. How does one “call upon Jesus”? In other words, what are the steps to asking Jesus into one’s heart?