

Connection Group Questions

For the week of May 11, 2025

This Week's Message: "The Truth and Greatness of Christ"

Passages: John 8:48-59

The following questions for discussion are designed to help move the Sunday morning teaching to a deeper place in the lives of those who hear it.

Getting-To-Know-Me Question

- What is one word or phrase you use so often that it should be printed on a T-shirt?

Into-The-Bible Questions

- **As a group, read John 8:48-59. Jesus has been in a perpetual state of conflict since John's opening words in John 1:1, and now, in these 11 passages, we see three more contentious exchanges or accusations.**
 - Are there any aspects from Sunday's message or these verses that stand out to you?
- **In verse 48, the Jews ask Jesus two rhetorical questions attempting to be as caustic as possible.**
 - Why is this such a vile or serious charge both in a spiritual and cultural context?
 - What can we learn from Jesus when we find ourselves a victim of false accusations? Read 1 Peter 2:21-23; 1 Peter 3:8-9; John 13:15.
 - As a follower of Christ, why is humility essential amid conflict, even when you know you are right, or the situation seems unfair? Read Philippians 2:5-8.
 - How does Paul's words in Romans 8:31, "*if God is for us, who can be against us?*" tap into the logic of the God's greatness when we are facing opposition?
- **In verse 51, Jesus says, "Truly I tell you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."**
 - What does it mean when Jesus says for us "*to keep My word?*" Read Proverbs 4:20-22; Luke 11:28; John 14:15, John 14:23.
 - Why is it so amazing that even after the Jews' vicious accusations and insults, Jesus would still offer them hope?
 - Why do you think he responded from a positive perspective instead of reiterating what He said in John 8:24, "*if you don't believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.*"?
- **In verse 54, Jesus makes it clear that He is not seeking to glorify Himself.**
 - Why would Jesus say His glory would be "*nothing*", if He is God? Read John 17:1-3 and Philippians 2:7-11.
- **In verses 52-58, Jesus asserts that Abraham rejoiced to see His day; he saw it and was glad.**
 - How would Abraham know Jesus to rejoice to see His day? What day? Why was he glad? Read Hebrews 11:8; 17; Genesis 15:6. What lessons can we learn from Abraham here?
 - Why is the Jews' logic flawed and what exactly is the root of their problem?
 - What would have been the difference if Jesus would have said, "*Before Abraham, I was?*"?
- **In verse 59, the Jews picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus was hidden and went out of the temple.**
 - Consider the irony in how the Jews, who thought their father, Abraham, put them in right standing with God, and who is also referred to as "*a friend of God,*" are now so eager to pick up stones and kill God's only begotten and well-loved Son.
 - Why do you think Jesus left the temple and didn't "*stand his ground*"? Read John 7:30 and 8:20.

Application for the Week

Though few of us would ever want to admit to being an oppressor, to some degree, we're all oppressors. In our flesh, we all want to exert power, exercise control, and pick up and throw stones at others in selfish ways whenever we get the chance. However, Jesus showed us a very different way and His best example of mercy and forgiveness came on the darkest day of oppression when He took upon Himself all the sins of mankind to save us. Jesus offered forgiveness to the very people who betrayed, condemned, and crucified Him. Perhaps this is a tough pill to swallow, especially if you've suffered oppression and persecution up close. This week, take time to consider the words of Paul and what Christ did for us knowing *"we too were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and detesting one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. He poured out His Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior."* (Titus 3:3-6). This week, remember the mercy God demonstrated towards us on the cross and look for ways to humbly give it to others.

How Your Group Can Pray This Week

How can we offer up praise and thanksgiving for any fearful opposition that we may be facing? It's only by remembering Who we belong to and Who we should be listening to by putting our trust in the faithful character of God. This week, pray that the cry of our hearts will be to uphold God's Word as He intends, believing and trusting His promises, which can never be broken, *"for you, Lord God, have begun to show Your greatness and Your strong hand to Your servant, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can perform deeds and mighty acts like Yours?"* (Deut. 3:24).

How Can We Be Praying for New Heights

Baptism is one of the most important acts of obedience for every believer. This week, pray for those who are taking this important step on Sunday, May 18, to identify with the life and heart of Jesus Christ on a much deeper level along with a willingness to live authentically in moving His kingdom forward.

Pray for our upcoming *"AnswersVBS: Wonder Junction,"* taking place on June 9-13. This camp will gather young people both in our church and our community for a fun-filled week of learning about Jesus and what He's done for them. Pray also for our godly leaders as they minister to these children with a gospel focus.