

ENGAGE

Like Jesus

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 3
WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 30TH

GROWTH GROUP FALL 2018

WEEK 3 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2018 - JOHN 1:1-18

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

- 1) John 1:1-5 is often read at Christmas Eve Candlelight services. Share a favorite Christmas tradition or experience from your childhood.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

The gospel of John begins just like the book of Genesis begins – “In the beginning.” God will act in a new way with his creation. What had begun in Genesis is now finding its fruition in John.

Genesis 1 tells us about the creation of humankind in the image of God, while John 1 tells us about the arrival of another human being, the one who is fully God and fully human. John refers to Jesus as “the Word.” We know that God often acted in the book of Genesis through his words. We also know that God’s word is powerful and effective.

Isaiah 55:10-11 says, “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

John tells his readers that God will send his son to live amongst the people. Jesus will not take up residence in the temple, but he will take up residence in the world. He will not be some abstract concept that brings peace or hope, but instead he will be a human being. John says that if we want to know what God is like, we need to take a look at Jesus.

Jesus (the Word), who was there with God in the beginning, and through whom all things were made, was coming to bring light to the darkness. Just as God had long ago spoken, “let there be light,” so Jesus was bringing light to a world that had been overcome by darkness.

Jesus would perfectly balance truth and grace. The law which had been given to Moses was a good beginning, but it couldn’t lead people to salvation. It contained some important truths, but it could not bring the grace that Jesus brought.



Verse 12 reminds us that the message of Jesus is for all people. Anyone can become a child of God, for all that is required is faith. It doesn't matter about where you come from, or who your family is. What matters is trusting your life to the one who is the word made flesh- Jesus Christ.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read John 1:1-18

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

- 2) Why do you think John chose to begin his gospel by connecting back to the creation story in Genesis?
- 3) Why do you think it was so difficult for people in the world to recognize Jesus? What does John mean when he says that "his own people did not receive him"?
- 4) John the Baptist is described as being "a witness to the light". John is using the image of light to describe the arrival and person of Jesus. How did John testify to the light? In what sort of ways do we testify to the light? What does that look like in our lives?
- 5) John describes Jesus as "the Word" because John believed that the words and actions of Jesus revealed the truth and essence of God. Later in John 8:31 Jesus said, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." What does it look like to abide in God's word? What impact should that have on our lives?
- 6) In what way are the law, grace and truth connected (v.17)? Why does John make this connection?
- 7) John twice tells his readers that Jesus was full of grace and truth (v.14, v.17). What does that mean? Can you think of examples from the New Testament when Jesus exhibited grace and truth?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) Share a time when you felt like you exhibited grace and truth in your words or actions. Is there a situation in your life right now that requires grace and truth? Share about it if you are comfortable and have your group pray for you.