

Small Group & Personal Bible Study

Pastor Dennis Hadley

Memory Verse: John 20:29

Because you have seen me, you believe; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

Daily Reading:

1. John 20:19-31
2. John 9:1-12
3. John 9:13-41
4. John 3:1-21
5. Hebrews 11:1-12:3

Lesson: Why do you believe?

1. Have you ever stopped and wondered if what you believe is really real? Do you believe what you say you believe? Do you really believe God created the heavens and the earth? Do you really believe there is life after death? Do you believe that God would punish sin, even of a good person? Do you really believe Jesus was the Son of God, sent from above to redeem us from sin and death? Do you really believe He lives and reigns? Do you believe Jesus is true God?

Let people openly share. We must wrestle with any unbelief we might have. Limiting God (like Thomas did before he touched his hands and side) shows a lack of faith and trust and more than anything else, it shows us where we must cry out to God to reveal Himself as the Truth. Glossing over struggles is never the right way to handle unbelief. The only right way is to deal with it head on with God. He can handle it. He did with Thomas.

2. According to John 20:31, what is the purpose of the gospel stories?

We learn from John that the testimonies of the gospel are for the purpose of belief in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that we can believe and have life in His name.

3. Read the story of the man born blind found in John chapter 9, what was the purpose of the man being born blind and later being healed in this encounter?

The purpose as Jesus stated it in verse 3 was that the work of God might be displayed in his life. That happened when Jesus healed him and his testimony was declared in worship and belief found in verse 38.

4. In our scripture reading this week we read of three different men who encounter Jesus (Thomas, Nicodemus, and the man born blind). What was Jesus' purpose at each encounter? How did the men respond to Him? What has been your personal encounter with Jesus? How have you responded? Has that encounter changed your life the way it should?

Jesus' purpose was to reveal Himself in a unique way so that person might believe. Thomas needed to touch and see, the man born needed to find healing and acceptance, Nicodemus needed to be challenged with his own intellectual understanding of God. (Although with Nicodemus is not immediately recorded how he responded but we see later in John 19 Nicodemus is still following after Jesus even to His death and in John 7 he defends Jesus)

Let people talk about their own encounter with Jesus Christ and how he finally got a hold of them in a special way.

Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father sent me, I am sending you." Ask the group "how is Jesus using your testimony to declare the work of God in your life?" and let them discuss what God wants to do with them.