

New Testament Challenge

March 1 – May 2, 2009

United Baptist Church – Old Town, ME

Small Group Questions – Week #8 – Starting April 19

Quick Facts about John

- John refers to himself in the book as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.”
- John was the only disciple who did not die a martyr's death
- He wrote The Gospel of John at the end of life. It is the last of the four gospels to be written and more than likely he had read Matthew, Mark, and Luke...
- John's Gospel is the most theological of the four and he uses imagery a lot like calling Jesus the light of world, the bread of life, the door, the vine, etc. There are also the seven “I AM” statements from Jesus
- John takes 6 chapters to cover the scene between Jesus and His disciples the night before His crucifixion as they celebrated Passover, which we now celebrate as Communion

Quick Facts about James

- He was the brother of Jesus. He did not believe in Jesus divinity until after Jesus resurrected and ascended into Heaven.
- He was one of the first leaders in the early church.
- Many scholars believe James was the first book written chronologically speaking in the New Testament
- Some scholars believe that James is a commentary on the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5.
- James was one of the first Christian martyrs when the persecution of the church began.

Quick Facts about 1st and 2nd Peter

- Both are written by Peter towards the end of his life
- Peter references Paul's letters in his letters and refers to them as equal with Old Testament scripture.
- Context of these letters: In the 64 AD a great fire destroyed much of Rome. It was widely believed that the Emperor Nero was responsible for the fire. However, he blamed the Christians for it and this began their persecution. Peter writes this letter to offer hope in the midst of suffering.
- Soon after he wrote these letters, Peter was crucified upside down.

The Death of Lazarus (John 11)

1. Why does Jesus deliberately delay in traveling to see Lazarus (v. 6)?
2. Why do you think Jesus wept?

3. How did Jesus respond to Martha when she questioned him for taking so long to get there?
4. How did Jesus respond to Mary when she questioned him for taking so long to get there?
5. How are the responses different? How do they demonstrate the heart of Jesus in identifying with others?

When You Face Trials (James 1)

1. What are some ways that you have been able to “consider it pure joy” when you were faced with a difficult circumstance?
2. How does perseverance play into this type of attitude? What difficult situation have you had to demonstrate perseverance in?
3. James says “every good and perfect gift is from above” (v. 17). What are some good gifts that God has given you over this past year?

Living for God (1 Peter 4)

1. What type of changes began to take place in your life after you gave it to Christ?
2. What did your friends think about this? Did they respect you or did they mock you?
3. How do you maintain relationships with friends who do not honor God while honoring God with your life?

False Teachers (2 Peter 2)

1. Why do you think it easy for people to follow false teachers?
2. Has there ever been a time when you were persuaded by someone who you now view as a false teacher?
3. What are some ways that you can guard against following the teachings of a false teacher?