

LIFEGROUP NOTES: JOHN 5:31-47

As ever, please use (or discard!) these ideas as is most suitable for your group. Don't feel you have to use everything.

Read John 5:31-47 and discuss:

1. Jesus' opponents were angered by the remarkable claims He made for Himself (as a reminder of these claims, see John 5: 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28-29). Consider how each of the following "witnesses" supports Jesus' claim to be the Son of God:
 - John the Baptist (vv.33-35; compare 1:19-36)
 - The works Jesus is doing (v.36)
 - The Scriptures (v.39)
2. In v.40 Jesus says (literally) "You do not want to come to me ..." This is in line with the Bible's teaching that as fallen people, we are not neutral towards God, but biased against Him (e.g., Romans 1:18-21). When have you seen this illustrated in your life or someone else's?
3. See vv.38-39 and 45-47. It seems that these religious leaders loved to search the Scriptures for the legal niceties, the arguments, the genealogies etc, but somehow missed the goal of all Bible study which is to encounter the living God in Christ. How might we be in danger of this mistake? How can we avoid it?
4. What charge does Jesus make in v.42? How does He support that charge in vv.43-44? What were the religious leaders' interested in? Where do we look for approval and what are the sources from which we derive affirmation? Why is making an idol of human praise always an obstacle to the true knowledge of God?
5. To bring this chapter together, compare v.6 "Do you want to get well?" with v.40 "You do not want to come to me to have life." Are there areas where Jesus is offering you the opportunity to stand up and live in a new way, yet you are resistant? What do you fear? How does what you are learning of Jesus in John's gospel encourage you to trust Him? How would your life be different if you took Him at His word?

In Conclusion

- Where have you been challenged by this study? What has encouraged you? Pray about your response to Jesus' offer of new life.

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