



Who is Jesus?

Luke 7:18-28 – Leaders version

Check in – with the group sitting in a semi-circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

What does the passage say and mean?

30 minutes

Read Luke 7:18-28

1. Now read Matthew 11:2-3. Matthew gives us an extra detail. Where is John when he sends his question to Jesus?

In prison. Read Matthew 14:1-5 with the group to find out why. Make sure they understand that he's in prison because of the king's anger at John's teaching, not because John had sinned.

2. What does John mean by 'Are you the one who was to come?' (Luke 7:19)

He's asking if Jesus is the Messiah (the Christ).

3. John is the one who was sent ahead of the Messiah. We know that he recognised him when he baptised him, so why do you think he's asking this now?

Let the group brainstorm. The passage doesn't answer the question. Maybe John is having doubts as he sits in prison wondering what has gone wrong with God's plan? (not likely). Maybe he's wondering if his life's work has all been for nothing? Maybe John had a different idea of Messiahship to what he sees in Jesus and he's starting to wonder if Jesus is the right guy? (possible, John spoke a lot about judgement and Jesus hasn't so far...)

4. What is Jesus doing when John's disciples come to him? (v21)

Healing people and exorcising evil spirits.

5. What message does Jesus send back to John in v22? How does this answer John's question?

Jesus tells them to tell John that the blind can see, the lame walk... the good news is preached to the poor. He's saying 1. see the power of God and recognise that I am God and 2. this is what I mean by Messiah. Spend some time with your group thinking about how the miracles in v22 prove that Jesus is actually God, and what Jesus' idea of Messiahship looks like. The Jews were expecting some sort of military figure who would liberate them from the Romans, not a peasant who hung around with sinners and lepers.

6. Read Isaiah 61:1-3 and Luke 4:16-21. What does Jesus say about Isaiah's prophecy in Luke 4:21? Now why do you think Jesus tells John what he does in Luke 7:22?

Jesus based his ministry on, and saw himself fulfilling, Isaiah 61:1-2 which was an acknowledged Messianic prophecy. John would have known this and made the link from Jesus' miracles to his fulfilling the prophecy and claiming that it was about him.

7. What does Jesus mean in v23?

It's like saying, 'Blessed is the man who doesn't misidentify me and miss salvation'.

8. Read Luke 7:24-28. Jesus says that John is the one about whom Malachi wrote (see Malachi 3:1). If that's true, then who must Jesus be?

If John is the one who was sent to prepare the way, then Jesus is the Messiah. It's another claim to be the One who was prophesied.

9. Why do you think the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than John?

John was the last of the Old Covenant prophets. 'The least NT saint has a higher privilege in Christ as a part of his bride (the church, Eph 5:25-27, 32) than John the Baptist, who was only a friend of the bridegroom (Jn 3:29). (NIVSB p1428 footnote).

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Do you have enough evidence from Jesus' teaching and miracles to know for definite who he is? If not, what questions need to have answered to help you with this?

Check out – with the group sitting in a semi-circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.

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