

Discussion Questions: John's Gospel (1:19-34)

These questions are to use (or not) as a group may see fit.

1. What are your questions, wonderings, disagreements, reflections, AND/OR connections, from the teaching this past Sunday on 1:19-34 where John the Baptist's testimony about himself AND Jesus is highlighted by the author?
2. As discussed last Sunday, the author's focus in this passage is on John the Baptist's witness/testimony about Jesus. John the Baptist testifies to the following three things about Jesus:
 - a. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
 - b. He baptizes with the Holy Spirit.
 - c. He is the Son of God.
 - What questions or wonderings do you have about any of these three roles of Jesus?
 - Which of these three things about Jesus feels most closely related to your own experience of faith?
 - Which of these three things about Jesus feels most distant or obscure from your own experience of faith?
3. The authoritative witness of John the Baptist and the author, John, is based upon their personal, eye-witness experience of Jesus. While we have not had the experience of being eye-witnesses to Jesus, each of us, on some level, has had our own "experience" of Jesus.
 - a. In what way(s) might you be able to say that your own experience of Jesus is like that of John the Baptist's or John the author?
 - b. How is your/our experience different from these authoritative witnesses?
 - c. How would you say someone can experience Jesus today?
 - d. How do you personally think about the act of "witness" as a role that Jesus believers play today? Is this important? Not? How do you think about it?
4. John the Baptist declares to those questioning him that "among you stands one whom you do not know" (1:26). John the Baptist, as a person who knew Jesus (as a cousin), could also truthfully say, "I too did not recognize him" (1:31). Even after John the Baptist receives the confirming sign of the Spirit descending upon Jesus, he continues (after being imprisoned) to wrestle with doubts about Jesus' identity. Is this a part of your own experience? In what ways might John the Baptist's experience also be true for you today?