

Discussion Questions: John's Gospel (3:22-36)

Overview Question:

1. What are your questions, wonderings, disagreements, reflections, AND/OR connections, from the teaching this past Sunday on John 3:22-36, where John the Baptist provides his final witness to Jesus as the "bridegroom who has the bride."

Literary/textual Questions:

2. Reading through this section 3:22-36, can you find connections between the language John the Baptist uses about Jesus and what has transpired between the beginning of his witness in 1:19, up through 3:21? What gets repeated here in this latest section that we've seen already along the way?
3. In what way/ways is this section a culmination of all that we have read so far in John's Gospel?
4. From whose perspective do you think John 31-36 was written? Is this John the Baptist continuing his statement from verse 30, or are these six verses John the author's reflection after the fact? Does it matter?
5. Why do you think Jesus (or Jesus' disciples) were also baptizing? What is the significance?
6. What do we learn about the Messiah/Jesus/Son in verses 31-36 that might have been surprising to Israel/Jews reading this for the first time?

Connection and Implication Questions:

7. The significance of John the Baptist's ministry cannot be overstated. He was THE prophet who prepared Israel to, at long last, meet their God (in the person of the Messiah). What is admirable in John the Baptist's attitude here in this section?
8. Not a single one of us has ever been or will ever be potentially mistaken for being the Messiah. John the Baptist was. But we all struggle with self-importance—somehow something John the Baptist avoided in this part of his story. Is there a healthy balance that we can strike between both believing that each of us possesses true value/importance, while at the same time embracing an attitude, like John, that we "must decrease" in the light of the Messiah? If so, how the heck do we do this?
9. What do you think it means that we must "obey the Son" in order to gain life? (vs.36)