

DISCUSSION 1

In vv. 19-23, the Pharisees ask John the Baptist who he claims to be. John tells us clearly who he is in relation to the Scripture.

1. Read Isaiah 40:3-5. John the Baptist claims to be the voice Isaiah speaks of. Why do you think he uses this text to explain who he is? Consider John 5:44-46. What can this passage reveal to us about John the Baptist's answer?
2. There seem to be hints of justice and fairness in the passage from Isaiah. What do these verses tell us about what Jesus's ministry accomplishes?
3. How does John's use of Scripture inform the way we should read it, apply it, and proclaim it?

DISCUSSION 2

In John 1:24-28, we see that John the Baptist made some startling claims. Here, he is distancing himself from being the Messiah and alluding to Jesus. Baptism was not a common practice among Jews—especially in this manner. While this form occurred with Gentiles, the Pharisees wondered what authority John had to baptize Jews.

1. According to this passage, by what authority does John baptize?
2. John says, "Among you stands one you do not know." Since the Pharisees were likely familiar with Jesus of Nazareth, why does John say this? What does he mean?
3. Based on the above question, what does this teach us about the nature of salvation (See John 3:6-8; 6:44)?

DISCUSSION 3

In the concluding verses of this passage, John the Baptist uses texts and prophecies from the Old Testament to declare Jesus as the Son of God, the true Messiah.

1. Consider 1:29 and 8:58. What is John proclaiming about Jesus?
2. Read Isaiah 11:1-2 and Ezekiel 36:27. How do these verses relate to John 1:32-34? How does this emphasize who Jesus is? What does this mean for us?

3. How might this text embolden you as you think of sharing the good news with others? How might it change the way you interact with co-workers, friends, or family members?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Who does John the Baptist claim to be? According to Isaiah 40:3, who does Scripture say John is?
2. If Isaiah wrote of John hundreds of years before John even existed, what does that tell us about the Bible?
3. Who does John claim Jesus is? Why do we need a Messiah?
4. What does John say happens to believers? How does this empower you to follow God?

APPLICATION

1. Read John 1 and Isaiah 40. Meditate on these passages and thank God for his kindness.
2. John proclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” What is the name of someone in your life who needs to hear this good news? Share this name with a close friend or family member, or your Small Group. Pray together that God would provide a gospel opportunity.