



MARVEL

PART II: JOHN 6-8

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Although John mentions the healing of the official's son as Jesus's second sign, this miracle signals the beginning of Jesus's public ministry. As Jesus ventured out of Samaria and into Galilee, people from all nations marveled at his teachings and miracles. In fact, the word "marvel" occurs six times in the book of John—most frequently in relation to Jesus's public ministry. So, why does John use this word specifically? To "marvel" implies a sense of wonder; this word highlights the awe-inspiring qualities of Jesus's work, character, and teaching.

DIVINE PURPOSE

In John 5, John features two instances of Jesus's healing power to reveal God's divine purpose through the Son. Following the second healing of the lame man, Jesus gives an explanation for his works. He says, "And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will." Jesus's miracles point to a greater miracle that we should marvel at—the defeat of death and sin, and the reconciling of man to God.

DIVINE POWER

In the same speech, Jesus also emphasizes his power. Jesus explicitly speaks of his marvelous power to raise the dead—a power belonging only to God. Furthermore, he claims authority over all things. Therefore, God has given Jesus the authority to judge the living and the dead.

DIVINE PROCLAMATION

Later, John records the account of Jesus teaching during the Feast of Booths—a teaching that amazed the Jews. How could a man with no education be teaching so authoritatively? Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me." In this statement, Jesus declared God's words as his own, thus claiming divine power. Both his teachings and his actions were divine proclamations of the kingdom of God. The Jews could not help but marvel at this man who proclaimed, "Behold I am making all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

These three characteristics of Jesus's words and deeds define his public ministry. John continually demonstrates the divine purpose, power, and proclamation of the Son of God. It is this message that changes our reality forever. Jesus holds the keys to life and death. He has authority in this life and the one to come.

This study guide is made up of three weekly sections:

1. DISCUSSION

Each week has groupings of questions that seem to fit well together. These groupings are called "discussions." They are designed to lead you into God's Word, provide sermon application, and guide your group conversation. Feel free to use the discussion questions that best fit your group's situation or needs. Beyond your Small Group, these questions can also be used in the context of a Bible study or discipleship relationship.

2. FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

These questions were created specifically with families in mind and we hope they'll be useful in facilitating family discussion (maybe around the dinner table or at a different family devotional time). These questions are applicable for all ages, including young children. We pray these bless you as you disciple your family.

3. APPLICATION

Each week, we've suggested some next steps. Whether you use these applications or find other ways to respond, our hope is that you intentionally act on and obey God's Word.

DISCUSSION 1

Seeking Jesus (vv. 22-35)

1. Why were the crowds seeking Jesus? What does Jesus say?
2. How can we seek Jesus wrongly? What does it look like to seek Jesus rightly?
3. What's the significance of Jesus's claim, "*This is the work of God, that you may believe in him whom he has sent*"? What does it tell us about true faith and the way of salvation?
4. Jesus says the crowds are not seeking him because of a sign in verse 26, but the crowds do ask for a sign in verse 30. What fundamental misunderstanding is taking place among the Jews? What does it show about their hearts and where they are finding satisfaction?

DISCUSSION 2

Listening to Jesus (vv. 32-40)

1. What did Jesus claim about the manna that God gave to the Israelites as food in the wilderness? What did it represent?
2. In this passage, what does Jesus claim to be? Did the Jews understand him?
3. What's the significance of Jesus claiming to be the bread of life?
4. How do Jesus's statements in verses 35-40 encourage you in regard to your salvation?

DISCUSSION 3

Jesus, the sovereign God (vv. 35-59)

1. What does Jesus claim about the nature of salvation (vv. 37, 39, 44)?
2. How can we trust Jesus's promise that he will raise us up on the last day (vv. 39, 51)?
3. How do we obtain eternal life? By saying a prayer? By doing good works? What does Jesus say about it in verses 53-59?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1. Why do you like to eat bread? Why did Jesus call himself the bread of life?
2. If Jesus, unlike bread, can satisfy us forever, what does that mean for our day-to-day living in the present?
3. How can we seek Jesus as our bread of life? What motivates us to do so?

APPLICATION

- Write down 5-10 things that refresh you. Then, pray through your list. Where are you finding refreshment and satisfaction? What is the bread that is sustaining you? How might you need to change your routines or habits to be satisfied by Jesus regularly?
- Next time you take Communion, do it with this text on your mind. Remind yourself and thank God that by accepting the bread from heaven, you have hope eternally.

YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

John 6:60-71

DISCUSSION 1

The grumbling disciples

1. Why were some of the disciples having trouble with Jesus's statements (Consider John 6:37, 39, 44; 10:25-27)?
2. How does Jesus clarify his statement, "*My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink*" by saying, "*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life*"?
3. Why do you think many disciples still left him?
4. Consider Jesus's statement in verse 65. What does this tell us about the sinfulness of man and the nature of salvation?

DISCUSSION 2

Spirit & life

1. What does it mean that Jesus's words are spirit and life?
2. Think of a time when you were very discouraged. What caused that discouragement?
3. What's an effective way to battle discouragement or depression if, according to this passage, the flesh is no help at all?

DISCUSSION 3

Peter's three astounding statements

1. In response to Jesus's question, "*Do you want to go away as well?*" Peter's response is, "*To whom shall we go?*" Considering there were many teachers in the day, why do you think Peter said that? Why is it important to have this same mindset?
2. The second time around, Peter answers the question with, "*You have the words of eternal life* (See John 6:68)." What is Peter proclaiming?
3. Peter's third statement is, "*We have believed and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.*" Read Isaiah 41:14; 43:3, 15; 47:4; 48:17; 54:5; Luke 4:34; Acts 2:27; and 13:35. In light of these passages, what is Peter saying that shows he has true faith?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be sinful? How did we become sinful?
2. How are we saved?
3. When things are sad or hard in life, where can we find encouragement and true life?
4. Who will never leave us or forsake us?

APPLICATION

- Pray for "disciples" you know who have left Jesus. Is God calling you to reach out to any of them or see how they're doing? If so, take the first step and see how God leads you next.
- If you have been battling discouragement, find some Scripture that encourages you. Write down five key Scriptures that will help you when you're discouraged. Read them regularly to remind yourself of God's truth.

DISCUSSION 1

Controversy & conversions

1. This passage describes several controversies surrounding Jesus. Who was skeptical of Jesus and who hated him? Who might these people represent today?
2. Jesus's brothers told him to go to Judea for an annual feast that all "good" Jews attended. Why did they want Jesus to go? Why did he not want to go? What can we learn from their suggestion and Jesus's response?
3. Verse 12 highlights two thoughts people had about Jesus. What were they? Do people still have these opinions about Jesus today?

DISCUSSION 2

Jesus speaks

1. When Jesus spoke in the temple, his profound teaching surprised people because he had no formal education. How does Jesus combat their uncertainty about him? What does his response teach us about Jesus and how to follow him rightly?
2. In verse 19, Jesus asks, "*Why are you seeking to kill me?*" In John 5:18, we see that the Jews wanted to kill Jesus after he healed a sick man and claimed God as his father. Based on these reasons, would it make sense that the Jews would want Jesus dead (even if they denied it)?
3. How does the illustration of circumcision on the Sabbath apply to Jesus healing on the Sabbath?

DISCUSSION 3

Understanding Jesus

1. What Jesus says in verse 17 helps us better understand him. What about his statement is encouraging if we want to know Jesus?
2. Can Jesus be known? If so, how?
3. How does understanding Jesus correctly free us from thinking it's up to us to convince others of Jesus's power?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever tried to get your sibling (or someone else) to do something they didn't want to do? Was it a good thing or a bad thing? How did it turn out?
2. How do you know if someone is telling the truth? Are you more likely to trust a friend who's the same age as you, or an adult? Why? How does this help us understand Jesus better?
3. Read verse 24. Have you ever thought something looked good (maybe food), only to find out that it wasn't? Or, maybe you thought a task would be easy, but found out that it was actually really hard? How are sin and obedience kind of like that?

APPLICATION

- Think about Jesus's unwillingness to show his power. Do you have a tendency to prove your opinions by power (Ex. better arguments, harder work, or getting others' approval)? Pray and ask God to show you a better way to be like Jesus when you encounter situations that tempt you in this way.
- Jesus often takes action on the Sabbath, which serves to remind us that we do not live under rules as the ultimate authority, but the maker of all order and law. Our main mission in life is to love God and to love our neighbors. Talk about how you can practically show love to your neighbors this week.

DISCUSSION 1

Jesus, the Christ (vv. 25-36)

1. In verses 27-29, the people debate where Jesus came from. Where does Jesus come from? Why is it important to understand that Jesus is fully God and fully man?
2. Why were people compelled to believe in Jesus despite the critics around him (v. 31)?
3. In this passage, we see that Jesus's actions made the religious leaders angry. However, according to verse 30, no one laid a hand on him because his hour had not come yet. What prevented Jesus from being killed or arrested by these leaders? How should we understand the sovereignty of God in light of this?

DISCUSSION 2

Rivers of living water (vv. 37-39)

1. In verse 37, Jesus shows that our greatest longing is satisfied in him. What things do people try to find satisfaction in? What's an example of something you thought would fulfill you, that eventually failed you?
2. What promises does God give us about the Spirit's work?
3. How should we view evangelism, in light of the truth that the Spirit works through us?

DISCUSSION 3

Different responses to Jesus (vv. 40-52)

1. In this passage, we see that some people believed Jesus was the Messiah. Read Micah 5:1-4. How did Jesus fulfill the things mentioned in this text?

2. Read verses 43-44. Why did some people want to arrest Jesus? What are some common reasons that people reject Jesus today?
3. What are some resources or truths that have encouraged your faith in Christ?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean that Jesus is “the Christ”?
2. Read Micah 5:1-4. Discuss the definition and significance of prophecy and how Jesus fulfilled Micah’s prophecy.
3. What should we do when someone doesn’t believe in Jesus?

APPLICATION

- Pray and ask God to strengthen your faith. Identify one area of growth you’d like to work on, and ask a friend for accountability. If they are willing, consider holding them accountable in this way as well.
- Consider reading and studying more in the field of apologetics. Tim Keller’s *The Reason for God* and William Lane Craig’s *On Guard* are two great books to start with.

DISCUSSION 1

Jesus vs. the Pharisees: their attitude

1. What attitude do the scribes and Pharisees have toward the woman in this passage?
2. Read Matt. 23:1-13. How does Jesus describe the scribes and Pharisees in this passage?
3. How could the scribes and Pharisees have handled the situation in a way that honored God? How should we deal with people found in sin (Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 6:1)?

DISCUSSION 2

Jesus vs. the Pharisees: their response

1. According to John 8:6, what is the real reason the Pharisees and scribes brought this woman before Jesus?
2. John Piper once said, “The way that you can tell if you’re a Pharisee or not is based upon how you act around vile and wicked sinners.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
3. How does the fact that we all struggle with sin influence the way we see others when they are caught in sin (Rom. 3:9-18)?

DISCUSSION 3

Jesus offers grace

1. Compare Jesus’s words in this passage to what Paul says in Romans 8:31-34.
2. When we sin, who is our offense truly against? How should this affect our repentance (Ps. 51:4)?

3. What does Jesus's reaction to the woman tell us about his heart toward sinners (also see Luke 15; John 3:16)?
4. Jesus forgives the woman's sin, but what does he tell her to do (John 8:11)? Why do you think he tells her this?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the way the Pharisees and scribes treat the woman in this passage? Have you ever acted that way when you've seen a sibling or a friend do something wrong?
2. Does Jesus treat the woman the same way the Pharisees and scribes do?
3. After we confess our sin to God, what should we do?

APPLICATION

- Get together with a friend and talk about ways you can show God's love to someone who society sees as an outcast.
- Think about someone who has recently come to Christ or is going through a hard time. Pray about how God might have you come alongside them in godly love.

DISCUSSION 1

The I am & the light of the world

1. Find all the “I am” statements in this week’s passage. How do these truths impact your life or bring you hope? Is there one in particular that sticks out to you? If so, why do you think that one stands out?
2. How can these statements encourage us when we are going through difficult times
3. Light is an important concept in John’s gospel (1:7-9). How does the metaphor of light help us know Jesus better?

DISCUSSION 2

A relationship with the Father

1. Jesus talks about his relationship with his Father in verses 14-19. What can we learn about Jesus from the way he describes his relationship with his Father?
2. Why is it important to us that Jesus has this type of relationship with the Father?
3. Verses 21-30 describe how the Father supports the Son. Read these verses and list out the ways the Father supports Jesus.

DISCUSSION 3

Being in Christ

1. Jesus encourages believers to “abide” in him, which is a strong theme in John’s gospel. How can this theme motivate us to live for him? How are you doing personally when it comes to abiding?

2. In verse 36, Jesus talks about freedom. Does freedom in Christ mean we can do whatever we want? Why or why not?
3. What does it mean to be a slave to sin? What is the solution to that slavery?

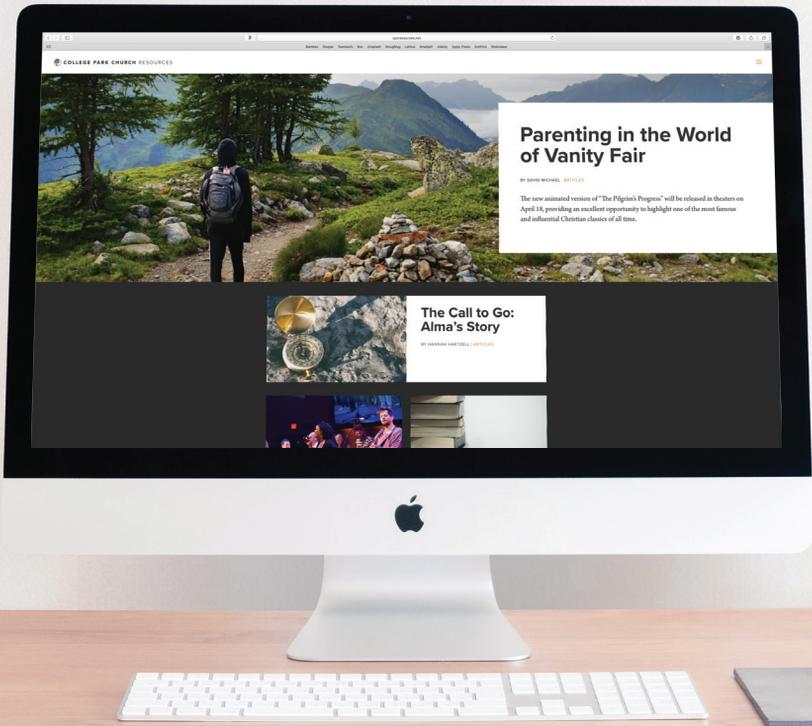
FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Give the kids flashlights and either have them go into a closet or make the room dark. Ask them what they can see when it is totally dark and what they can see when the light comes on. Discuss how this exercise can help you better understand who Jesus is.
2. Consider having an age-appropriate discussion about the history of slavery in the United States. Talk about how it would feel to be a slave with a mean master. Discuss how physical slavery can relate to sin and its hold over us.
3. Talk about some of the sins you've committed (it may help for parents to go first). Then, discuss how abiding in Jesus can help us overcome sin.

APPLICATION

- Think about how God has helped you overcome darkness or struggle in the past. Consider journaling about this faithfulness, particularly in light of any current struggles you are going through.
- Ask God to reveal any ways you are currently living as a slave to sin. Ask others to pray for you and hold you accountable as you fight sin.

For more resources like this, visit
cpcresources.net



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