

WEEK FORTY-THREE INTRODUCTION

John structures his Gospel around seven “I am” statements of Jesus (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7; 10:11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1) and seven miraculous signs (John 2:1-12; 4:46-54; 5:1-11; 6:1-15; 6:16-21; 9:1-12; 11) which attest to the truthfulness and divinity of Jesus. John is often called “the Evangelist” because he writes explicitly for readers to believe in Jesus Christ. We encounter four of these “I am” statements in this week’s reading. The question of Jesus’ authoritative testimony regarding Himself is a major point of contention in all of the Gospels. Who would they believe? Who will we believe today? Facing Jesus revealed in Scripture demands a response. We cannot choose Jesus the teacher and leave behind Jesus the preacher. We cannot claim Jesus as king and reject Him as king.

KEY SCRIPTURE

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”

– Luke 17:20-21 ESV

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What restricts the understanding of those listening to Jesus in John 7:39-47? How does their spiritual condition shape their spiritual cognition?

According to Luke 10:22, how is it possible for people, including us, to know God the Father? What are some implications of that for life in and outside the church?

In Luke 12:4-7, how does the fear of God lead to fearless living? What do you *fear*? Why?

The issues of human sexuality, gender, marriage, and divorce are inescapable in our world. How does Jesus address these issues in Matthew 19:1-12? What are some ways you need to apply His teaching to your own life? How does Jesus' teaching compare to the current cultural narrative on these issues?

In Luke 15:7 and 10, according to Jesus what prompts celebration in heaven among angelic beings? Does the same thing elicit joy in you? Why or why not? Examine your heart.

Jesus encounters 10 lepers in Luke 17:11-19. What is their plea to Christ? What does He do? Which one responds in a way favorable to Jesus? Why does the *identity* of the one *invite* surprise in the reader? If this one is already healed, in what way does Jesus pronounce him "well" in verse 19?

Memorize Mark 10:45. How does Jesus conceive of His ministry? How can you express that ministry and mission in your life?

Jesus gives a short but poignant lesson on leadership in Matthew 20:25-28. How is this teaching compare to common thinking about leadership today? Who do you lead? Who do you influence?

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

-Luke 19:10 ESV

Jesus came to seek and to save those lost in spiritual darkness. He now sends His people, empowered by the Holy Spirit, on the same mission. Who comes to mind when you think about those close to you but far from God? Make a list. Pray for them. Serve them. Share the good news of Jesus with them.