

Small Group Discussion Questions - Fall Semester // Week Five

Remember, these questions are just tools for discussion. You don't need to 'get through them all'. Use the questions that are helpful, skip the questions that are not. And let the conversation flow naturally.

Optional Ice Breaker(s)

- a) Before you begin your study, take a few minutes to check in with each person in your group. As COVID-19 cases rise in Manitoba, it is likely that more people will be experiencing anxiety/fear this fall. Write down anything that you can pray for later.
- b) What is one of your favourite things to do by yourself? If you had a whole day to yourself, how would you spend your time?

Passage and Discussion

Read 1 John 2:18-23

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading of this passage? What is a theme, verse, or word that you find encouraging? What do you find challenging in this passage?
- b) To begin with Cam's question on Sunday morning, what comes to mind when you hear the word "antichrist"? How do you think most people in our culture would define this word?
- c) Based on this passage, how would you answer the question: "who is the antichrist"? How is this answer different than what we imagined or have been shown in movies? What does this tell us about the importance of reading Scripture for itself?
- d) As Cam taught on Sunday, "anti-christ" refers to anyone or anything that denies that Jesus is Lord. Why is this an important definition for us to understand as Christ-followers? How should this definition shape the way that we interact with the world around us?
- e) In this passage, John teaches us that there are people, powers, ideas, etc. in our world today that are opposed to God. What are a few examples of anti-christ beliefs or ideas in our lives?
- f) If we are not careful, sometimes we can find ourselves living in a way that supports anti-christ ideas, although we are unaware of it. How do you think that this can happen in our lives? What are a few safeguards to avoid this that we can put into our lives?
- g) Cam said this on Sunday: "anything in our lives that deceives us or does not lead us to Christ is not neutral: it is anti-christ." Is this a new definition of anti-christ for you? How does this statement change the way that you should evaluate your life?

- h) How can we learn how to identify anti-christ people, beliefs, or ideas in our culture (books, movies, music, etc.)? What are a few useful strategies in becoming more discerning in our everyday lives?
- i) Charles Spurgeon said: “Discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong. It is knowing the difference between right and almost right”. What do you think about this statement? What are a few examples of “almost right” beliefs in our culture today?
- j) In your own words, what is the difference (if any) between being discerning and being distrustful? Is it wrong to be distrustful of someone?
- k) It is important to know that while we are called to be discerning, that we also must be gracious with those who affirm the Lordship of Christ, but do not look or act exactly like us. How can we walk the line between being discerning, and being gracious with our brothers and sisters in Christ?
- l) Was there anything else in the message on Sunday that stood out to you as impactful or challenging?

Take it Home (Optional Ideas for Response this Week)

- a) This week, take a few minutes to pray that God would help you become more discerning in your life; that you would become increasingly able to discern anti-christ people, attitudes, or ideas in your everyday life.
- b) This week, consider if there is someone trustworthy in your life that you could ask to hold you accountable. Ask that person to help you become more discerning in your life; that you would be honest with yourself and with them about any anti-christ beliefs or ideas in your life.

Optional Ideas for Prayer Time

- a) In this season, it is important for us to be intentionally praying for each other. This also means that we must each choose to be honest and vulnerable with our prayer requests. Take time to ‘check-in’ about how each person is doing, and pray for them.
- b) As a group, spend a few minutes praying for this new series that we are walking through as a church. Pray that God would use it to help each of us become more like Him, and to help our church become more like the community He wants us to be.