

Small Group Guide: The Authority of Jesus (John 5:18-29)

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus claims equality with God the Father
2. Jesus has authority to give life and execute judgment
3. Honoring Jesus is essential to honoring God
4. There will be a final judgment for all people
5. Salvation comes through belief in Christ, not works

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?
2. The sermon mentions that Jesus "doubles down" on his claim to be equal with God. How does this impact your view of who Jesus is?
3. How do you reconcile the idea of a loving God with the concept of divine judgment?
4. The pastor says, "Heaven is not a place for those afraid of hell. Heaven is a place for those who have found great joy in the person of Jesus." How does this statement challenge or affirm your understanding of salvation?
5. Discuss the difference between trying to earn salvation through works versus bearing fruit as evidence of salvation. How does this distinction affect your daily life?
6. The sermon emphasizes that Jesus took our punishment upon himself. How does this aspect of the gospel impact your view of God's love and justice?
7. How can we cultivate a proper "honor" for Jesus in our lives, as discussed in the sermon?

Practical Applications:

1. Take time this week to reflect on areas where you might be relying on your own "works" rather than trusting in Christ's finished work. Journal about this and pray for God's help in surrendering these areas.
2. Practice explaining the gospel to someone else, emphasizing both God's justice and His love as presented in this sermon.
3. Identify one way you can demonstrate your faith through actions this week, remembering that good works flow from salvation rather than earning it.
4. Spend time in prayer, thanking Jesus for bearing the punishment for your sins and asking for a deeper appreciation of this sacrifice.
5. Share with the group next week how reflecting on Jesus' authority has impacted your daily life and decisions.

Closing Prayer