



Small Group Notes - John 14:15-21

Some groups may find the following suggested questions a helpful starting point. Don't feel bound by them, rather work at understanding God's word for yourselves, praying that God will help you live in the light of it.

Introduction

Over the last three weeks, at the start of a new academic year, we have been asking questions about discipleship. As a church family we have been encouraged to place our trust in Jesus again and to commit to living for Him this autumn.

Sunday's sermon started with the question 'Why doesn't God make himself clearer?'

1. In what ways have we found ourselves asking that question?
2. In what ways does the world around us ask that question?
3. Do you think Jesus' answer (in v9-21) is what Philip expected in answer to his request (v8)?

This series is designed to help grow our trust in Jesus and show us again what life looks like if we do trust Him. As last week, we are now going to think about the two main points from the sermon in turn.

Part 1 – Who is the Holy Spirit?

In John 13:33 Jesus says "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come."

4. How must the disciples have felt? What might have been their worries?

Read John 14:15-21

5. How does v16 address these worries?

A key thing to notice in this section is the continuity between Jesus and the Spirit.

6. How familiar are you with thinking of the Holy Spirit as 'the Spirit of Jesus'?
Here are some verses from this section of John's gospel that you may like to look up: John 14:26, 15:26, 16:8, 16:12 (and some from the rest of the NT - Romans 8:9, Galatians 4:6, 1 Peter 1:11)
7. What evidence can you find in v15-21 that the Holy Spirit continues Jesus' ministry?

Part 2 – How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?

8. v21 speaks of both 'having' and 'keeping' Jesus' commands. What might these two practices look like for us?

9. In these verses 'loving' Jesus is the key to enjoying fellowship with God (including the person of the Spirit). Our feelings come and go, how is the picture of love here a more steady basis for our fellowship with God?

10. How does Jesus command in John 13:34-35 challenge us?

11. What would it look like to be filled with the Holy Spirit in light of this (and 15:21)?

Conclusion

Jesus says that He is not growing more distant (as he returns to the Father) but actually drawing closer. The question is, will we be receptive? Focusing on the practical (rather than simply sentimental) signs of our love for Jesus is what these verses speak of. By obeying we love Jesus, and as we do, we enjoy a greater fellowship with God.

12. Given everything we have seen this week, what different things do you now need to pray - for yourself, your small group and our church?

Spend time praying for each other in response to God's word.