



WEEK 14 - QUESTIONS FROM WEEKDAY READING (pgs 407-445)

ICEBREAKER - Today, we're going to play "Two Truths and A Lie." Choose two statements about yourself that are true, and one that is false. Share all three and ask people to vote which is a lie.

Read John 2:13-25 (pg 394, middle section)

- As Jesus and the Jews dispute Jesus' act of upending the temple, clearing it of detestable "money changing" or fleecing the unwitting Passover purchaser, the Jews call Jesus to account for his actions by asking by **what authority** he has acted.
 - As you wrestle with this passage, why is this an important question?
 - Have you ever found yourself asking Jesus (or thinking to yourself), "What sign can you show me to prove yourself to me? How do I know what's right, good, or best?"
- There is a key moment lodged in the middle of this story when Jesus' disciples remember the prophecy written of Jesus, "Zeal for my Father's House will consume me." (In other words, "eat me up.") The disciples begin to understand that Jesus is beyond human and that his authority comes from a divine prerogative - Ultimate Authority as the Ultimate Reality. Sometimes in our life, we don't do a good job of deciding who/what has the "right" to inform our decisions or subdue our will. We just "go with the flow" of society and culture.
 - Are there places or areas of your life that you need to bring under the authority of Jesus instead of the foolishness of humanity - like fake news, celebrity sources, body image, identity, self-worth, rumor mills, or social media? Which ones inform your moral compass?
 - What "source" informing your world needs to take a back seat to Jesus today?
- Jesus goes on to bring the accusing Jews to a standstill with a prophecy of his own, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days" referring to himself, his death at their hands, and his resurrection. But he did not offer another sign for his authority to purify the temple, and the Jews did not accept his authority. They did not "believe." Over the next few days of the Passover Festival, Jesus performed signs that other Jews witnessed and "believed." But notice something funny here. The text says that Jesus did not *entrust himself* to them (their belief). He knew how superficial, skin deep, and weak it was. This section ends with the words, "He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he new what was in each person."
 - How often do you find yourself following your own faulty reasoning or frail feelings to orient your life and world? What ways have you chosen to believe in yourself (or someone/something else) instead of Jesus and his Word? (John 1:1-20)
 - When you look at the story of Jesus' life, what do you see that makes him believable, credible, and authoritative?



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WEEKLY QUESTIONS:

1. *What's something you noticed for the first time?*
2. *What questions did you have?*
3. *Was there anything that bothered you?*
4. *What did you learn about loving God?*
5. *What did you learn about loving others?*

The Advocate | (p. 418 & 420)

- In John 14, 15, and 16, Jesus makes much of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is said to help you, be with you, teach you, remind you, convict, guide, and glorify Jesus. The mystery of the Trinity often leaves people with theological imbalance. In other words, people (or entire churches) focus on one or two persons of the Trinity while forgetting the work of the other(s). Which member of the Trinity do you focus on the most? How has this shaped your belief system?
- Jesus gives the Holy Spirit a nickname in John 14-16, the Advocate. This name comes from *paraclete*, which means "one who is called to someone's aid." How do you think this would bring comfort or anticipation for the disciples as Jesus was talking about his ascension?
- How has the Holy Spirit been the *paraclete* in your life, the one called to your aid? Is it hard or easy for you to recognize his work in your life as the advocate?

Vine and Branches | (p. 419)

- As Jesus talks with the disciples about the Father's and his work as the vine and gardener, there are examples that sound pleasant, while others sound less so. What words or phrases in the middle three paragraphs on 419 do you like? Which do you not like or sound painful? Discuss.
- Jesus uses metaphors, parables and analogies frequently. In this section, he again uses gardening terms. What truth do you see in this analogy about how you should live and operate in your life today - approximately 2000 years after Jesus commanded his disciples to remain in him?

Love | (p. 436-437)

- As the Beatles said, "All you need is love." We use the word "love" profusely today, for interests, hobbies, people; and all for different reasons. Since Jesus himself tells us that the two greatest commands are rooted in love (love God and love others), it begs the question: what defines love and how do we model it? As you look at the passage on page 436 & 437, how does John define and identify love? What parts of that definition are you doing well? Where can you improve?