

Discussion Questions April 1, 2018

You Can't Be Serious (John 16:33 & The Revelation)

(Share about a time when you have felt deeply disappointed in God. When you feel disappointed in God what do you tend to do? How do you cope with your disappointment?)

In this sermon, “John the apostle” said, “I had been exiled to the Roman Prison Colony on Patmos for preaching the Gospel. I was a castaway and sometimes wondered if God had cast me away. In this world I had seen tribulation. Most of the guys had been tortured and then, murdered. Nero had been burning believers alive, as human torches, in the Coliseum. Our fellow Jews had betrayed us for power and position. I couldn't stop worrying about the churches in Asia Minor. We were to be “*fishers of men*,” and I felt like a failure.”

- Why do you think God allowed for all this hardship to fall upon Jesus' followers?
- Why do you think He allows disappointments and hardships for us today?

It seems God is passionate about setting us free from the burden of thinking we are salvation and revealing that He is salvation. In order to do so, He is not afraid of looking like a fool, and He is not afraid of letting us look like fools that we might know the depths of His love for us.

- In what circumstances are you concerned about looking like a fool?
- In what areas do you find it easy to laugh at yourself. When do you find it hard?
- Does Jesus ever embarrass you? Are there things that He did or said that you are embarrassed to share with others? Why do you think that is?

We all struggle to grasp and accept the depth of God's unconditional love for us. Take a moment to examine yourself.

- What might be hindering you from the revelation of His love for you?
- What in you needs to die—to be humbled & surrendered—that you might know His love?

The book of Revelation can be frightening (especially with all the various interpretations of it out there) and the thought of God's judgment frightening as well, and yet, the death and resurrection of Christ reveal the amazing love of God for all of humanity.

- When you think of God's Judgment and The Revelation, what do you think of?
- Are you afraid of the Judgment of God?

John shared about all that Jesus says about judgment:

“The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the son” (John 5).

“I judge no one ... I have much to judge” (John 8).

“Now is the Judgment of this world...I did not come to judge the world, but save the world” (Jn 12).

- Do these statements surprise you? If so, why?

“John” told the story of the disciples trying to catch fish after Jesus' death and how Jesus made them breakfast.

- In your life where are you exhausting yourself trying to “catch fish”—trying to save yourself?

“Laughing at your old you is part of giving birth to the new you . . . so you won't be stuck on you, proud of you, and worried about you...Instead you'll be forever grateful to God for the gift that is you—eternal and free.

- What might God be calling you to laugh about instead of worrying about?
- What struggles and fears can you release to God knowing that endured the cross and has a good and loving plan for your life?

Take a moment to place your nets (your striving, fear, & attempts to save yourself) aside.

Take a moment to gaze at your Savior, on the beach, longing to have communion with you.

Take a moment to be fed by the One with the nail-scarred hands who longs to spend today with you.

**These questions were created by Kimberly Weynen*