

John 2 – Unexpected Messiah

These are the leaders notes from the Kielder Bible Study Group for the meeting that was held on 21st August 2012

Recap

- John the author was brother of James – son of Zebedee
- The Gospel was written around AD 85 after a time of great upheaval and unrest – The Roman legions had destroyed the temple in AD 70
- Society was a multi cultural and multi faithed pretty much like ours today
- One of the main reasons for writing it was to quell any myths going around about Jesus that He was just a great Philosopher or Moralist – He was the Son of God.
- John assumes that his readers are familiar with the other three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke and builds on them.
- John did not see Christianity as a hypothetical action but a call to action
- The main religious authorities around in Jesus's time were
 - The **Pharisees** – were mostly middle-class businessmen, and therefore were in contact with the common man. Religiously, they accepted the written Word as inspired by God. But they also gave equal authority to oral tradition and attempted to defend this position by saying it went all the way back to Moses. Evolving over the centuries, these traditions added to God's Word, believing that “the law” was the most important thing.
 - The **Sadducees** – They were aristocrats in the main. They tended to be wealthy and held powerful positions, including that of chief priests and high priest, and they held the majority of the 70 seats of the ruling council called the Sanhedrin. They worked hard to keep the peace by agreeing with the decisions of Rome. They seemed to be more concerned with politics than religion.
 - The **Zealots** - The zealots favoured armed rebellion against Rome. They believed that God would deliver Israel with the sword.
- The common concept of the Messiah at the time was a political/military figure who would overthrow the Roman rule.
- From Chapter 1
 - John calls Jesus the Word as he is telling us about God.
 - We meet John the Baptist
 - The crowds thought he might have been Elijah who had come back to this world
 - John through divine inspiration recognised that Jesus was the Son of God
 - John called Jesus the Lamb of God – recognising his sacrificial role
 - Jesus is baptised by John
 - Jesus starts to call his disciples
 - The disciples recognise him as the Messiah – They would have probably meant it in a political way suggesting that Jesus was going to throw out the occupying

Roman armies and restore self rule for the Jews.

John 2

This is the start of a section that covers the next few chapters covering 7 miracles/events – We will be looking at two of them today. John uses these to show us different aspects of the Messiah – ie Jesus was not the type of gung ho Militaristic person they were expecting, but someone rather different.

Miracle 1 – turning water into wine John 2 1-11

1-5 - Setting the scene

Q Do we think Mary was right in asking Jesus to do something about the wine?

6-8 - Each pot held somewhere between 20-30 gallons of liquid – So this equates to somewhere between 120 and 180 gallons of wine. There are roughly 21 glasses of wine in a gallon so this is between 2500 to 3700 glasses of wine. Some party!!

Q Why do we think Jesus involved the servants in this process rather than just doing it himself? - Laying down a principle that He works in partnership with ordinary people.

9-11 – The end result

Q It is suggested that there is a link between the old ceremonial ritualistic process of washing and the new way of worship that the wine might represent. What do we think?

Q When Jesus reigns in ones life then it is not a funeral but a party – how do we show that in our lives?

Miracle 2 – cleansing of the temple John 2 12-25

It should be noted that John is out of step with the other gospels in his order of things here. Either there were two similar events at different times or John has rearranged the order of things to help clarify the message he is trying to bring across

12-14 – Going down to Capernaum – This was at a lower level than they were currently at when they were at Cana

The scene that John describes is in accordance with old testament Jewish laws. In order to make a sacrifice a Jewish person would need an animal to kill. Most people did not bring their animals with them but purchased one in the temple court yard. To buy an animal a person had to use the special temple currency Tyrian Shekels. So the money changers were needed to change the local currency into the special temple currency..

15-17 – What Jesus does next

Q Why do we think Jesus got angry? V16 – Jesus is upset about it being a market

Q Is it ok selling things in church?

Q What was the Jewish authorities response to this? - They did not complain maybe they thought Jesus would be the military leader they had been looking for

The disciples will have remembered that two old Testament passages refer to what Jesus was doing

Malachi 3 1-4

Psalm 69 v9

18-25 - The Jews response

v20 - 46 years This means the year of the event being recorded in v18 was AD26

Q The people question Jesus's authority for doing this – What answer does Jesus give?

Q What do we think v24-25 mean – The people outwardly said they would follow him but inwardly they did not mean it in their hearts.

Lets look at Jeremiah 17 9-10 to see what it says there.

Matthew 5 38-40 Q As a Christian – when is it right to get angry and when is it right to show the other cheek

Recap

Some key points from the chapter :-

- We need to make sure God is at the heart of our worship – not shops, money making endeavours.
- Jesus can take the ordinary and turn it into the extraordinary
- Jesus is in control and will not be hurried in His plans
- Jesus was not quite the Messiah the Jews had thought that they were getting.