

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

JOHN 1:6-8

DISCUSSION 1: JOHN THE BAPTIST (BAPTIZER)

1. Read John 1:19-34; 3:22-36; Isa. 40:3-5 for more about John's ministry as a witness. (See the "For Further Study" section for additional verses on John.) What else do you know about John the Baptist from the Bible?
2. How would you describe the purpose or role of John's ministry?
3. Why is he an important part of the Biblical storyline and the ministry of Jesus?

DISCUSSION 2: WITNESS

1. Read John 1:7-8 again. What is his role as a witness, or what is the purpose of a witness? What are the differences between why John was sent and why Jesus was sent?
2. From the passages we've read in John (1:6-8, 19-34; 3:22-36), what are some things John says about John? In other words, what does he tell others about Jesus?
3. Jesus tells his followers they will be his witnesses (Acts 1:8; see "For Further Study" section for others verses in Acts about witness). What are ways you might better point others to Jesus or be a witness in your daily life? Are there any specific relationships or places where you're being a witness? How might this group together find ways to be a witness to who Jesus is and why he's worthy of following?

DISCUSSION 3: HUMILITY

1. John's ministry was about exalting Jesus, not himself. He summarized this when he said "He [Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Why is humility essential to exalting and following Jesus? In what ways do pride, fear of man, selfishness, and vanity get in the way?
2. What might it look like in your life to see Jesus increase and you decrease?
3. What are some challenges today to making less of ourselves? Where are you tempted to exalt yourself, make yourself the center, and prioritize people thinking well of you over pointing them to Jesus?
4. In light of this conversation, what are 1-2 things you want to do differently to see Jesus increase and you decrease?

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What does a witness do? How was John the Baptist a witness about Jesus? What are some ways we might be a witness about Jesus to friends, family, and neighbors?
2. Since not everyone believes in Jesus or knows him, they need to hear about who he is from us. What are some things you would tell someone about who Jesus is and why he's worth worshipping and following?
3. John said that Jesus must increase and he [John] must decrease. What does that mean? What are ways we can pursue humility and self-denial so we can put Jesus before ourselves?

APPLICATION

- **Individual:** Identify 1-2 ways this week you want to see Jesus increase and see yourself decrease through humility and worship. Share with another small group member, a spouse, or a friend what those actions steps are and then pray for and encourage one another as you seek to live it out.
- **Group:** Spend time praying together as a group for specific lost people in your life, as well as for open doors to be a witness of Christ to them. Consider incorporate time in your regularly small group gathering to share testimonies of how you came to Christ and who witnessed to you.
- **Group:** Come up with a few ideas for how your group might be witnesses together. This could include evangelism, outreach, serving together, hosting a meal, or getting involved in a compassion ministry. What are some ways you can build or deepen relationships among those in your community or neighborhood? How can you put yourself in places where unbelievers are for the sake of starting relationships or entering into meaningful conversation? How could you serve a group with the love of Jesus together?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- **John the Baptizer:** Matt. 3:1-12; 14:1-2; Luke 1:5-45, 57-80; 3:1-22; 7:18-23; John 1:19-34; 3:22-36; Isa. 40:3-5; Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6.
- **The Light:** John 3:19-21; 8:12-20; 12:35-37; Ps. 27:1; Ex. 13:17-22; Is. 42:6.
- **Witness in Acts:** Acts 1:8, 22; 2:32, 40; 3:15; 4:33; 13:31; 14:3, 17; 22:5, 20, 15; 26:16.
- **Humility:** Eph. 4:2; James 4:6-10; Luke 14:11; Prov. 11:2; Phil. 2:1-11; 1 Peter 5:5-11.
- "The Social Media Strategy of John the Baptist" by Stacy Reaach at thegospelcoalition.org.