

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

JOHN 4:43-54

DISCUSSION 1: ICE BREAKER

1. What was your most memorable or favorite New Year's Eve celebration? What made it so memorable?
2. How would you describe 2018 for you and your family in three words? What are some evidences of grace God showed you in the last year?
3. Does anyone have any New Year's resolutions or goals that they want to share with the group? What do hope to see God do in our church this year? (see "Application" section for further discussion)

DISCUSSION 2: SEEKING THE SIGNS

1. Read John 4:43-54. What are some observations you have about the text? Is there anything you think was surprising about this story?
2. Why do you think John inserts Jesus statement about honor in vs 44? What might that tell us about the nature of the "welcome" he was given when he arrived in Galilee?
3. How does Jesus respond to this desperate father in verse 48? Why do you think Jesus rebukes this official and the crowd that was with him? What is Jesus trying to correct?
4. Looking at the remainder of the passage, what are the indicators that this father no longer saw Jesus as a last resort but as his Lord? What makes you think his faith was authentic or not? What was the source of his faith?

DISCUSSION 3: SEEKING JESUS

1. Why is it easier to pray or come to Jesus out of desperation or fear? Why is desperation or fear not sufficient in producing authentic faith in Jesus? When we come to Jesus only out of desperation or to seek a sign, what does it say about the quality of our faith?
2. What are some unhealthy ways we seek Jesus, rather than coming with a heart of faith? What is healthy fear and desperation?
3. What does this story teach us about what Jesus desires to be true of all who follow him?
4. Why do you think John included this interaction with this father as one of his seven signs? What does this story in conjunction with the other narratives we've seen in John's gospel tell us about the message of Jesus and his character?
5. Pray together as a group that you would have a healthy desperation for Jesus this year that springs from a heart of faith and not selfishness.

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What some things that happened last year that we can thank God for as a family?
2. What do we want to do together as a family this year? What are some ways we as a family can honor God better with our schedules and time this year?
3. Read 1 Cor. 10:31 and discuss as a family what it means to glorify God in everything that we do.

APPLICATION

- **Group:** What are some things that you thought went well for your group in 2018 (i.e. group fellowship, attendance, prayer, spiritual growth, community outreach, discussions). What are some ideas you think would help your group foster biblical community in the new year? Pick one or two agreed upon goals for your group that are feasible for each member to strive in grace to accomplish. Revisit these goals at the first meeting for each month. Take some significant time at the end of your group discussion to pray for God to help you accomplish your group's goals for the New Year.
- **Individual:** Take some time to reflect personally on what God has done in your life in 2018, and what you hope He will do in 2019. Make a list of the ways God showed his grace and kindness towards you and then write down 2-3 areas of your life that you would like to grow in His grace. With any goals you plan to accomplish in the New Year make sure you write down why these things matter to God and how you plan to accomplish them. Use Scripture to help you evaluate your goals. Share your plan to grow in grace with a spouse or trusted friend to help you encourage you as the Holy Spirit grows you in grace.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

- **Seeking the Signs:** John 6:14; 6:26-33; 20:29-31
- **New Year's Resolutions:** I Cor. 10:31, I Thess. 4:3, Phil. 3:12-14, Phil. 2:12-13, Phil. 1:6
- **Prophet with No Honor:** Matt. 13:57, Mark 6:4, Luke 4:24