

John 12:19-36 Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Mike identified three different kinds of people in this text. The first group were the core of Jesus' followers (e.g. Andrew and Philip). When they attempt to arrange a meeting for some Greeks with Jesus, He responds by pointing out that the hour of His death had come. He also explains that if they want to live they must serve Jesus. If they want to serve Jesus they must follow Jesus, even unto self-denial and death. (vv. 23-26)

- A. Why do you think Jesus responds this way to the disciples in this situation?
- B. How does this apply to us today? How are we tempted to make following Jesus about making ourselves look better and enjoying special status as an "insider," i.e., the friend or associate of a someone important?
- C. Following Jesus is a process of humbly drawing closer Him and thus becoming more like Him. In what ways has Jesus been inviting you to walk closer with Him?
- D. In what ways would you have to humble and deny yourself in order to take this step and get closer to Jesus?

2. The next group was that crowd that was standing there and witnessed Jesus' statement and the Father's response in vv. 26-27. Even though the Father spoke for their benefit—that they might believe—they misheard Him. Some thought it was just thunder (a naturalist explanation). Others said that some spiritual being had spoken to Jesus, but didn't recognize it as the Father.

- A. There is a temptation for us to try and explain away the life of Jesus. The naturalist does it by denying all supernatural elements and just saying that it was a coincidence and there is some natural explanation for what happened.
 - 1) Where do we see this today in our own lives?
 - 2) How do you struggle with this?
- B. Another approach is to explain Jesus' life in terms of vague spirituality (e.g. enlightened teacher, a spiritual wise man, an angel or spirit, etc.), as

opposed to the one and only unique son of God who shows us the way to the Father.

1) In what ways are we tempted to do the same thing today and make Jesus one of many spiritually or morally insightful individuals or teachers?

2) How do you struggle with this?

C. Where in and in what ways do you need to take a clear stance on who Jesus is in your life?

3. Then there are the critics and cynics in the crowd who basically respond to Jesus by saying that His teaching doesn't line up with what they know and believe, and so they challenge him to explain Himself (vv. 34-36).

A. How does Jesus respond to them?

B. In what ways have you had to (or still have to) deal with skepticism in your own heart? What makes it difficult for you to believe and trust that Jesus is the truth?

C. What has God used in your life to help overcome your doubt and the need to have God reveal Himself on your terms and answer your questions?

4. As we prepare for Easter, what would it look like for you to take a step closer to Jesus in the next seven days?