

Don't forget to take attendance -Thank you!

- **How are you wired: Do you like a stage or prefer the crowd?**
- **Have you ever had a moment where someone else got credit for something you did? What was your reaction?**

These don't necessarily need to be major or serious in nature, they can be funny examples of when we wanted the credit for something. Parents can talk about Santa and the tension of the credit going to him instead of the parents who paid for the gifts.

As we continue our journey through the Gospel of John, we see a tension beginning to build between the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus. As Jesus' ministry grows, John the Baptist's followers become concerned with his status in the region beginning to change.

Have someone volunteer to read John 3:22-26

- **What are John's disciples concerned about?**

John's disciples are worried that people are choosing to go to Jesus instead of John, but there is definitely a sense of jealousy in their concern. You can imagine their frustration: the guy they have chosen to follow is now losing his status, and even though he is known as a baptizer, it is Jesus that people are now flocking to.

- **Can you think of a time when someone you knew was doing much better than you in their career, their marriage, their finances, etc. How did that make you feel? Did you have a desire to compete with that person?**

This can be a harder question to come up with a response on the spot, so come prepared with your own example to help the group begin to discuss this question. The truth is, we've all experienced this before, but taking a second to remember them can be helpful as we talk about comparison and humility.

Have someone volunteer to read John 3:27-30

- **What is John's response to their concern?**

John's response is not only humility, but a reminding to his followers of his ultimate purpose. Jesus' arrival and His increase in prominence is ultimately the goal of John's entire ministry.

- **What does it mean that "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven? What does that mean for us in our giftings?**

John is reminding his followers that his giftings are from God. Every time we are tempted to boast, we should be reminded where our talents, abilities, and gifts came from. We cannot boast in ourselves, without recognizing that God is responsible.

The desire for credit and renown is something that every person deals with (in different ways), yet sometimes the credit/adoration can be pushed upon you.

Have someone volunteer to read Acts 14:8-15

- **What are Paul and Barnabas doing? What is the people's response to their ability?**

Paul and Barnabas perform a miracle as they help a man regain the ability to walk. The people who witness this immediately choose to worship them as gods, because of what they've seen.

– **How do they respond to the people's worship of them?**

Paul and Barnabas do not simply try to timidly divert attention or praise to God, they are passionate in their dismissal of any praise and ferocious in their reminding that they are just humans who have been sent to tell others about God and His ability. There can be some interesting discussion about what that could look like in our lives. Not the tearing of clothes, but the active redirecting of praise back to God.

You may feel like you don't have the ability of Paul and Barnabas, or a literal stage that may tempt you to be prideful, but God has given you different areas of influence in your life where you have an opportunity to choose humbleness and make much of Jesus.

– **What are some platforms/areas of influence in your life?**

Help your group see that everyone has areas of influence in their lives, even if they feel like they don't have leadership roles at work or stages/platforms in their lives. It may be helpful to come up with some examples you can share. (We discussed social media being a platform many people have on the Leader Podcast)

– **What is a practical way you can make Jesus greater and yourself less this week?**

Help your group think through areas (work, school, group), as well as practical things they can do this week (prayer, reminding themselves, redirecting credit back to Jesus). Help your group see that John the Baptist's words were not only about making Jesus greater, but also making ourselves less.

We would love for you to help your group to develop some personal bible study habits during our study of the Gospel of John. One idea is to send your group a text/email/message every week with the verses for the upcoming small group discussion. Ask them to read it on their own and personally think through the following three questions.

This week

John 3:22-36

- What does this tell me about God?
- What does this tell me about people?
- Is there a next step for me to take because of this?

You can refer to these questions in group, but do not have to. The main purpose is to build the routine of reading and applying the Bible on their own.