Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 10:52 PM
Subject: Last Nite's Last MOB Session on the Gospel of John!

Last nite, we had the last MOB session on our study of the amazing Gospel of John!  John's gospel addresses--and answers--the most critical questions anyone could ask (and should ask!) concerning the identity (the person!) and work of Jesus Christ!  John makes it clear that how a person chooses to respond to these questions (and respond to them he must!) will determine his or her eternal destiny!

John made--well, actually, Jesus made!--His identity the central issue of his writings!  He begins "in the beginning" where the "Word," speaking of Jesus, "was with God and was God" (depicting the mystery of the "Godhead")--and then identifies Him (Jesus!) as the Creator of all things!  It was in this same "beginning" (according to Genesis 1) where "God" (plural) "created the heavens and the earth..." and decided to "make man in Our image"!  And so, this same Jesus who had a part in making man in His own image--"in the beginning"--was now "made flesh and dwelt among us"!  And John writes, in John 1:14, that "we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth!"

And so--just to get this straight--God created man "in His own image" in order that man could have life, and an eternal relationship with Him; and when that relationship was broken by sin, God (the Father!) sent His Son--"made in the likeness or image of man"--to "redeem" him from sin, restore that relationship, and give him "eternal life"--just like He purposed from the beginning!  Paul writes (in Philippines 2) that "although He existed in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking on the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of man!"  Wow!

Kostenberger--whose book has so beautifully complemented our study of John--observes that "the striking opening of John's gospel establishes a connection between God's act of creation through His spoken Word and His act of providing salvation through the incarnate Word, Jesus!"

John's purpose is writing his gospel is clear!  We are left with his resounding statement in John 20:30-31--which I don't think we'll ever forget!  That there were "many other signs that Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name!"  That word "believe," or some form of it, is used 98 times in John's gospel, including exhortations to believe that are interspersed with the miracles, or "signs," or the "I am" statements that John chose to include in his record.  And then of course, there's John 3:16, where John writes: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life!"

We have this message to share with our world!  And the gospel of John is the best place to go to get it right!  May we never forget the lessons we learned through our study together and be forever vigilant--and pro-active, as John was--in sharing the good news with others God brings into our lives!

May God bless you in your summer plans!  And we'll see you back at MOB in September, Lord willing!

Lowell