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Subj: Last Nite's MOB Session

Men--Last nite we did an "overview" of the Gospel of John from a theological perspective--and also looked at some of the ways (in our assigned chapters 13-21) in which Jesus "prepared" His disciples for what was to come, as He headed to the cross! We began with a reading of John 14:1-17 which touches on both these subjects.

John, at its core, is a book with a theological message which, according to Kostenberger, must be confronted! The writer John, near the end of his book, said he purposely selected the things he did "...so that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through His name." In his "prologue" (John 1:1-18), he identified Christ as the "Word" who was with God "at the beginning" of the world--and that He was God! And that "all things came into being through Him"! And, that He was "made flesh and dwelt among us"---and John testifies that "we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of God, full of grace and truth"!

Kostenberger calls it a "striking opening" to John's gospel which "establishes a connection between God's act of creation through His spoken word and His act of providing salvation through His incarnate word, Jesus!" It also speaks to some of the basic doctrines of the Christian faith--including the eternity of God, the deity of Christ, and His Incarnation and "substitutionary atonement." God sent His Son to become "flesh" (incarnated) so that He could go to the cross and become the "Lamb of God"--the ultimate sacrifice for sin! Paul says it this way in II Cor. 5:21: "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

And John makes it clear that Jesus is the only way to God, which makes His coming into the world crucial and "life-saving"--and adds a sense of urgency to the proclamation of the Gospel! John quotes the words of Jesus Himself, speaking to Thomas (that would be "doubting" Thomas!); "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me." Well, so much for those who think that all religions are the same and that there are many ways to God!

We ran into some other doctrinal truths also as we briefly looked at John 14, where Jesus was "preparing" His disciples for what was to come! In anticipation of the cross, He told them that He was "going to prepare a place for them" but that He would be "coming back" (doctrine of "eschatology" or "things to come"). Also, that He would "...ask the Father" and that He would give them "another Helper" who would "lead them into all truth" and "be with them forever"--speaking of the Holy Spirit. And thus we have a glimpse at the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of the Trinity (Father, Son, and now Holy Spirit), all of which we'll be getting into in greater detail in the weeks ahead!

Next week, as Kostenberger notes, we'll be embarking on a more detailed exploration of this rich book (i.e., the Gospel of John!) Lesson #4! So fasten your seat belts!

Thanks men, for your support and participation--including the food you all brought last nite for the rest of the MOBsters! And thanks, in particular, to Bob Pewitt who does so much to make our time together special!

May God bless your week!

Lowell Mininger