



WOODLAND HEIGHTS

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Questions Jesus Asked: Drawing Near to the Lord Part #7 – Whom Do You Seek?

Small Group Discussion Guide on John 18:1-11

Woodland Heights Christian Church Core Value Connection

This sermon on Mark 10:35-45 aligns with the core value of **Discipleship** at Woodland Heights Christian Church. Discipleship involves growing in faith by pursuing a deeper relationship with Christ, examining our hearts, and aligning our pursuits with His will.

The question Jesus asks in John 18:1-11 in the Garden of Gethsemane is simple: “Whom do you seek?” This question echoes through the ages, challenging us to examine what—or whom—we truly pursue in life. It reveals the Savior who seeks us first with relentless love, protecting His own and willingly embracing the Father's will. This profound encounter illustrates God's desire for us to surrender to Him, trust His power, rest in His protection, and follow His example, fostering spiritual growth and aligning with our church's mission to teach believers to live out Christ's principles in a transformative way.

Section #1 – ENCOUNTER

“Observing God’s Word”

Illustration: Imagine a moonlit garden on the edge of a valley, shadows dancing from flickering torches carried by a mob on a midnight mission. The air is thick with tension, the scent of olive trees mingling with the metallic tang of weapons.

In John 18, Jesus steps forward into this confrontation, not as a fugitive, but as the sovereign Lord, asking a question that pierces the darkness: “Whom do you seek?” As you read this passage, notice how His words reveal hearts, command authority, and fulfill divine purpose, like a king unveiling His identity amid betrayal.

Let’s start our study by anchoring ourselves in Scripture. Read John 18:1-11 (ESV) as a group, family, or an individual, letting God’s Word sink in. Picture the scene: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, facing betrayal yet stepping forward with divine confidence.

Core Questions

- What do you notice about Jesus’ words and actions in this story? Why is this relevant?
- What are key words, phrases, or themes that grab your attention in this text?
- What is the main lessons that you learn about the character of God from John 18:1-11?

Section #2 – EXPLORE

“Understanding the Passage and Sermon”

Let’s unpack the question of Jesus and the three lessons from the Garden of Gethsemane outlined in the message—Trust in the Power of Christ, Rest in the Lord’s Protection, and Follow the Example of Christ. Discuss these as a group or reflect on them as an individual.

Quote – “To seek God is to find Him; to seek anything else is to lose everything.” – **Augustine of Hippo**

- What does this quote teach us about our pursuits in life? Why is it an important lesson to remember?

Lesson #1 – Trust in the Power of Christ...True Victory is Found in Surrender to Him (v. 1-6)

Jesus, knowing all that would happen, steps forward and asks, “Whom do you seek?” His declaration, “I am he,” causes the mob to fall back, revealing His divine authority. The sermon highlights Jesus’ omniscience and willingness to surrender to God’s plan.

- How does Jesus’ foreknowledge and power encourage you in times of uncertainty?
- Have you ever experienced a moment where surrendering to Christ brought unexpected victory?
- In what ways does this lesson challenge you to trust Jesus’ power over your own efforts?

Quote – “The Lord reigns over all, even when the night seems darkest.” – **Charles Swindoll**

Lesson #2 – Rest in the Lord’s Protection...His Sacrifice Brings You Safety and Security (v. 7-9)

Jesus repeats the question and commands, “If you seek me, let these men go,” fulfilling His promise to lose none of those given to Him.

- What does this reveal about Jesus’ role as the Good Shepherd who protects His sheep?
- How can you rest in God’s protection during crises, knowing Jesus intercedes for you?
- What do you learn from the contrast of Judas’ pursuit of gain with Jesus’ selflessness?

Quote – “Christ’s love is not selfish; it seeks not its own, but the good of others.” – **John Stott**

Lesson #3 – Follow the Example of Christ...Seek God’s Will and Experience His Eternal Blessings (v. 10-11)

Peter strikes with a sword, but Jesus rebukes him, choosing to fulfill the will of the Father.

- Why is it significant that Jesus willingly accepts the Father’s will, even unto death?
- What does Peter’s action teach us about fighting battles with the wrong weapons?
- How can we follow Jesus’ example by seeking God’s will in our daily sacrifices?

Section #3 – EMBRACE

“Applying God’s Word”

Quote: “On Christ’s glory I fix my thoughts and desires.” – **John Owen**

Go deeper into the Word of God by applying what you’ve learned to your life today. Reflect on these action steps and discuss how you can live out the truths from John 18:1-11.

Personal Reflection

- **Examine Your Pursuits:** The sermon's illustrations of Howard Hughes or Chris McCandless challenge us to identify what we are truly seeking in life as our top priorities—success, security, self-reliance, or something else. Consider your top priorities in life and write down one area where you need to redirect your pursuit toward Christ more and take a step this week to surrender it to Him.
- **Rest in His Protection:** Reflect on a time when you felt vulnerable. How can Jesus' words, "Let these men go," remind you of His protective love? Spend time in prayer thanking Him for safeguarding you and ask for faith to rest in His security.
- **Follow His Example:** Inspired by Joshua Chamberlain's courage at Little Round Top, consider a "obstacle" God is calling you to be victorious over today—perhaps a sacrifice for others or obedience in hardship. Commit to one act of following God's will this week, such as serving someone in need or sharing the Gospel.

Memorize and Reflect: Memorize and Reflect: Memorize the sermon's memory verse, 1 Chronicles 16:11 (ESV): "Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His presence continually." Reflect on how continually seeking God transforms your path and share with the group how this verse inspires you.

Closing Challenge and Prayer

As a group, pray for one another to seek Christ above all else, just as He seeks us. Encourage each member to take at least one action step above and follow up next week to share how God worked through your obedience.

Consider participating in a Sunday School class, a Wednesday study, or invite someone new to join your small group to continue growing in faith together.