

Home Group study: week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## Jesus Christ: Dangerous Revolutionary

### 9: Trueness

'Trueness' is a strange word which we seldom hear these days. It is defined as: 'Faithfulness, loyalty, constancy. Also occasionally: integrity, honesty, justness.'

How does this differ from 'truthfulness'?

Can you think of anyone you've ever come across who fits that definition?

#### Read:

#### John 9: 1-23

In the chapters leading up to Chapter 9 we see the Pharisees getting more and more annoyed with Jesus and more and more determined to kill him.

- John 6: Jesus has fed the 5,000 (his first 'official' miracle).
- People are taking notice of him and his teaching is getting more extreme.
- In John 7 he's back preaching at the festival in Jerusalem: we read: 'no one would say anything publicly about him for fear of the leaders.'
- The Pharisees send the palace guard in to arrest Jesus, but he manages to preach again (v37). The Palace Guards are so impressed by him they potter back without having arrested him.
- His teaching continues to get more extreme till in John 8 58 he says 'Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am!' The Jews would recognise the 'I am' reference from Exodus 3; a defining point in their proud history where Moses has gone to the burning bush and discovered God speaking to him through it. Not surprisingly they were completely incensed by Jesus saying the same thing about himself.

#### Discovery

In the first five verses, in what ways does Jesus reflect the truth of who he is?

We think of cynicism and unbelief as something for our generation. As this passage progresses, how does it show that cynicism and unbelief may be deeper rooted in mankind?

If we'd been eyewitnesses, do you think we would have thought that the man had been healed, or that the man who claimed to be healed just looked like the blind man?

Which seems the more likely?

What do we make of what the Pharisees say in verse 16? Have a look at Exodus 20:8.

Was Jesus right to heal on the Sabbath? In the light of this Commandment, does the fact that Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath make him more true to himself, or less?

The Pharisees remain unconvinced and send for the man's parents; they still don't believe it is the same man. Why are they so determined not to believe he has been healed?

Why are the parents so non-committal in their reply to the Jews?

## **Understanding**

Realistically, do the parents have a choice as to whether or not to admit that Jesus has healed their son? Do we blame them for being so evasive in their response to the Jews? How might we react if we are called upon to testify about Jesus in a really hostile situation? What does Matthew 10: 19-20 teach us about the way we might react in such a situation? Does that give us comfort?

Now read John 9: 24-34. Contrast the man's response with that of his parents. How does the man show 'trueness'? He must have known the risk he was running, speaking to the Jews like that (NB by 'the Jews' John is meaning the Jewish leaders): why might he have been prepared to be so bold? Does his response to the Jewish leaders remind us of the way someone else spoke to them?

Notice how the Jews regard the reason for the man's blindness (v34), then contrast it with Jesus's view of it (verses 1-3).

What does this tell us about the attitude of the Jews towards the law?

What does this tell us about Jesus' approach to the law?

What does that mean for us 2,000 years later?

## **Application**

What can we learn from the way the man's parents dodged the Jewish leaders' questions and the way the man himself answers them?

Do we reflect the 'trueness' of Jesus in the way we stand up for the Gospel, or are we more inclined to avoid standing up for truth?

Why do we find it so hard to make that stand?