



JOHN 3:22-36

INTRODUCTION

Discuss together the struggle that we often have to hand over a role or a position to someone else.

What does it feel like to see someone else flourishing in a role that you may have once had, and actually growing what it is that you may have started.

What is it about our nature that makes it a struggle to wholeheartedly rejoice at someone else's success in a role we once held?

If no one feels it's a problem, talk about the joy you may have felt at seeing someone do well at something you handed on to them.

BIBLE

Read through John 3:22-36.

This passage is the final episode of John the Baptist in the Gospel of John. The text tells us that these events took place before John had been put in prison (v24). Think about what the implications of this statement might be. If prison is the result of proclaiming and pointing to the Messiah, what might that mean for the Messiah himself?

1. *Why might John's disciples be somewhat concerned that Jesus and his disciples are baptising more people than John? (v26)*
2. *Look at John's first comment (v27). What do you think John means by it? How does it inform John's response, knowing that anything he has, or Jesus has, has not come from themselves, but from God (which is what he means by "from heaven")?*
3. *John says his joy is complete, and that he has finished his task. What do you think that task was, given his analogy with the bridegroom and the friend of the bridegroom?*
4. *"He must increase, but I must decrease" (v30) John says this about his public ministry in the face of the appearance of Jesus on the scene. But there's a much wider implication for us. This attitude frames what it means to be a maturing disciple of Jesus Christ. How does that look in our lives today. Spend a good amount of time in the group discussing what this pattern looks like in our own lives, and in the life of the church.*
5. *What might it look like in our lives if we do not take on this attitude? We live in a culture that tells us that our aim is "You Do You", which sounds like us increasing! What dangers do we face if we run our "I increase project?" How does our culture play this out in our city of Perth today?*
6. *John the Gospel writer points out that it is a category error to assume that Jesus is just a bit better than John. He wants us to know that Jesus comes from above (v31) in contrast to those who come from below (the rest of us!) How does having a "big" view of Jesus transform how we approach the changes he is calling for in our discipleship?*
7. *Read v36. What do you think it means to have eternal life "now" (where and when does it begin and what are its attributes?). What do you think it means for God's wrath to remain on someone? What is the test case for whether we have eternal life or face God's wrath?*

PRAY

Think through the ways we don't want to "decrease" to allow Jesus to "increase". Pray through these issues and ask help from the group so that each of us will grow to be more like Jesus, and will put aside our selfish goals.