

II. Group discussion *Each number below includes a set of questions that relate to the scripture text. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”*

Read John 1:1-14 aloud.

1. Why do you think God became a man? How would you explain it to a 10-year old?

2. What do verses 1-4 say about the “Word”?
There since the beginning, with God, was/is God.

How do these first few verses remind you of Genesis 1?
Read Gen. 1:1-3, 26. “God said...” = words.

By the end of verse 14, what do we know about the Word?
The Word/creator/God became human and humans could see God's glory in him. But most people did not recognize or receive him.

Who or what was the “Word”?

3. A God who becomes human.
Which of the world religions have a concept of a god becoming a man?
None. Ancient Greek gods disguised themselves as humans, but it was self-serving and only temporary. Some religions suggest that humans can become gods, or that we are fallen gods. That's nothing like Jesus.

How easy is it to imagine a god becoming human? Why?

What does it tell you about God to know that he became human?
*He is a relational being – not a force or concept.
He cares about us.
He understands what we go through (except for guilt).*

4. What does it say about our value that God became human?
We are valuable. We are capable of relationship with God.

5. How did the world respond to the Word, the creator (10-11)?
He came to his own, but his own did not receive him.

What are some ways that the world did “not receive” the Word?

What are some ways that you have rejected God in the past?

6. What happens to people who receive the Word?
12 – to those who believed, he gave the right to become God's children.

7. A theology of bodies. (We all have them – bodies & theologies!)
a. Some worship their bodies. How could our bodies take first place in our lives (be an idol)? How are we overly-focused on bodies?
Focused on appearance, nutrition, exercise, being driven by our appetites. Judge others based on their appearance.

b. Some see bodies in a negative way, like they are evil. What are some problems that come from having a body?
*Limited capabilities (can't do what others do, can't be two places at once).
Sickness & pain & aging. Bodies can be embarrassing (odors, waste, warts & blemishes). We get hungry & tired.*

In what ways is it hard to imagine Jesus as a real man?
Do you think his knee bled when he scraped it? Did he play sports or games? Did he get sick? Do you think he noticed pretty girls?

c. If Jesus had a body, yet was still full of God's glory, how could that shape our perspective on our bodies?
Our bodies are neither divine nor evil. They are made to glorify God.

† **The big question** *If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.*

Today's sermon and LG guide suggest that God loves being with his people. How could you make your life more inviting for God to dwell within you?
God is holy, so sin has absolutely no place in his presence.

III. Other resources

The point – Make room for God in your life. He delights in being with you, and you will find delight in being with him.

Prayer ideas

Invite God to live within each of our lives.

Thank God for becoming human.

Pray for someone who needs to recognize and appreciate God's presence.

Ask God to guide our congregation through the process of discerning whom he has prepared to preach at College Hills.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Finding light in a surprising place.

Supplies: Pliers, 2 wintergreen mints per kid (packs of 20 available on the LG table), a completely dark room, trash can.

Read John 1:1-6 aloud.

Who was the Word? *Jesus.*

Who was the light of the world? *Jesus.*

Read John 1:10-11 aloud.

What are some things these verses say about Jesus?

With God from the beginning, created the world, came into the world.

How did the world respond to Jesus?

Did not understand him, would not receive him, put him to death.

Why was it hard to see that Jesus was the light of the world?

Who believes that I can make light out of a mint? *Hold up a mint.*

Take kids into dark room, squeeze mint with pliers. There will be a glow when you crush the mint. Let each kid try, then eat extra mints.

How is this mint with light in it like our lives?

LIFE Group Guide

John 1—God with us

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme: **God delights in being with his people.**

Our guest speaker for Homecoming on September 23 is Jason Bybee, and his message is based on John 1 – the God who dwells among his people. Christianity is the only world religion where God loves people so much that he would join us and even suffer for us.

Remember that groups will meet next Sunday night as well.

Service opportunity for LIFE groups –

Habitat for Humanity is looking for groups to help with their Fall build. They need 20 adult volunteers and 30 sack lunches every Saturday this fall. Would you help? This would be a great opportunity to help someone and build teamwork within your group. They need workers THIS SATURDAY, September 29!!! Contact Greg Smith at 449-7439 for info.

BTW, College Hills will do a spring build for Habitat, so if you can't get a fall date, you might schedule a spring date.

Leadership tip: Remember to meet privately with God. Quiet prayer times will calm your spirit, strengthen your faith, and prepare you to minister to your group. If your schedule is like mine, you need to block off times for time alone with God.

I. Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ What is your favorite kind of pie?
- ❖ When were you in the best physical shape of your life?
- ❖ What food does not agree with your digestion?
For groups who are comfortable with one another!