

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The Upside Down Guide to Life:

Seeking the Seekers

John 12:20-36

April 2nd, 2006 (the 5th Sunday in Lent)

Warm-Up: Os Guinness defines a seeker as “someone for whom life, or a part of life has become a point of wonder, a question, a problem, and irritation. It happens so intensely, so persistently, that a sense of need consumes them and launches them on a quest.” Has there ever been a time in your life when that described you? (Perhaps you feel like a seeker right now). If not, do you know someone who qualifies as a seeker? Describe what that looks like – either in your life or in someone else’s life?

1. Read John 12:12-19 to understand the context. Imagine the Greek seekers in that crowd on that day. What would have fascinated them about Jesus?
2. Briefly read John 12:20-36 (don’t get bogged down in details at this point). Did Jesus answer their request or not?
3. What is the point of verse 24? Remember Jesus is applying this to his own life first, so what is he saying about his life and mission? (You can also read John 10:11, 14, 17-18 and John 15:13).
4. What did Matt mean when he talked about little “dyings” that we must face everyday? Here’s a scary question not for the faint of heart: Can you name one specific example of where God is calling you to die to self?
5. What are the promises from Jesus in verses 24-26?
6. Compare John 12:27 with Mark 14:32-40. What else do you notice about Jesus’ agony in the Garden?
7. In talking about suffering Matt quoted his friend Jay who said, “*When my wife got cancer, our friend Jay, a crusty guy who used to own the vacuum repair shop in town, looked me in the eye and then he exploded with anger and said, “Cancer, that bleepety-bleep disease killed my father. I hate that **** disease.” On one level, that’s a very Christian statement. Do you agree or disagree with Jay’s theology?*
8. Read verse 32. Recall that the word Jesus used for “draw” was also used for hauling nets or dragging criminals to court. When have you felt drawn by God? Is there any way that you feel that God is drawing you at this point in your life? How does it feel to have God drawing you?
9. Matt concluded by saying, *You see, this passage – which talks about dying to self and walking through suffering – is really about grabbing life. That’s the promise Jesus gives in John 10:10. Why not receive all that God has to offer you? Why do we settle for less than God’s best? Why not abolish petty living? Why not shoot for the best – God’s offer of life? Why not pour out my life so others can live? I’d be a fool to settle for anything less.* How can you grab on to the life in this passage from Jesus?