

CHOSEN.

DIGGING DEEPER

AT THE END OF MY ROPE

MARCH 19

When Jesus showed up in people's lives in the Gospels, something shifted. The same is true today. When we radically encounter who God really is, in the greatest way possible, nothing is ever the same. God will stop at nothing to show you that you are chosen like he did with a religious leader at the end of his religious rope. God cares more about heart transformation than behavior modification.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be "religious"? Do you view religion in a positive or negative light? Do you view yourself as a religious person? Why or why not?
2. Read **John 3:1-21** and answer the following questions:
 - Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):
 - Who is talking?
 - What is the circumstance?
 - Any repeated phrases?
 - What surprised you?
 - What stood out to you?
 - Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?):
 - What questions do you have?
 - Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences - what are the main points?
 - What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this?
 - What do you learn about yourself and your choices?
 - Now make some applications (what's my response?):
 - How do you respond to what you are reading?
 - How does this apply to your life?
 - What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
 - Who could you share this with for the sake of encouragement?
3. Read **James 1:22-27**.
 - What kind of religion does God desire?
 - Is this how you defined religion in the first question?
4. If you are a follower of Jesus, how do you view your relationship with Him? Do you try to earn His love with your deeds or are your good works an overflow of your love for Him and His love for you? How might you move deeper into the latter?
 - If you do not yet follow Jesus, what is He inviting you to through the story of Nicodemus?

5. What tangible needs of your neighbors could you fill today as a response of all that you have received in Jesus?
6. End in prayer, asking that you might know the love of Christ even more that you might make it known to those God has placed around you.

KEY SCRIPTURE

John 3:1-21 Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.” Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked. “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

James 1:22-27 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do. Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Hey, families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

THIS WEEK

This week, kids hear about how Jesus healed a blind man.

- THE BIBLE: Jesus changes how we see things.
- THE BIG IDEA: John 9

ASK THIS

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't, "So . . . how was church?"

- How do you know God is with you even though you can't see God?
- What does it mean to live in the light and not darkness?

REMEMBER THIS

This month, your kids are memorizing the Bible verse

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV), in case you want to work on them together.

EC: "The old has gone, the new is here!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

Elem: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

NEXT WEEK

Next week, kids will hear about the time Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

