



WHAT IF JESUS WAS SERIOUS

DIGGING DEEPER

CHRISTIANS & CULTURE

OCTOBER 15

If Jesus was serious, then transforming our world happens one heart at a time.

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. How do you perceive the relationship between Christians and culture? What do you think that relationship should look like?
2. Read **Matthew 5:13-16**.
 - A. Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):
 - What do you notice and what are you curious about?
 - B. Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)
 - What do you learn about God?
 - What do you learn about humanity?
 - What does it mean to be salt and light in the world?
 - C. Now make some applications (what's my response?)
 - How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
 - What should be our response to this passage?
3. Read **Matthew 5:17-20** and **Matthew 22:34-40**.
 - When Jesus says the "Law in the Prophets", He is describing the entire Hebrew Scriptures- their Bible. How would you describe Jesus' view of the Bible?
 - What is Jesus' connection to the Bible according to Him?
 - Dig into verse 20. Pharisees were known for being flawless when it came to observing the law. Knowing the kinds of people Jesus said the Kingdom is for, how is it possible to exceed the Pharisees when it comes to righteousness? What is Jesus really after?
4. How do you view the Bible? Do you consider it to have ultimate authority in your life or do you view it as a suggestion? Or something else?
 - How seriously does Jesus expect us to treat the Bible?
 - Check your heart, is there anything getting in your way of submitting to God's word completely in your life?
5. How are you being salt and light in the world?
 - Are you standing out in the way you live your life (your values, how you treat others, your ethics)? Or, have you become complacent in your beliefs, allowing the ideas and ideologies of the culture to sweep you away?

- Or are you skeptical? Maybe you believe in Jesus, but you don't want your life to change (ex, "I know God wants me to be generous, but I earned this money, so I'll do what I want with it.." I know what the Bible says, but it's fun to gossip about my boss behind her back" etc.)?
- The church (collective) is called to be salt and light in the world, showing the world truly what God is like. How are you contributing to the saltiness and brightness of God's Kingdom? How are you diluting it or dimming it? What next step can you take toward greater obedience to Jesus' call here?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:13-16 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:17-20 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 22:34-40 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

PRAYER

Spend time praying for the church. We are the hope of a dying world coming into the Kingdom. Pray for the church to flavor the world with God's love and grace and to be a beacon of light, displaying who God is in the way we live. Repent of ways we have failed to be this to the world. Pray for the Israeli-Palestine conflict, that God's Kingdom would break through there and bring peace.

TAKE A NEXT STEP

1. Consider thoughtfully reading or listening through the whole Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) weekly throughout the series.
2. Share with someone your next step toward greater obedience to Jesus and ask for prayer and accountability in this area. Remember, we are not salt and light on our own, but together!



FOR THE PARENTS

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

All month long we are going to be talking about how Jesus defeated sin.

THE BIBLE: Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

THE MESSAGE: Cain didn't feel happy when he disobeyed God. And Cain got angry when God tried to correct him. He didn't want to do what was right. In the end, Cain was even unhappier than when he first did wrong. But we don't have to be that way. We can learn from our mistakes and we can choose to obey God instead of sin.

THE BIG IDEA: Jesus defeated sin for us!

ASK THIS

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

- **God wants us to give Him our best. What are some ways you can make sure you give God your all?**

REMEMBER THIS

Getting angry is not a sin. It's what we choose to do with that anger that can cause it to turn into a sin. We will always have a lot of emotions. But God helps us deal with what we are feeling in a healthy way so we don't choose to sin. And if you ever find it hard to choose to do what is right when you are angry, remember to reach out to Jesus to help you win over sin! We don't have to be ruled by our emotions when we have Jesus on our side.

NEXT WEEK

Next week, we'll explore the story of Noah and see how the people turned so far from God that He had to do something about it.

