

Small Group Discussion Questions cont...

5. Are the priorities of a devoted Christ-follower any different than those of a non-believer
6. What should the priorities of a devoted Christ-follower look like? Can you try to number them? What is first, what is next, and so on...
7. How can we live against the flow of our culture? Did Jesus give us any instructions either spoken or exemplary that might help? (Matthew 5 is a good reference again. Also Matthew 6: 5-15. Mark 1:35, Mark 2:13, 3:7 – Jesus is probably getting away to pray when the crowds find him, Mark 6: 45-46, Luke 6:12, Luke 9: 18, 29, Luke 11: 1-4, others?) What is Jesus doing in these passages?
8. Prayer is foundational to Jesus. Do you think it is truly foundational to the church or is it often all but over-looked? How about in your personal life?
9. What can we do to make prayer more a part of our lives? (Hint: The answer to this question is similar to the answer to other questions like, “What would it take for you to get in shape, or stay true to a diet...”)
10. Close by praying the prayer that Jesus taught in Luke 11: 1-4. Only as you pray it, stop after every phrase, consider what Jesus said, think about it deeply, meditate on it, listen for God’s still small voice, then continue to the next phrase.

“Against the Current”

Colossians 2: 6-8, 20-23 and Luke 11: 1-13
Sunday, July 25, 2010

Remember the joy of swimming at the beach or floating down a lazy river in a tube? How pleasant and effortless *and* how quickly we move as we go with the flow. With that image in mind, consider that our lives can go with the flow, too. It’s easy, maybe even effortless, but does it naturally bring us closer to God or further from Him?

I. The flow of Culture is _____

- TV, Schools, Work Place, Athletes (Tiger Woods most popular athlete in the world)
- Not a new problem, scripture demonstrates
- Idolatry, selfish sin, kings and kingdoms, injustice, revelry, adultery
- Not just outside the church, it creeps in here, too
- George Barna’s research suggests that in many areas, the church is statistically no different than the culture.
- Are we 6 ½ days secular, ½ day sacred? Is this God’s design for us?
- “The World” – Biblical code word for Cultural Decadence
 - Jn 1:10 – The World did not know Jesus
 - 8: 23 – Jesus declares that he is not of this world
 - 15:19 – Jesus says he has saved us out of this world
 - Acts 17: 31 describes when Jesus will come and judge the world
 - 2 Cor. 10: 2-3 – We live in the world, yet we must be different from it
 - I Peter 1 and 2 – we must live as aliens and strangers in this world
 - I Jn. 2:15 – if anyone loves the world, the love of God is not in him

II. The Jesus Way is Against the _____

- Mangers and virgin girls, hamlets and shepherds signal the difference
- Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 and 6, Christ's Manifesto
- As Jesus was, so we must be
 - Core values must differ dramatically from the world
 - Relationship with Jesus as Priority One, not optional, not casual
 - Life and work of the church as vital to your life, not occasional
 - We are God's instrument for the salvation of the World
- Not just for preachers and "Super Christians"
- Colossian Church had known it and were slipping back into worldliness
- How can we live like this? It seems impossible!

III. Prayer gives us the Strength to _____

- Look at Jesus' pattern (oracao) pray then do, pray then do, etc....
- Prayer, then, is the foundational act of Christ and the fundamental action of Christianity (Add On vs. Tap Root)
- How Do I Pray like Jesus?
- He taught us (Luke 11: 1-14)
- Pray these words
- Think on them, meditate on them, listen for the Spirit of God to direct your thoughts, respond
- Use this method with other scriptures
- Drop your agenda and list, and tune in to Jesus' agenda
- The "Everyday Voice" of God is his Word
- Focus on what God is saying to you about you, rather than getting stuff from him

Praying Jesus Prayers anchors and empowers us to go against the current. To begin this would begin a Christian Revolution.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Take a minute or two and describe to those around you how things have changed in the world since you were a kid.
2. Imagine you could take an outsider's view of your day today. What if it were all videotaped and then shown back to you. Is there anything in your day today that might distinguish you as a follower of Jesus? Would there be anything in a week's worth of video?
3. Discuss how important it is to be different than the world around us, then discuss how important it is to be like the world around us. When you are done, take a look at these verses:
 - Jn 1:10 – The World did not know Jesus
 - 8:23 – Jesus declares that he is not of this world
 - 15:19 – Jesus says he has saved us out of this world
 - Acts 17:31 – describes when Jesus will come and judge the world
 - 2 Cor. 10: 2-3 – We live in the world, yet we must be different from it
 - I Peter 1 and 2 – we must live as aliens and strangers in this world
 - I Jn. 2: 15 – if anyone loves the world, the love of God is not in him
 - Colossians 2: 6-8, 20-23
4. Think about what you remember of the story of Jesus. Was he like the culture around him? In what ways? And how was he different than the culture around him? (For some examples take a look at Matthew 5)