



study questions



Use these questions in your community group time to dig deeper and discover how you can apply today's message to everyday life.

INTRODUCTION

If there is something or someone more out there; if there is a Creator as Christians believe and the Bible teaches; if there is a supernatural realm, then we are obligated to bow the knee to that Someone. That's what happens in the face of great power and authority.

One of the greatest marks of our time is a resistance, and sometimes out and out rebellion, against authority. If that is true, the heart of the struggle between culture and faith, as well as the struggle in the heart of every person, all comes down to this: If there really is a supernatural Creator out there, then I'm going to have to submit to his authority.

We almost need a miraculous inner change to accept that. Those moments often happen in places and people we least expect.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Looking back over your childhood, and growing up, would you say you were born a compliant person or someone who feels the need to push the edges of authority?
2. **Read Matthew 8:1-13 together.**
 - a. If you've served in the military or have been in law enforcement, share with your group your insights on the perspective of this centurion.
 - b. How do you see the two stories of the healing of the leper and the centurion's servant? [Why do you think Matthew links them together?]
 - c. How is God pictured here? Put a word on it and explain your choice (i.e. – communicator, authoritarian, comforter, etc.)
 - d. Why do you think this Roman centurion and the Jewish people had different views of Jesus' right to do what he did? Why do we?
3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said this:
...how wrong it is to use God as a stop-gap for the incompleteness of our knowledge. If in fact the frontiers of knowledge are being pushed further and further back (and that is bound to be the case), then God is being pushed back with them, and is therefore continually in retreat. We are to find God in what we know, not in what we don't know.
 - a. What do you think Bonhoeffer meant? Does his warning still apply today?
4. **Now read Matthew 28: 16-18 together.**
 - a. These are among the last words Jesus said before he ascended. Why do you think it was so important for him to remind his disciples of this authority at the end? Surely he'd told them many times over the 3 years he spent with them.
 - b. Does anything about his statement remind you of your relationship with him?
 - c. What steps do you need to take this week to apply that to your life?
5. How did the "5 minute challenge" go last week? Share it with your group.
6. How can the people of your group be praying for you this week, so that you can "fall in awe" with Jesus all over again?

MOVING FORWARD

"If there is something more out there, what are we going to do if we find it?" – That has been the question and struggle of humankind for all of history. But he's communicated to us and shown us how to find him and what to do when we do. He's a loving, healing God, full of grace and truth. Move forward and lean into him a little bit more this week – and be sure to give yourself time to reflect on what you find.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Jesus: "...surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:20