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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

The juice goes out of Christianity when it becomes too based on faith rather than on living like Jesus or seeing the world as Jesus saw it. —Steve Jobs

If you're a follower of Jesus, nonbelievers expect you to act like Jesus. They expect you to care about and value the things that Jesus cared about and valued. They judge your likeness to Jesus largely on the way you react and respond to people outside the faith. And you know what? They're right to do so.

On the other hand, Jesus says to live for his kingdom and to have his view of the world that doing so brings with it. Sometimes that means making judgment calls about right and wrong. Then there is the question of all the Bible passages that talk about loving one another inside the church by confronting sin.

What is a Jesus-follower to do? Jesus comes to the rescue with clear and practical teaching.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a time when someone at work, in your family, or at church held you accountable. How did it help you grow?
2. Read **Matthew 7:1-12** together. Do you think this is all about the same subject?
 - a. In a couple of words, what is it about?
 - b. What do you think Jesus is saying about a Christian's behavior in **v. 3-5**? Do you find this comfortable or uncomfortable? Is that a good thing or bad?
 - c. What do you think Jesus is say in **v. 6**?
3. Read **1 Corinthians 5:9-12** together. How does this passage challenge your assumptions about what the Bible says regarding judging others? How does it square with **Matthew 7:1-2**?
4. Read **Matthew 7:7-12** together again. How does this help you have a *kingdom* view of the behavior of others? How about your own behavior?
5. If you're a follower of Jesus, why is it so difficult to not judge nonbelievers?
6. What is most uncomfortable about holding other followers of Jesus accountable for their behavior? How do you know when it's your duty to do so and when it's just your opinion that is bothering you?
7. Is there a nonbeliever whose behavior you tend to judge? What can you do to put aside judgment and love that person the way Jesus commands?
8. How can your group pray for you as you seek to live a Jesus-style non-judgmental life this week?

MOVING FORWARD

When we judge nonbelievers, we lose our influence. Can you imagine where we'd be if we'd never abandoned love as our primary influence? Let's decide together that we're going to work to love one another better without judging outsiders.

PRAYER

So in ever thing, do to others what you would have them do to you... Matthew 7:12