

“Do I have something in my eye??”

A Personal or Small Group Experience

Two of the most common reasons that I have heard for people not attending church are 1) the church is greedy and money hungry, and 2) the church is full of hypocrites. Unfortunately, one or two bad experiences can sour Christianity for people. Usually, there are much deeper issues related to lifestyle, control, or authority that get in a person's way from following Jesus Christ, but money and hypocrisy become the easy scapegoats.

Hypocrisy is defined as:

1. The practice of professing beliefs, feelings, or virtues that one does not hold or possess;
2. An act or instance of such falseness.

Jesus continually challenged the religious leaders in their hypocrisy and the way they practiced religion. It became purely about following rigid instructions and performing rituals. They lost the heart of the law and what it truly meant to be a part of God's people. Many of them loved to be seen in public as the religious elite and held the Jewish people to standards they were unwilling to uphold.

In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, He addresses this issue. Read and discuss Matthew 7:1-5. In what ways have you been judged? How have you judged other people? Why do you judge other people?

Typically, judging those around you stems from a deep insecurity and need to be seen in a more favorable light. Judging those around you or participating in gossip gives you a sense of power and elevates you over the person you are degrading. Matthew 7 asserts that we have no right to judge someone around us until we remove the sin in our life. Wow, what a humbling passage!

When we understand the Christian story, it should humble us and remove any feeling of superiority or the right to judge. Read through and discuss Ephesians 2:1-10.

What does it mean to be 'dead in your transgressions and sins'? Reread verse 3. What does this tell us that all humanity shares? What does this mean?

Focus on verses 8-10. This is a core verse that explains the uniqueness of Christianity. Define and discuss the concept of grace. Has grace impacted your life and perspective?

Christianity is the only religion in the world that stands upon grace. It can be easy at times to forget that I was dead in my sins. Daily, we must humble ourselves and have the attitude that 'I am in just as much need of God's grace as anyone I will ever look eyes with'. As a Christ follower, we are called to set down our judgmental eyes and respond with a humble and grateful heart for what God has done.

Read Micah 6:8 and spend time praying through whatever God has laid on your heart through this study. For some, it might be a time of confession; others may pray to truly understand grace. Pray that the attitude of your heart will be purified and that you will view the world through the eyes of one that has received God's grace. Pray that you can boldly embody grace as a deployed Christ follower to those you encounter each day.

DEPLOYED!

“Connecting With God” Weekly Guide

This booklet is a resource to help you “Connect with God” this week. He deeply desires ongoing personal connection with you. You are that important to Him.

This Page has some scripture verses for you to meditate on each day this week. Notice the helpful hints section – these are great things to consider when personally engaging with God through His Word.

The Center Pages contain the notes and outline for the message given on Sunday. The message is also available as an audio download from www.pointofgracechurch.org

The Back Page has a study written specifically for a small group of people or an individual to drill down deeper into a particular aspect of the week's theme. Small groups can review memorable points of the week's message and then work through the study concluding with a time of prayer.

Scripture & Meditation Guide this week!

Helpful Hints:

- 1) Find a quiet place along with 15-20 minutes!
- 2) Focus on God for a few moments asking His Spirit to speak to your heart!
- 3) Listen to Him by reading a section of scripture then rereading it several times, dwelling on “words and phrases” which grab your heart's attention. Ask God, “What do You want me to hear?” “Why this word at this time?” “How are You inviting me to respond?”
- 4) Pray everything that is on your heart and mind as you are ready!
Worship Him, Bless Him, Thank Him, Ask Him, Trust Him

Enjoy these verses and your time with Him!

Monday: Acts 15:1-35

Tuesday: John 8:1-11

Wednesday: Ephesians 2:1-10

Thursday: Acts 10

Friday: John 14:15-31

Saturday: Colossians 2:6-15