

This document contains all discussion questions including the series “James: Authentic Faith”, “Christmas Time is Here”, The Lord’s Prayer”, and stand alone sermons with most recent at top. We invite you to review and discuss.

Discussion Questions

James 1:19-27

January 22, 2023

Think of the last time you got angry. What was the circumstance that prompted your anger?

Read James 1:19. What do you think would happen if we did what James recommends here?

Read James 1:20 and Ephesians 4:26. Is it wrong to get angry? Why or why not?

Read James 1:21. How do we get rid of moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent?

Read James 1:22. What are some ways that people can deceive themselves?

Read James 1:23-24. How does this passage describe people who do not obey God’s word?

Read James 1:25. How does God bless those who study and obey his Word?

Read James 1:26-27. What is the contrast here?

How can you put into practice religion that is “pure and faultless”?

How does the world pressure us to disobey God’s Word?

List some practical ways to protect yourself from the world’s influence.

Discussion Questions

James 1:13-18

January 15

What victory or challenge have you experienced recently?

Read James 1:13. What are some excuses that people give for yielding to temptation?

Read John 8:44. What do you learn about evil from this verse?

Read Genesis 3:1-5. What was wrong with what the serpent said?

Read James 1:14. Why are we tempted?

Read James 1:15. List the results of continually giving in to sin.

Read James 1:16 and Galatians 6:7. What are we not to be deceived about?

Read James 1:17. In what ways have you received good gifts from God?

Read James 1:18. How has God set us free from sin and temptation?

How has the testimony of others helped you in your struggle with sin?

Discussion Questions

January 8

What is a favorite movie or book of yours? What do you like about it?

Read James 1:5. How does a person gain wisdom? What does this verse teach you about God?

Read James 1:6. Is it wrong to doubt? Why or why not?

Read James 1:7-8. Who should not expect to receive anything from God? Why?

Read James 1:9. Why can believers in humble circumstances take pride in their high position? (See James 4:10)

Read James 1:10-11. Is wealth bad? What is the take-away?

Read James 1:12. How has God brought good into your life through the trials you have experienced?

Has your relationship to God changed as you have gone through these trials?

Describe a time when God's wisdom helped you through a problem.

Discussion Questions

January 1

What is our typical response when suffering/trials/persecution lands in our life?

When was the last time you had to endure suffering/trials/persecution?

How did you handle it?

Name a time when someone else was able to encourage you or come alongside you during a time like this think of their name.

Has that same person lived through suffering/trials, etc.

Has there ever been a time when you've had the opportunity to come alongside someone while they're in a season of trials and suffering?

What are some ways we can stop and follow the instructions in Romans 12:12?

Discussion Questions

December 24 – Christmas Eve no discussion questions (no service due to inclement weather)

Discussion Questions

December 18

What is your favorite Christmas movie?

Read Luke 1:35. The language is similar to the original creation account in Genesis 1:2.

Why is the virgin birth important?

Larry King, the famous talk show host was once asked, "What is the one question you would ask Jesus?" Larry responded, "I would ask Him if He indeed was virgin born, because the answer would define history for me."

Read Luke 1:36-37. Why does the angel mention this?

Read Luke 1:38. How does Mary respond to what the angel told her?

Read Luke 1:39-45. What effect did Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth have on her?

Read Luke 1:46-48. What does Mary give praise to God for?

Read Luke 1:49-50. According to these verses, why can we praise God?

Read Luke 1:51-53. We can praise God because He is just. What does His justice look like?

Read Luke 1:54-56. What attribute of God is described here? How has God demonstrated this attribute to you?

Discussion Questions
December 11

If you could celebrate Christmas anywhere, where would it be?

Read Matthew 1:18-19. What was the problem Joseph faced?

Read Matthew 1:20-21. Why did the angel appear to Joseph?

Note - "Jesus" means "savior" or "deliverer." What does this tell you about Jesus?

Read Matthew 1:22-23 and Isaiah 7:14. What is the meaning of this prophecy?

Note – the word used in Isaiah is "gyne," which means "a young woman." Matthew actually changes the word and uses another word - "parthenos" - which means a literal "virgin." This is powerful textual evidence of the authenticity of the virgin birth.

"Immanuel" – means "God with us." Why do you think this title is significant?

Read Matthew 2:24-25. "God did not make a mistake in choosing Joseph as the step-father of Jesus." What evidences of Joseph's character do you notice in this passage?

Discussion Questions
December 4

Do you sometimes feel like you lack assurance and security in your walk with God?
Why?

Read 1 John 3:1.

How does God view your relationship to Him?

What are some of the consequences of this relationship?

Read Hebrews 10:14.

Because of the cross, what is your standing before God?

How can your standing before God impact your walk with Him?

Read Matthew 7:21-23.

If the Devil cannot get us into the ditch of no assurance or a wavering assurance, he would love to get us into the ditch of false assurance!

What does a false assurance look like?

How can we avoid it?

Read John 5:24.

What does it mean to have crossed over from death to life?

How can this impact our walk with God?

Read John 17:3.

Why is knowing God considered eternal life?

Read Isaiah 49:15-16.

As you read this passage, what thoughts do you have about God?

Why does God give you genuine assurance and security in Him?

What are His purposes for doing this?

Spend time praising our Heavenly Father that He counts us as His precious daughters and sons!

Also, spend time embracing your status as His beloved son or daughter!

Discussion Questions
November 27

Share a time when you felt close to God.

Matthew 6:13b “For Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

The Lord’s Prayer begins and ends with praise. Why do you think that is?

What, if any, is the difference between praise and thanks?

Three Hebrew words for praise:

“Hallal” – “to be vigorously excited, to celebrate”

“Barak” – “to bless, to be still”

“Shabach” – “to address in a loud tone, to shout”

What do these words teach you about praise? Which of these do you most relate to?

Read Psalm 134:2. Why do you think the Bible encourages a physical response to praising God?

We praise God for His attributes, His character. This doxology lists at least four attributes of God.

God is sovereign, the ultimate authority – “Yours is the kingdom”

God is almighty – “and the power”

God is glorious – “and the glory”

God is eternal – “forever”

Choose one of these attributes and share a time when this attribute of God became real to you.

What other attributes can you praise God for? Explain.

Spend time praising God for who He is.

Discussion Questions for November 20

Name something you are stressed about.

Is worrying productive? Is there a good side to worry?

Read Philippians 4:6. What is the antidote to worry (anxiety, stress, etc.)? Explain.

Read 1 Peter 5:7. What is your take-away from this verse?

“There is no problem too big for God’s power or too small for God’s concern.”

Read Matthew 6:34. According to Jesus, what is key to not worrying?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18. How would this help in coping with stress?

“There is always something to be grateful for.”

Read Philippians 4:8. Why is this important to dealing with worry?

Read Matthew 14:22-32. How was Peter able to overcome his fear?

Read Philippians 4:7. Why can we have peace of mind?

Discussion Questions for Small Groups – November 13

Read Galatians 5:13 through 26; and Galatians 2:20

- V.13, Provide some examples to serve one another humbly in love.
- V.14. Why should you love your neighbor as yourself?
- V.15. Why do you think Paul gives this warning?
- V.16. How can we walk in the spirit?
- V.17. Why are the flesh and spirit in conflict?
- V.18. What does this mean?
- V.19 through 21. Paul says, “I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.” What is the kingdom of God? Is this the entire list of sins?
- V.22 and 23. Provide an example of each fruit of the spirit? Provide an example if applicable to your spouse, children, sibling, parent, neighbor, co-worker, neighbor, opposite political views, etc.
- V.24 and Galatians 2: 20. What does this personally mean to you as a Christian?
- V25. How do you keep in step in the spirit?
- V26. How could one become conceited, provoking and envying each other? How do you avoid any of these three or all of them?

Discussion Questions for November 6

Name a temptation that you don't really struggle with.

Read Matthew 6:13. What is one take-away from reading these simple words?

Is temptation wrong? Explain.

Read James 1:13-15. What are the components (and consequences) of sin?

Read Hebrews 4:15. How does this help us in our struggle?

Read Ephesians 6:12-17. What principles do you learn about our struggle with sin?

Read 2 Corinthians 10:4-6. What do you learn from this passage?

Read James 4:7. How did Jesus resist the devil? (See Matthew 4:1-11.)

What are some practical ways for us to resist the devil?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. When it comes to sin, the three promises of God listed are:

- 1. Common trials**
- 2. Controlled pressures**
- 3. Conquering grace**

What encouragement do you find in these promises?

Small Group Questions

Discussion Points

10/30/22

What are some examples of how God loves and forgives us?

Talk about a time when it was difficult to forgive someone.

Have you ever had to forgive someone multiple times for the same offense? Or different ones? What made this difficult?

Think and discuss the idea that God forgives us in that same way ... repeatedly and never ending.

Our Forgiveness Depends on How We Forgive Others

- Is this shocking or does this seem unreasonable?
- Why is forgiveness so important to God?

Talk to your group about times when a burden, guilt, worry has been lifted off your shoulders. Now put yourself in someone else's shoes ... being the one who is forgiven when you don't deserve it - the weight lifting off you.

Pray together to realize how much you have forgiven and how it's your opportunity to go and love and forgive like Jesus!

Discussion Questions
“Forgive Us Our Debts”
October 23

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

Read Mark 2:1-12. Why does this passage teach about Jesus?

Is guilt good or bad? Why?

What do you think is the difference between true and false guilt?

What do you think is the purpose of guilt? (See Galatians 3:24)

Erich Fromm wrote, “It is indeed amazing that in an irreligious culture as ours, the sense of guilt should be so widespread and deep-rooted as it is.” It could be said that all of modern psychoanalysis is an attempt to help people with guilt.

Read Romans 3:23, 6:23 and 8:1. We are guilty because we have sinned, but God declares us “not guilty.” Why? (See Colossians 2:13-15)

Read 1 John 1:9. How is it that God is just when He forgives us?

Read Matthew 12:31. What is the one sin God will not forgive? (See Matthew 12:22-24.)

“I know God forgives me, but I can’t forgive myself.” What would you say to someone who said that to you?

God not only wants to forgive you; He wants you to feel forgiven. What does that look like?

Discussion Questions

October 16

Share a prayer request that God has answered in your life.

Read Matthew 18:19. What do you think this means?

Read Matthew 7:9-11. What is your take-away about God from this?

“Although God knows our need, he still wants us to articulate it to him.” Why is that? What keeps you from asking God for your needs?

Do you ask God for what you want as well as what you need? Is that okay?

A traffic signal as an analogy of how God responds to our prayers:

- **Green – “yes”**
- **Amber – “wait” (persevere)**
- **Red – “no”**

Are you experiencing a “green”, “amber” or “red” response to any specific prayer at the moment? Share your experiences together.

Pete Greig writes, “When you pray about the small things in life, you get to live with greater gratitude. If you only pray about big, gnarly, hairy problems that seem serious enough to warrant divine intervention, you will only very occasionally experience miracles. But when you learn to pray about the little things in life – you start to notice how many minor miracles are scattered around in the course of an average day.”

Pray for one another’s prayer requests.

As you pray, keep in mind:

Pray incrementally. Pray for a specific next step, rather than jumping to the top of the mountain.

Pray the promises of God. Is there a specific promise that relates to the situation?

Discussion Questions

October 9

Share a highlight of your past week.

Read Matthew 6:10. The kingdom of God was Jesus' favorite topic – He spoke more about the kingdom than any other topic. What is the kingdom of God? Is it political?

Read 1 John 5:14. What do you learn about prayer from this verse?

Read 2 Peter 3:9. What do you learn about God from this verse?

How can we learn what God's will is?

Read Luke 11:5-11. What strikes you about this passage?

Read Mark 14:36. What does the example of Jesus say to you?

Pray for the kingdom of God to come, and His will be done in the following areas:

- **Our world**
- **Our nation**
- **Our state**
- **Our city**
- **My family**
- **My life**

Discussion Questions – October 2, 2022

“Hallowed Be Your Name”

Think of a time when you felt close to God. What attribute of God did you experience?

Why do you think we most often associate prayer with asking, rather than worship?

Read Acts 4:24-31. The early church put their own crisis into perspective by worshipping.

What are some things you could do to foster an attitude of worship in your daily routine?

“In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him.” – C.S. Lewis

Have you experienced the connection between worship and joy? Do you enjoy spending time with God? When are the times that prayer is most enjoyable for you?

Pete Greig notes that prayer is primarily about relationship with God. “It’s relational, not transactional.” How does this change your perspective of coming to God in prayer?

Read Psalm 8. Take time to Pause and Rejoice.

Pause - Take a moment of silence to reflect on what you’ve just read.

Rejoice – Thank God for one or two things in your life.

Discussion Questions for **September 25** – Small Group

1. What is/was your image of your earthly Father?
2. What is your image of God as your heavenly Father?
 - a. Are these two similar?
 - b. Is there a possibility that this influences your life? Your decisions or actions?
3. Read these verses below and discuss what God might think about you – his child...

Matthew 6:26

1 John 3:1

James 1:17

Luke 6:36

Psalm 68:5

Psalm 103:13

John 3:16

Matthew 7:11

4. Do these verses change your image of your heavenly Father? Can you think of any other stories or parables that show the image and character of your heavenly Father?

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Discussion Questions for **September 18**

Think of a prayer that was answered the way you had hoped. What was it?

Read Matthew 11:28. How do you think this relates to prayer?

Read Ephesians 3:17-19. What does Paul pray on our behalf?

Read Matthew 8:5-13. What do you learn about prayer from this?

In his book, "How to Pray," Pete Grieg says the best piece of advice on prayer is to keep it simple, keep it real, and keep it up.

1. Keep it simple – (don't make it complicated.)

Read Luke 11:1-4. What is your first impression from reading the model prayer of Jesus?

2. Keep it real – (don't role-play before God.)

Read Matthew 6:7-8. What keeps you from being authentic with God?

3. Keep it up – (don't give up praying too soon.)

Read Luke 18:1-8. What is the point of this parable? Do you find it challenging to persevere in prayer? How can we be encouraged to keep going?

Share one way you'd like to grow in prayer.