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Leader Guide

Reading for Intent

September 11, 2022

Main Passage: John 5:39-40

Theological Theme

God's Word is true and was given to His people for a purpose. We should be careful to rightly interpret and apply Scripture to our lives.

Introduction

- ❓ Share an instance where you experienced misinterpretation or misunderstanding due to a language barrier.
- ❓ What is your favorite scene from a movie where a misinterpretation happens? What makes these scenes entertaining?

1. The Word Proves True (John 5:37-42)

Think about what happens in a court of law. Two sides are trying to prove two different things. Eyewitness testimony is one of the strongest presentations in a court of law and can be the thing that sways what is proven true or false.

- ❓ Why do you think eyewitness testimony is considered strong evidence? Why is it significant that there were witnesses to the truth of the Bible and the truth about Jesus?
- ❓ How did Jesus show that the people He spoke to had missed the point of the Scriptures? What did He say was the point and why is this important for us today?
- ❓ Application: Why is it important that we first understand the original intent of the words of Scripture before looking for how they apply in our lives today?

2. The Word Must Be Treated Correctly (2 Timothy 2:14-17; Revelation 22:18-19)

As we learn to treat God's Word correctly, we realize our responsibility regarding Scripture. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul addressed the issue of handling the Word of God.

- ❓ How do we get caught up arguing about words that have no profit to the gospel? How are we in danger of this if we don't understand the original intended meaning of the Scriptures?
- ❓ When have you or someone you know gotten caught up in sin because of believing a lie over the truth?
- ❓ Application: How will you seek to understand the original meaning of the Scriptures? What kinds of resources does our church have to help with this?

3. The Word Keeps Us from Sin (1 John 2:3-6)

Any discussion about the Word of God and how believers are responsible to treat it should also include the positive results from right understanding and application.

- ❓ How have you seen positive rewards motivate behaviors either in you or someone else?
- ❓ How does 1 John tell us we can know if we are in right relationship with Jesus and His Word?
- ❓ Application: How would intentional reading of God's Word compel you to change today? How would your life look different if you believed the Scriptures were completely true and the source of all truth?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

- ❓ What does this passage say?
- ❓ What did this passage mean to its original audience?
- ❓ What does this passage tell us about God?
- ❓ What does this passage tell us about man?
- ❓ What does this passage demand of me?
- ❓ How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
- ❓ How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).