**FIVE QUESTIONS EVERYONE SHOULD ANSWER**

Brentwood Campus
 Summer Series 2023

When we adopted our current mission statement and vision frame, the leadership team made an important decision. While most churches measure “mission metrics” to gauge ministry effectiveness, we instead developed five questions that every growing disciple should be able to answer. We spend the month of July asking ourselves these important questions.

**July 2 | How are you being changed by Jesus? 1 Corinthians 3:1-3**

Jesus not only saves people for an eternity, but he transforms lives in the here and now. If we are genuine disciples of Jesus, there should be evidence of maturity and spiritual fruit in our lives. We should always be ready to share at least two testimonies: how Jesus saved me and how he is changing me right now.

Followers of Jesus are equipped to do the work God calls them to do.

**INTRODUCTION**

**As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.**

*What’s the best coach or teacher you’ve ever had? How was that person able to motivate you so well?*

*What are some general characteristics you think are essential for a leader to possess in order to motivate people? What about an individual? What kind of person is a great member of a team?*

*What responsibility do you think the church has to equip followers of Jesus? How does that responsibility work alongside a person’s own initiative?*

**UNDERSTANDING**

**Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.**

Have a volunteer read I Corinthians 3:1-2.

Paul gives a harsh word to the Corinthians. He says he can’t talk to them as people who live by the Spirit, but as people who are still worldly: “Mere infants in Christ.”

Why does he call them infants, or babies in Christ?

The Corinthians were not growing in their faith. They had received Christ—they had experienced God—but weren’t growing in deeper relationship with Him.

Why weren’t they growing?

*How do you think most people look at the process of spiritual growth? How are some of the ways we think that growth is meant to happen?*

*What do you think God expects of Christians when it comes to growing in Christ?*

There are so many myths we believe—that growth is automatic, instant, easy, and something we can do by ourselves. God expects us to grow—to be actively involved in being equipped to hear and respond to God. But to do so, we must counter these myths with the truth.

Have a volunteer read 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

“God does not call the equipped. God equips the called.” How does God equip us, according to this passage?

*How does the Bible help us grow in our faith?*

read the following passages: Matthew 22:29; 2 Peter 3:18; Titus 3:14; Proverbs 27:17.

*How do these passages correct the myths we believe about growing in Christ?*

These passages remind us that growing in Christ is a choice—it’s not something that just happens. They tell us that growth is gradual, it’s not something that happens in an instant. Growing in Christ happens by developing good and godly habits—it’s more than just coming to church on Sunday, but it’s a day-to-day lifestyle. And growth happens in community with others, rather than just between me and God.

**APPLICATION**

**Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.**

*How active are you right now in pursuing spiritual growth?*

*How do you need to change? What ideas to you need to leave behind? What habits do you need to develop? How can our group help in this area?*

The church is responsible for equipping Christians, but Christians do the work of ministry. That means we must all be actively pursuing spiritual growth as we follow Jesus.

**PRAYER**

Thank God that He equips the called, rather than calls the equipped. Ask His forgiveness for buying into myths about growing in our faith. As Him to help us to grow, to develop good habits, develop strong relationships and be committed to intentionally equipping ourselves in order to be fully devoted followers of Christ.

**COMMENTARY**

1 Corinthians 3:1-2

3:1-2. Many of the Corinthians were immature in the Lord. They were not able to receive solid food (advanced teaching) because they were full of envy and strife (“rivalries”), which marked them as babies in Christ who needed milk (fundamental Christian instruction) rather than adult fare.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Paul encouraged Timothy to continue in the truth of the gospel which he had learned and firmly believed. The term continue carries with it the idea of holding onto or remaining true to what has been revealed. Paul’s encouragement to remain strong in what he had learned was based on the veracity of Timothy’s teachers. Likewise, those who taught Timothy appealed to the sacred Scriptures for their doctrine. It was the Scriptures which grounded Timothy in the spiritual wisdom necessary to fend off the false teachers. Salvation here refers to sanctification—becoming more like Christ. Paul reminded Timothy that the Scriptures guide believers on how to believe, grow, and serve the Christian community.

The Bible is God-breathed or inspired by God. Paul did not discount the role of human instruments in producing these books (see 2 Pet. 1:21), but God’s role was primary. Inspiration is defined as “the act of God by which He superintended/guided the human authors of the 66 books of the Bible so that using their own individual personalities they composed and recorded without error, His revelation to man in the words of the original.” (Daniel Akin, Christian Theology: An Overview)

Paul identified several ways the Bible is useful or profitable for believers. “Teaching” refers to the Bible as the basis of sound doctrine. Because of the prominence of heresy among his readers, Paul emphasized the importance of sound teaching. “Reproof” may refer to both exposing the errors of false teachers (doctrinal) and also showing someone the error of his or her ways (personal). Either way, the Bible shows us our wrongs and leads us to forgiveness and peace. “Correction” suggests that God’s Word helps people restore their doctrine or practice to a right state they had forfeited. “Training in righteousness“ means the Scriptures act as a disciplinarian that leads people to a holy lifestyle. If Timothy would nurture his life in the Scriptures, he would be complete and equipped for every good work. He would be both prepared and qualified for every task God assigned him.

The Greek word rendered “competent” (v. 17) has the sense of being capable, proficient, or able to meet all the demands placed upon a person. In the Bible it carries the force of a person who, through diligent study of Scripture, has progressed spiritually to being able not only to discern the will of God but also to abide in it consistently. As a result, the complete Christian is fully engaged, either as layperson or leader, in serving God. Whatever God calls complete Christians to do, they are ready to follow God’s commands because of their dedication to the study of the Word and their obedience to God’s teaching.