

JESUS

through the eyes of...

Week of March 26 – The Experts¹

Overview:

Who do *you* see when you look at Jesus? Teacher? Miracle worker? Divine Son of God? All of these? Our view of Jesus is shaped by our own perspective, our church history, and our study of scripture. Over the next several weeks, we will view Jesus from Luke's perspective, through the eyes of some of the enemies he faced while on earth. We pray that as you see Jesus in fresh ways, you are drawn to follow Jesus more closely and become more like him every day.²

Group Objectives:

Relationships and Life Transformation are the primary purpose of community groups

- Reflect on this past Sunday's message and other devotional reading.
- Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members.
- Discuss how Jesus confronted the Pharisees and Experts in the Law and consider how we might miss the heart of following Jesus.

DNA statement(s) tie-in:

- *We encounter the Father daily – God the Father speaks to us through the Bible and we commune with him through prayer.*

Conversation Starters:

- What rules do you follow that other people find weird? What is the funniest misunderstanding that you have experienced recently?

Listening to God

- Where did you see God at work last week? How were you able to join him?

Learning from God's Word: Bible Study Discussion

- *Read Luke 11:37-54*
 - When you think of Pharisees and Experts in the Law, what kind of person do you picture? How did they interact with the people around them? How would they have viewed Jesus? Would you have been friends with them? Maybe in your mind they are legalistic or hypocritical. Maybe you picture them as the "bad guys" who killed Jesus. While these may be true to some extent, the Pharisees and Experts in the Law were

¹ This week's lesson was written by Cameron Booze and edited by Dawn Gentry.

² For a monthly reading and devotional guide to accompany this series in Luke, go to cccomaha.info.

highly respected in Jewish culture. People looked up to them as examples of righteousness and religious zeal.

- If the Pharisees and Experts were so passionate about following God's Law, why did Jesus proclaim these "woes" on them? What are each of the "woes" calling out in the behavior of the Pharisees and Experts in the Law?
 - While the Pharisees and Experts in the Law were committed to following God's Law, they often missed the heart of the Law in favor of following rules. As you think about the "woes" that Jesus confronted the Pharisees and Experts with, is the Holy Spirit showing you any that are present in your life? Are there any areas not covered in this list of "woes" where you feel like you might be following rules and missing God's heart?
- **Read Luke 15:11-32**
 - What do you notice about the sons in this story? What do you notice about the father?
 - Which of the characters do you relate to the most and why? Which characters do you find it hardest to relate to and why?
 - When Jesus told the story, the older brother represented the Pharisees, and the younger brother represented the "sinners" that Jesus was focused on reaching. In light of this parable, how should we love the "pharisees" and the "sinners" in our life? Hint: how did the father respond to each of his sons?

Leaning into Obedience:

- Are there any man-made rules in your life that are keeping you from following God fully? If so, what are they?
- Which of the brothers in Luke 15 are you more like? How does this awareness enable you to ask God for his help in the future?
- How do you sense God calling you to respond to this passage?
 - Is there an example to follow? A command to obey?
- How can the group encourage you this week as you respond?

Prayer Prompts:

- Invite members of the group to share personal prayer requests.
- Allow time for silent reflection on the following questions.
Am I trusting in God or my own efforts to make me righteous?
- Option: Read Ephesians 3:16-21 over your group.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.