

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series: There's Got to be a Better Way??!

It is no secret we live in polarizing and divisive times. Our world labels, judges, cancels, and dismisses others, all in the name of being on the "right" side. And all too often, Christians play right along, acting no better than anyone else. Even worse, the Christian faith has been used, reduced, and manipulated to justify hateful behaviors and particular worldviews. As we live through another election cycle, people of faith must ask; is this really how Jesus called us to live? Is this really what Jesus wanted for the church? What is at stake if American Christians continue in this way? Is a third way of living and loving even possible?

Message Description:

As followers of Jesus Christ, there is better way, one Jesus set and invited us to follow with his command to love one another as Christ has loved us. Jonathon Leeman says, "when it comes to culture, Jesus followers must neither withdraw nor seek to control, but rather faithfully represent the values of the King we serve." That means that our posture, tone, and approach must mirror the values of the King that we proclaim to follow. The cross of Jesus, which looked like foolishness to the wisdom of the world and looked like losing in the political and imperial terms, must lead and guide us in all we do.

So, how do we engage in a loving way with believers, neighbors, and family members whom we disagree with? This week, we offer "rules of engagement" for the season. First, we humble ourselves to recognize that there are a diversity of cultures, personalities, bodies and abilities, political dispositions, and languages within the body of Christ, all of which impact our particular life experiences and worldviews. People experience the world differently. We cannot understand someone else's life experience or perspective unless we humble ourselves and ask. When we encounter people with differing opinions, we must be curious, and not judgmental.

Second, we must surrender any other idols we hold or turn to for wisdom, security, comfort, or answers over and above Jesus Christ our lord. Misplaced loyalties lead to death because they blind us to the wisdom and goodness of God, and to the power of the cross.

Key Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1: 10-31; Proverbs 3:5-7

Questions based on this week's teaching:

1. Check your posture, tone, and approach when it comes to engaging with your neighbors. Is there an area you feel you need correction or adjustment?
2. Are there people in your life you need to practice being curious and not judgmental? How could you start?
3. How do you spend your time? What voices do you prioritize and listen to? Do you feel you rely on one of these "sources of wisdom" more than you should?
4. What did you find most challenging about this week's teaching?