

Small Group Discussion Guide

“The Backwards Life” (pt. 1) – 3.9.2014

Scripture: John 12:27-36

Bottom Line: Jesus lived his life with the end goal in mind.

INTRODUCTION:

Have you ever heard someone say, “If I could go back in time, I would change (fill in the blank).” Of course you have! We would all like to change something in the past to benefit us in the present. Perhaps it would save us a lot of regret if we lived our lives with the end goal in mind. Jesus did. Let's see what it looked like for him.

UNPACKING THE GOSPEL IN THE BIBLE:

Read John 12:27-28

Why didn't Jesus ask the Father to deliver him from his troubles here?

Jesus knew that sometimes God brings us to a place in life where he desires not to deliver us from trouble but for us to endure trouble with the end goal in mind. The end goal being God's glory. We know that he is always with us. However, our natural response is fear or panic (ex. Luke 8:22-25). Responding with faith is a huge witness to the world that God is in control.

Read John 12:29-33

What do verses 31-32 reveal about Jesus?

The coming of the Son of God into the world was the decisive act in history. Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection brought judgment in the sense that it dethroned Satan and forever divided humanity into two categories: righteous and unrighteous. For those who believe, Jesus took their judgment on himself forever freeing them from condemnation and also making them righteous (right with God).

Read John 12:34-36

What does Jesus mean in verse 36 when he says to believe in the light that you may become sons of light?

The Bible was not written for our information but for our transformation. Life on earth is short when compared to eternity. Jesus is saying to believe in him so that you may be changed by him and love the things that he loves.

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE GOSPEL APPLIES TO MY LIFE:

If Jesus said he would draw all people when he was lifted up then doesn't that mean that everyone will be saved?

No. We know that the Bible clearly teaches that whoever believes the gospel is saved but those who do not believe, are not saved (Jn. 3:16-18). Since Scripture doesn't contradict itself we know that Jesus is saying that he will draw all people who believe to himself. However, in other places in Scripture, it is clear that at least one person from every ethnic group will be saved (Rev. 7:9-10).

How do we live now with God's glory as the end goal of our lives?

Clearly, the goal of Jesus' life is to bring glory to God through his death and resurrection for our salvation. We too can live for the glory of God when we embrace all that Jesus accomplished for us and respond by living in light of it. In other words, because Jesus earned my forgiveness, I am forgiven and I will live my life forgiving others. Because Jesus was generous with me, I will respond by being generous with others.

LIVING OUT THE GOSPEL IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE:

What are you currently living for?

What do you want to be living for?