

Growth Group Questions

5th Sunday after Pentecost, July 2, 2023

Introduction

As we begin our new series on the definition of a Christian, discuss what you would see as essential to being a Christian. What might non-Christians add or change in our definition?

Into the Word – Exodus 32:15-29

1. The Israelites had *just* made a covenant with God that they would keep his commands. (Exodus 19 & 24). How could they so quickly fall into such gross violation? (Once you're done judging them, privately ask God to forgive a sin that you blatantly did even though you knew better.)
2. What do you think of Aaron's explanation in verse 24?
3. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt. Where did the gold come from (Exodus 12:35-36) and how does that make this sin even worse?
4. How did the Levites express 1st commandment obedience in the face of so much 1st commandment lawbreaking? Why would God make the punishment so severe? (Though 3000 out of 1-2 million isn't as many as it might have been)
5. Here we see a weak spiritual leader and an impatient sinful people together sinning. How do we avoid falling into the same error in our churches today?

Into the Word – 1 Timothy 6:11-16

6. What high task does Paul call Timothy to in verse 11?
7. Paul doesn't tell Timothy to BE perfect, but to perfectly keep what command? (Answer is in verse 12)
8. Why is the return of Christ so important to our ability to "fight the good fight and hold on to eternal life"? Take a moment to share a time when you were able to resist temptation and hold onto Christ instead in that moment.

Into the Word – Matthew 10:34-42

9. These verses teach a hard truth. Even blessings of God can become temptations to idolatry. What potential idol does Jesus address in verses 35-36 and how have you seen that in people you know?
10. Discuss verses 38-39 and explain what it means to "lose our lives for Jesus' sake." Is this talking about martyrdom or something far more difficult? (Refer to Romans 12:1)
11. Describe the close and important connection between our Savior, his prophets (preachers), and those who support the preachers. How does this help curb pride and division?

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit of power and love, we give you thanks this week not only for our place in your kingdom, but also for the blessings you have poured out on our earthly nation. Move our leaders to greater faithfulness and bless us citizens with peace and freedom. Amen.