

Message Discussion Guide

The Ultimate Question...

The Church at Brook Hills, Dr. David Platt

April 12, 2009

Romans 10:9-10

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Moral relativism is a philosophical concept that has been woven into much of our culture.

Moral Relativism - the perspective that truth and morals are relative to persons and groups holding them; thus, there are no absolute truths and morals that are true for all people of all times.

Those who attempt to hold to this view say things like, "All religions are fundamentally the same; they're just superficially different" and "Truth is subjective – a matter of preference. Something may be true for you but not be true for me." Do people genuinely act like they believe statements like this in matters of practical daily living? If we genuinely applied this line of thinking to our everyday lives, how would our lives be affected? Would society even be able to function?

Why do people tend to mostly apply relativistic thinking to issues of philosophy, religion and spirituality?

Explain that in your time today you will discuss one of the most important questions of truth and the results of believing or denying it – the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Option 2

People often are one sided on their affirmation or denial of a historical event. Most do not attempt to consider both sides of an issue in history and evaluate the plausibility of whether or not the event occurred. It seems easier to claim that an event simply did not happen. When considered more closely, however, denying a historical event demands as much evidence as affirming it. In your time today, explain that you'll be discussing the issue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Too often Christians are asked to prove that the resurrection happened but the burden of proof also lies on non-believers to prove that it didn't happen.

Ask your group if they agree with the statement, "Virtually nothing in history can be established with 100% certainty." Think of some examples of events in history and what would be necessary to prove that those events actually did happen. How might one prove that those same events didn't happen? This is a very important distinction to make.

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Review the Message . . .

THE ULTIMATE QUESTION...

Did Jesus rise from the dead?

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS...

- Jesus didn't _____ die _____ on the cross.
- Jesus' tomb was not _____ empty _____.
- The disciples _____ stole _____ the body of Jesus.
- The disciples were _____ delusional _____ when they claimed to see Jesus.
- Jesus died on the cross and actually rose from the grave.

Discussion . . .

- Have someone read John 19. What parts of this text demonstrate to you that Jesus' crucifixion and death are historical realities? What parts of this text leave room for the possibility that Jesus wasn't crucified?
- Have someone read Matthew 28. What parts of this text demonstrate to you that Jesus' tomb was empty and that the disciples did not steal His body? If His tomb had not been empty or if His body had been stolen, what parts of Matthew's account might he have left out?

Application . . .

- What issues of unbelief do you struggle with regarding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus?
- How does reading these accounts of the crucifixion and resurrection strengthen your belief in these events?

STARTLING IMPLICATIONS...

If Jesus rose from the dead...

- He is Lord over _____ life _____ and _____ death _____.

"No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again."

John 10:18

- He is Lord over _____ sin _____ and _____ Satan _____.

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

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1 Corinthians 15:55-57

- He is Lord over _____ you _____ and _____ me _____.

“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”

Romans 10:9-10

- He _____ reigns _____ over us supremely.
- He _____ loves _____ us deeply.
- He will _____ judge _____ us eternally.

Discussion . . .

- According to John 10:18, who was in control of what happened at the cross?
- Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-22, 35-36, 42-49, 55-57. Paul uses the word “victory” two times in 1 Corinthians 15:55-57. In context with the verses you just read, what does Paul mean by the word “victory”?
- According to 1 Corinthians 15, why does Jesus resurrection give the Christ follower “victory” over death?
- What does it mean to confess Jesus as Lord? How do Jesus’ words in Luke 6:45 help us understand what Paul means in Romans 10:9-10 regarding “how” one is saved?

Application . . .

- Does Jesus have authority to take your life in His way and in His time? If so, how does this impact the way that Christ-followers view their own personal death and the death of other Christ-followers?
- How does this truth change the way we view suffering? How we view dying?
- How does death “sting” humanity? In what ways has death “stung” you personally? [Note: Ask these questions sensitively and wisely]
- What effect should death’s “sting” have on our view of sin? Ask God to give you a hatred of sin and lead you to repent of sins with which you still struggle.
- In light of the ways that the “sting” of death has affected you, how does the resurrection of Jesus Christ bring you comfort? Thank God right now for some specific blessings we may experience as Christ followers now that death’s sting has been removed.
- Is Jesus Lord of your life? When you share the gospel do you declare Him both savior and Lord?

THE PERSONAL QUESTION...

- Do you _____ believe _____ in the resurrection of Jesus?
- Do you _____ surrender _____ to the Lordship of Jesus?

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Discussion...

- How does the Bible's emphasis on the heart affect how you view your own conversion to Christ? Has there been a true heart conversion or just mere head attestation?

Application . . .

- How does a belief in the resurrection of Jesus set Christianity apart from every other religion in the world?
- Why is it possible for someone to claim a belief in the resurrection of Jesus and still not be forgiven and reconciled to God?
- Jesus' resurrection proves that He is Lord. To believe in the resurrection and not trust Him as Lord is not only foolish but it means that one is not saved. Eternity depends on the answer to the question "Believing that God raised Jesus from the dead, do you surrender to His Lordship?"