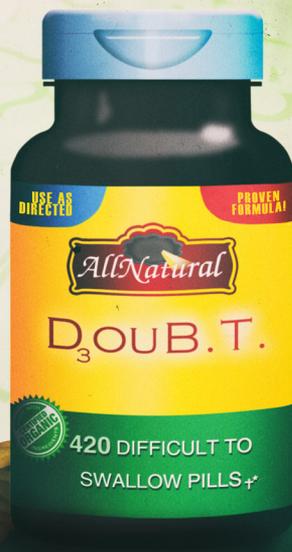


GOING DEEPER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

July 31, 2016

THE BENEFIT OF THE



Discussion Guide

A Solid Foundation

CONNECTING:

45 MINUTES

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOUR GROUP WITH A WAY OF CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER SO THAT YOU MIGHT PARTNER IN THE WORK GOD IS DOING IN YOUR LIVES.)

- IN WHAT WAYS DID GOD MOVE IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK? IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU RESPOND TO HIM?
- WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE THIS WEEK? IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, DID YOU INVITE GOD INTO THIS CHALLENGE?

- HOW HONEST HAVE YOU BEEN WITH US? (GRACIOUSLY THANK GROUP MEMBERS FOR THEIR HONESTY IF THEY STATE THEY HAVE HELD BACK.)

GETTING STARTED:

10 MINUTES

- WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A "BIBLE-BELIEVING" CHRISTIAN? COULD YOU ELABORATE?

DIVING INTO THE TEXT:

60 MINUTES

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOUR GROUP WITH A SIMPLE ROAD MAP THROUGH THE TEXT. FEEL FREE TO USE THESE QUESTIONS IN WAYS THAT BEST FIT YOUR GROUP AND THE DYNAMICS OF YOUR OWN MEETING.)

- USING THE NOTES, DISCUSS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUNDAMENTALISM AND THE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE IN THE FORM OF FUNDAMENTALISM WHICH EMERGED IN OUR AREA.
- READ JOHN 5.1-18 ALOUD. PAUSE. READ THE TEXT ONCE MORE, SEEKING TO IMAGINE YOURSELF AS PRESENT IN THE SCENE.
- IN WHAT WAYS DOES JESUS INVITE THE JEWISH LEADERS TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS REAL (TO DOUBT)?
- WHAT IS THE RESPONSE OF THESE LEADERS? WHY MIGHT THEY RESPOND IN THIS WAY?
- HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED A SIMILAR RESPONSE TO THE ASKING OF QUESTIONS FROM A FELLOW BELIEVER? WHAT WAS THIS EXPERIENCE LIKE?
- READ JOHN 5.31-40 ALOUD. PAUSE. READ THE TEXT ONCE MORE.
- WHAT ROADBLOCKS TO ASKING QUESTIONS DOES JESUS IDENTIFY?
- IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT JESUS REBUKES THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF HIS DAY FOR READING THE RIGHT BOOK IN THE WRONG WAY. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
- IN WHAT WAY MIGHT ONE'S APPROACH TO SCRIPTURE MAKE ROOM FOR OR DENY A PLACE FOR QUESTION ASKING (DOUBT)?
- THE STREAM OF FUNDAMENTALISM WHICH HAS INFLUENCED OUR GEOGRAPHICAL REGION IDENTIFIES PEOPLE OF FAITH AS BIBLE-BELIEVING PEOPLE WHILE JESUS SEEMS TO IDENTIFY PEOPLE OF FAITH AS JESUS-CENTERED PEOPLE. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE? HOW MIGHT THIS DIFFERENCE INFLUENCE THE WAY SCRIPTURE IS HANDLED?
- WHY MIGHT DOUBT FIND A PLACE AMONG JESUS-CENTERED PEOPLE BUT NOT AMONG BIBLE-BELIEVING PEOPLE?
- CONSIDER CONCLUDING BY DISCUSSING WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE TO BE A GROUP WHICH SEEKS TO BE JESUS-CENTERED PEOPLE.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

FUNDAMENTALISM

FUNDAMENTALISM IS A MOVEMENT THAT AROSE IN THE UNITED STATES DURING AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER WORLD WAR I. IT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO REAFFIRM ORTHODOX PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY AGAINST THE RISING CHALLENGE POSED BY LIBERAL THEOLOGY AND HIGHER FORMS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM WHICH SOUGHT TO REINTERPRET SCRIPTURE USING NATURALISM AND QUESTION THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF SCRIPTURE, AND THE CHALLENGE PRESENTED TO BIBLICAL HISTORY BY THINGS LIKE DARWINISM. THIS MOVEMENT EMERGED FIRST IN A SERIES OF TWELVE VOLUMES CALLED THE FUNDAMENTALS (1910-1915) WRITTEN BY AMERICAN AND BRITISH BELIEVERS FROM VARIED DENOMINATIONAL AND

THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS. THESE WORKS COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS AND PRESENTED THEIR CRITICISMS FAIRLY AND WITH MUCH APPRECIATION FOR THEIR OPPONENTS AND THEIR VIEWS. HOWEVER, THIS APPROACH QUICKLY CHANGED WITH A GREATER URGENCY AND MILITANT SPIRIT TAKING THE PLACE OF DIALOGUE AS THE MOVEMENT GAINED MOMENTUM. BY THE 1920'S, A FUNDAMENTALISM "BATTLE" WAS BEING WAGED IN THE LARGE NORTHERN CHURCH DENOMINATIONS AND WAS VIEWED AS NOTHING LESS THAN A STRUGGLE FOR AUTHENTIC CHRISTIANITY WITH OPPONENTS VIEWED AS PRESENTING A NEW NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGION. WHILE THESE STRUGGLES TOOK PLACE WITHIN ALL NORTHERN DENOMINATIONS, THE LARGEST BATTLES WERE FOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN PRESBYTERIAN AND BAPTIST DENOMINATIONS.

BY 1926, IT WAS BECOMING APPARENT THAT THOSE WHO WERE FIGHTING FOR THE "FUNDAMENTALS" OF CHRISTIANITY WERE NOT GOING TO CONVINCHE THEIR OPPONENTS, NOR WERE THEY GOING TO DRIVE THEM OUT OF THEIR DENOMINATIONS. THEREFORE, NORTHERN FUNDAMENTALISTS BEGAN TO CREATE NEW DENOMINATIONS IN ORDER TO CARRY ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE A TRUE FAITH, SEPARATE FROM THOSE THEY REGARDED AS APOSTATE BELIEVERS. ONE OF THESE, FOUNDED IN 1932, WAS THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES, A DENOMINATION WHICH REMAINS INFLUENTIAL WITHIN OUR AREA STILL TODAY. DURING THIS PERIOD OF DENOMINATIONAL FORMATION, A COMMON DISTINCTIVE THEOLOGICAL POINT BEGAN EMERGE ACROSS THESE NEW DENOMINATIONS. THESE NEW DENOMINATIONS EACH STRESSED THAT THEY REPRESENTED TRUE CHRISTIANITY BECAUSE THEY WERE BASED UPON A LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE AND THAT THEY WERE TO REMAIN SEPARATE FROM ALL WHO DID NOT MAINTAIN THEIR DISTINCT LITERAL INTERPRETATIONS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE AT THIS POINT THAT THE FUNDAMENTALIST APPROACH BEGAN TO FOCUS MORE ON THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE. IN FACT, THE SINGLE HALLMARK OF THIS BRANCH OF FUNDAMENTALISM IS AN ELEVATED VIEW OF SCRIPTURE. THIS ELEVATED UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE WENT BEYOND TYPICAL ARGUMENTS OF INSPIRATION BUT EXTENDED TO INTERPRETATION; THAT IS, THESE GROUPS BELIEVED THAT TRUE CHRISTIANITY CONSISTED OF GROUPS WHICH HELD TO THE RIGHT INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

WITH THIS ELEVATED UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE GROWING, A GROUP EMERGED WITHIN FUNDAMENTALISM WHICH EQUATED CHRISTIANITY WITH WHAT THEY CALLED "BIBLE-BELIEVING" CHRISTIANITY. IN SHORT, THIS MEANT A FAITH WHICH WAS ORGANIZATIONALLY MODELED ON A SPECIFIC READING OF SCRIPTURE. IN THIS VEIN, SPECIFIC INTERPRETATIONS OF DOCTRINE BECAME OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE, LITMUS TESTS FOR CONTINUING FELLOWSHIP AS ONLY CERTAIN DOCTRINAL EXPRESSIONS WERE CONSISTENT WITH TRUE CHRISTIANITY. ONE MIGHT SAY THAT THIS STREAM OF FUNDAMENTALISM EMPHASIZED SCRIPTURE AND ITS PROPER INTERPRETATION AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF TRUE FAITH. THIS BRANCH OF FUNDAMENTALISM DIVERGED FROM ANOTHER GROUP WHICH

CAME TO BE IDENTIFIED AS EVANGELICALS. THIS FUNDAMENTAL GROUP WHICH EQUATED SCRIPTURE AND ITS PROPER INTERPRETATION WITH TRUE FAITH OPPOSED BILLY GRAHAM AND OFTEN REFUSED TO READ EVANGELICAL PUBLICATIONS LIKE CHRISTIANITY TODAY OR TO SUPPORT EVANGELICAL SCHOOLS LIKE WHEATON COLLEGE OR FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY. HOWEVER, THIS BRANCH OF FUNDAMENTALISM FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE MUCH TRACTION BECAUSE OF THE INHERENT DIFFICULTIES FACED IN COOPERATING WITH ONE ANOTHER BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR IDENTICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF SCRIPTURE TO BE PRESENT FOR COOPERATION TO BE HAD.

THE TEXT

JOHN 5.16-18, 31-40: JESUS AND SCRIPTURE

THESE VERSES ARE ROOTED IN THE CONTEXT OF ONE OF JESUS' SABBATH HEALINGS. WHILE IN JERUSALEM FOR A FESTIVAL, JESUS HAPPENED UPON AN INVALID OF THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA. AFTER A BRIEF CONVERSATION ABOUT THE MAN'S DESIRE TO BE MADE WELL, JESUS HEALED THE MAN AND INSTRUCTED HIM TO PICK UP HIS MAT AND WALK (JOHN 5.1-9). HOWEVER, RATHER THAN REJOICING OVER THIS MAN'S APPARENT HEALING, THE JEWISH LEADERS RESPONDED WITH FRUSTRATION THAT JESUS' COMMAND CONCERNING THE CARRYING OF THE MAT WAS FORBIDDEN, A VIOLATION OF THE MOSAIC LAW NOT TO WORK OR CARRY A BURDEN ON THE SABBATH (EXODUS 20.8-11; JEREMIAH 17.21-22). WHEN THESE LEADERS DISCOVERED THAT IT WAS JESUS WHO HAD INSTRUCTED THE MAN TO BREAK THE SABBATH LAWS, THEY BEGAN TO PERSECUTE JESUS. THEIR PERSECUTION IS UNDERSTANDABLE NOT ONLY BECAUSE JESUS HAD TAUGHT ANOTHER MAN TO BREAK THE LAW, BUT THIS WAS NOT JESUS' FIRST SABBATH RULE-BREAKING OFFENSE (MARK 2.23-3.6).

JESUS RESPONDS TO THE ATTACKS OF THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS BY DISAGREEING WITH THEIR CHARGE OF BEING A SABBATH RULE BREAKER. JESUS CLAIMS THAT THE FATHER DID NOT STOP WORKING; THAT IS, JESUS STATES THAT GOD HIMSELF DID NOT KEEP THE SABBATH. THIS WAS A COMMONLY ACCEPTED THEOLOGICAL POINT IN JESUS' TIME BASED UPON THE ARGUMENT THAT GOD HIMSELF COULD NOT STOP WORKING ON THE SABBATH BECAUSE THE UNIVERSE WOULD CEASE TO FUNCTION AND PROVIDENCE WOULD ABATE ONCE EVERY SEVEN DAYS WHICH WAS NOT THE CASE, THEREFORE, GOD MUST NOT EVER STOP WORKING. HOWEVER, JESUS TAKES HIS ARGUMENT ABOUT GOD A STEP FURTHER. HE CLAIMS THAT HE IS WORKING BECAUSE HE IS RELATED TO THE FATHER. JESUS' CLAIM IS MORE THAN JUST A STATEMENT ABOUT BEING ONE OF GOD'S CHILDREN. HIS ARGUMENT THAT HE TOO CAN WORK ON THE SABBATH LAYS A DIRECT CLAIM ON DIVINITY. SIMPLY PUT, JESUS CAN WORK LIKE THE FATHER BECAUSE HE IS LIKE THE FATHER. THIS POINT WAS NOT LOST ON THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS WHO NOW SEEK WITH GREATER INTENTION TO

KILL HIM, NOT ONLY FOR BEING A SABBATH RULE BREAKER BUT FOR BEING A BLASPHEMER. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THE TENSION JESUS IS CREATING FOR THESE LEADERS. WITH HIS ACTIONS AND WORDS, JESUS IS INTENTIONALLY CHALLENGING COMMONLY ACCEPTED THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT LAW AND GOD. JESUS IS CREATING A GAP BETWEEN WHAT THESE LEADERS BELIEVED AND WHAT THEY WERE EXPERIENCING WITH JESUS. JESUS IS INVITING THESE MEN INTO THIS GAP SO THEY MIGHT ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRUE NATURE OF LAW AND OF GOD. HOWEVER, THESE MEN REFUSE TO ASK THE QUESTIONS JESUS IS INVITING THEM TO RAISE. THEY CANNOT ACCEPT THAT JESUS MIGHT BE CORRECT.

THIS REFUSAL ON THE PART OF THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS LEADS TO A DISCUSSION OF JESUS' TRUE IDENTITY. THE RIGHTNESS OF HIS ACTIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE RESTS ON THE NATURE OF HIS IDENTITY. JESUS BEGINS THIS DISCUSSION BY NOTING THAT HE IS NOT DOING ANYTHING HE HAS NOT BEEN LED TO DO BY THE FATHER (JOHN 5.19). SIMPLY PUT, JESUS SAYS, WHAT YOU ARE SEEING AND HEARING FROM ME IS ACTUALLY FROM GOD. THIS WOULD BE TRUE IF JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH, BUT IS JESUS THE MESSIAH (JOHN 5.26-27)? JESUS CLAIMS THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL INDICATIONS THAT HE IS. JESUS AGREES THAT ANY PROOF OF HIS IDENTITY MUST GO BEYOND HIS OWN CLAIMS. THEREFORE, HE LISTS A NUMBER OF SOURCES WHICH POINT TO HIS TRUE IDENTITY AS MESSIAH. FIRST, JESUS CLAIMS AN INTERNAL KNOWLEDGE. HE KNOWS WHO HE IS BECAUSE OF THE ONE WHO IS MOVING INSIDE HIM (JOHN 5.32). HOWEVER, THE LEADERS DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THIS TESTIMONY BECAUSE THEY THEMSELVES DO NOT HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD (JOHN 5.38). SO, JESUS POINTS TO THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN. WHILE HE ARGUES THAT HE DOESN'T ACCEPT JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT HIS IDENTITY BECAUSE IT IS THE TESTIMONY OF A MAN, HE DOES NOTE THAT JOHN WAS RIGHT ABOUT HIM. FURTHER, HE POINTS TO HIS MIRACLES WHICH PHYSICALLY DEMONSTRATE JESUS IS SPECIAL.

HOWEVER, EVEN WITH THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN AND JESUS' MIRACLES, THESE LEADERS REFUSE TO ASSENT TO JESUS' CLAIMS ABOUT BEING THE MESSIAH. THEY REMAIN STEADFAST IN THEIR CONDEMNATION OF JESUS. JESUS POINTS TO THE SOURCE OF THEIR RELUCTANCE, A MISHANDLING OF SCRIPTURE. JESUS STATES THAT THESE LEADERS ARE STUDYING SCRIPTURE DILIGENTLY, BUT THEY ARE DOING IT WITH THE WRONG INTENT. THEY ARE STUDYING SCRIPTURE SO THEY MIGHT FIND LIFE. HERE, JESUS ALLUDES TO A COMMON JEWISH UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE IN HIS DAY, THE UNDERSTANDING THAT A PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE WAS THE SAME THING AS FAITH IN GOD. ONE ANCIENT JEWISH SOURCE READS, "HE WHO HAS ACQUIRED THE WORDS OF THE LAW HAS ACQUIRED FOR HIMSELF THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME" (PIRQE ABOOTH 2.8). A MORE MODERN WAY OF SAYING THIS MIGHT BE "PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THE RIGHT THINGS ARE PEOPLE OF REAL FAITH." JESUS DOES NOT DENY THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE NOR DOES HE DENY THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING PROPER

THEOLOGY. WHAT HE DENIES IS THE EQUATION OF FAITH AND A PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE. JESUS CLAIMS THAT REAL FAITH IS GROUNDED ONLY IN HIM. THOSE WHO COME TO HIM FIND LIFE. IN THIS UNDERSTANDING OF FAITH, THE SCRIPTURES SERVE THE PURPOSE OF POINTING PEOPLE TO JESUS NOT AS A SOURCE OF LIFE ITSELF. JESUS ALONE BEARS THAT WEIGHT. ONE MIGHT SAY THAT THESE LEADERS WERE STUCK, UNABLE TO RESPOND TO JESUS BECAUSE THEY WERE READING THE RIGHT BOOK IN THE WRONG WAY. THEY WERE READING THE SCRIPTURE THINKING THAT IF THEY INTERPRETED THEM CORRECTLY THEY WERE PEOPLE OF FAITH WHILE JESUS CLAIMED THAT PEOPLE OF REAL FAITH CAME TO HIM WHEN THEY READ SCRIPTURE. HE, NOT SCRIPTURE, WAS THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH.

REAL LIFE WITH BLAKE:

I GREW UP IN A FUNDAMENTALIST DENOMINATION, A FORM OF CHRISTIANITY WHICH EMPHASIZED ITS FAITHFULNESS TO THE BIBLE. I CAN REMEMBER MY PASTOR SAYING OVER AND OVER HOW WE WERE A PEOPLE "OF THE BOOK" AND HOW WE WERE A PEOPLE WHOSE FAITH WAS GROUNDED IN SCRIPTURE. THIS SOUNDS WONDERFUL BECAUSE IT HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANT PLACE SCRIPTURE HOLDS. HOWEVER, THERE IS A DARK SIDE TO THIS APPROACH TO SCRIPTURE. YOU CAN'T ASK A QUESTION. YOU SEE, IF YOU ASK A QUESTION THEN WHAT YOU ARE SAYING IS THE BIBLE MIGHT BE WRONG AND IF THE BIBLE IS WRONG AND IT IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR FAITH THEN FAITH FALLS APART. THUS, MY CHURCH WAS A "NO QUESTIONS ASKED" KIND OF CHURCH. DOUBTERS WERE QUICKLY USHERED TO THE BACK PEW AND THEN OUT THE DOOR. BUT, AS I MATURED, I CAME TO REALIZE THAT PEOPLE READ THE SAME SCRIPTURES, CLAIM THEY ARE TRUTHFUL AND FROM GOD AND STILL DIFFER ON WHAT THEY MEAN. THAT PROBABLY MEANS ONE OR BOTH OF OUR INTERPRETATIONS IS A LITTLE OFF. SO, SHOULDN'T WE BE ABLE TO ASK A QUESTION ABOUT THAT? NOT SO FAST, I WAS TOLD. YOU STILL CAN'T QUESTION, BECAUSE WE HAVE THE RIGHT INTERPRETATION. IF WE ARE WRONG, THEN IT ALL FALLS APART. AH, THERE IT WAS. MY FAITH TRADITION HINGED ON A SPECIFIC INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE. DOES ANYONE SEE A PROBLEM WITH THAT? I DO AND SO DID JESUS.

JESUS ENCOUNTERED A GROUP OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN HIS DAY WHO SAID, "WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE. WE ARE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK!" ACTUALLY, THEY DIDN'T SAY IT THAT WAY, BUT PRETTY MUCH. JESUS LOOKED AT THEM AND SAID, "YES, AND THAT IS THE PROBLEM. YOU ARE READING THE RIGHT BOOK IN THE WRONG WAY." JESUS CALLED THESE LEADERS TO REALIZE THAT FAITH BEGAN WITH HIM, WAS FOCUSED ON HIM, NOT SCRIPTURE. PEOPLE OF FAITH ARE JESUS PEOPLE NOT BIBLE PEOPLE. SO, DOES THIS MEAN THE BIBLE ISN'T IMPORTANT? ABSOLUTELY NOT! SCRIPTURE IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE BECAUSE IT ALL POINTS TO JESUS. WHEN WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE JESUS PEOPLE AND NOT BIBLE PEOPLE SUDDENLY IT IS OK TO ASK A QUESTION. THE QUESTION IS MUCH DIFFERENT THAN WE MIGHT EXPECT. GONE ARE THE QUESTIONS OF WHO IS RIGHT AND WHO IS WRONG. GONE ARE THE

QUESTIONS OF WHETHER SOMEONE IS IN OR OUT BECAUSE THEY HOLD TO OUR FINER NUANCES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION. GONE ARE ALL THESE AND SO MANY MORE, AND IN THEIR PLACE IS A SINGLE QUESTION, "HOW MIGHT I SEE JESUS?"

REAL LIFE WITH YOU:

QUESTIONS ARE OFTEN AVOIDED AND DISCOURAGED IN CHURCHES WHICH FIND THEIR ROOTS IN THE FUNDAMENTALIST MOVEMENT BECAUSE THIS MOVEMENT HAS COME TO EQUATE TRUE FAITH WITH A SPECIFIC INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE. THIS IS THE ORIGIN OF THE PHRASE "BIBLE-BELIEVING CHRISTIAN." JESUS RAN INTO PEOPLE LIKE THIS IN HIS DAY. REALLY, THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AROUND, PEOPLE WHO USE INTERPRETATIONS OF SCRIPTURE TO DISCERN WHO IS OUT AND WHO IS IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. HOWEVER, JESUS BLATANTLY CONDEMNED THIS FORM OF FAITH, NOTING THAT THIS FORM OF FAITH READ SCRIPTURE BUT IN THE WRONG MANNER. JESUS CLAIMED THAT TRUE FAITH RESTED UPON HIM. PEOPLE OF REAL FAITH WERE JESUS PEOPLE NOT BIBLE PEOPLE. WHO WAS IN AND WHO WAS OUT DEPENDED ON WHETHER SOMEONE WAS FOLLOWING JESUS NOT HOW THEY INTERPRETED A SPECIFIC PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE. THAT SAID, SCRIPTURE IS NOT UNIMPORTANT. IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE BECAUSE ALL OF SCRIPTURE IS MEANT TO POINT US TO JESUS. SCRIPTURE SHOWS US HIS CHARACTER AND REVEALS TO US HIS DESIRES FOR HIS PEOPLE AND HIS CREATION.

HOWEVER, THIS PURSUIT OF JESUS REQUIRES ASKING QUESTIONS, MANY MANY QUESTIONS OF SCRIPTURE. THIS WEEK, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONTINUE ASKING YOUR QUESTIONS OF GOD. PERHAPS ONE OF THE QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK CONCERNS THE NATURE OF TRUE FAITH. CONSIDER ASKING GOD WHERE THE FOUNDATION OF YOUR FAITH LIES. ARE YOU A JESUS PERSON OR A BIBLE PERSON? TALK WITH HIM ABOUT WHY THIS MIGHT BE AND HOW HE IS INVITING YOU TO RESPOND.

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