

ASKING FOR A FRIEND | WEEK 3: THE LGBT QUESTIONS

MARCH 3, 2019

SERMON STUDY

The content we are covering this week can be complex and emotional. We can love each other, but not necessarily agree—that's all part of healthy relationships. As you begin your group discussion, take a moment to pray together, asking God to help each of us give grace-filled responses and always with an attitude that seeks first to understand before being understood.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we never find him standing against people. He was always sitting with people! He showed compassion, empathy, and understanding. God wants us to sit with people and love them with the truth. Giving your life to Jesus means submitting all of your wants and desires to him, finding your primary identity in him, and making your prayer, "More of you, Jesus, and less of me, until it is Christ alone in my life."

Read Matthew 19:4-5, Hebrews 13:4, Matthew 19:19, and John 3:17. Most people in same-sex relationships don't leave the church because they were told this is wrong. They leave because they were dehumanized, ridiculed, and excluded. Truth is one of the most loving things you can do, but it should never be used or even perceived as a weapon to devalue or dehumanize anyone.

- When have you ever felt dehumanized, ridiculed or excluded? What did you do about it?
- In your own life, have you ever been guilty of making inappropriate jokes or comments toward same-sex attracted people? Knowing that love is commanded, and agreement is optional, what is one step you could take (even a small one) to reach out in love?
- What does the Bible say about God's design for marriage? What does this mean for all of us, regardless of sexual orientation?

Read Hebrews 4:15-16. Our theology should increase our empathy. Our church should be a safe place for everyone. All of us have issues to work through, and we are as dependent upon God's grace as the air we breathe.

- Do you feel empathy at church? Why or why not? What is one way you could show empathy toward others at church?
- How does it help you to know that Jesus knows everything about you and empathizes with everything you're going through? Do you feel you can go to him in prayer boldly, knowing that you'll receive his mercy and help? Why or why not?

Read John 3:30, 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Chasing after the Lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives should be the path for every Christ follower, regardless of sexual orientation. Our primary identity should only be found in Jesus.

- How easy is it for you to say: More of Jesus, less of me, until it is Christ alone? Why or why not?
- Finding your primary identity in Jesus means submitting all your wants and desires to him. Think of one area of your life that needs to be submitted to Jesus. What would it take for you to be able to surrender it to him today? How can our group pray for you in this area?

DAILY BIBLE READING

Here's a glance at how we're being challenged this week. (Subscribe at: tpcc.org/dailybiblereading)

Day One: Matthew 19:19 and John 3:17 | Sit with people, love with truth.

Day Two: Matthew 19:4-5 | Surrendered sexuality.

Day Three: Hebrews 4:15-16 | Our theology should increase our empathy.

Day Four: 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 | Jesus as savior and Lord.

Day Five: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 | More of Jesus, less of me.