



Text: Matthew 6:19-34

Lesson Themes:

- The overwhelming love of God radically changes the focus of our lives.
- As God transforms your life, the way you react and respond to people around you also changes. Those changes impact the culture in which you live.
- DOING THE GOSPEL

Theme Verse: Matthew 6:19-21

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Outline of Text:

- I. Focus on the Eternal, not Earthly (6:19-21)
- II. Focus on Good, not Evil (6:22-24)
- III. Focus on Assurance, not Anxiety (6:25-32, 34)
- IV. Focus on God’s Kingdom, not Mine (6:33)

'How' to Lead a Bible Study Discussion Group

- This discussion guide is designed for just that... discussion. When I lead discussion group Bible studies, I do not have answers anywhere in the material, nor do I use a leader's guide with all the answers written in.
- This is INTENTIONAL! I believe that the discipleship process should be an encounter with God, not just listening to someone else tell you what words to write down to fill in the blanks.
- Our goal is to help you facilitate discovery learning for your students. As the questions are asked, every participant (including the leader) is required to search God's Word to discover the appropriate morsel of truth. When facilitators are 'armed' with all the answers, they are less likely to allow the time needed for individuals to process the question and formulate an answer.
- Don't be afraid of silence! That discovery process is the key to the success or failure of this process. It is in those moments of silence that we stop teaching and the Holy Spirit takes over!
- We cannot forget what Jesus said in John 16:13: *"when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."*
- A "Lesson Commentary" is also available with these resources. We encourage you to study the material contained in the commentary, but do not try to teach (or lecture) your group from that material. Let it serve as a source of information for you to draw upon to help give context and perspective to the group discussion.
- For a deeper discussion of how to lead an inductive style, Bible discussion group, please download the "Leading Small Group Bible Studies" resource by clicking [HERE](#).

Ice-Breaker Options

Truth is Truth is Truth

In this activity, you will have three differently shaped, clear plastic containers and three identical water bottles. Here are some ideas to help you find your containers:



The goal of this activity is to show that even though something might look different doesn't mean that it is different.

For the activity, you will fill three different containers with exactly the same amount of water in each. Then ask the class which container has the most water and which container has the least amount of water. After everyone has guessed, pour each container back into the three water bottles to show that each had the same amount of water as the others.

In this illustration, the water represents absolute truth. In our world today, people think that truth is something that you can define for yourself—you can distort it however you please. But no matter what you may do with it, truth is truth and it is absolute and unchanging.

As the water was poured into the different shaped containers, the container shaped the water into different shapes, but it did not change the essence or the character of the water. When we accept God's Word as the absolute truth for our lives, God transforms our lives by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2) and conforms our lives to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).

"Truth is powerful. It brings life. It has been here since the beginning, and it still exists today. Truth is available to all who seek it in the person of Jesus Christ. Even though our society tells us that it's narrow-minded to believe in ultimate truth, there's lots of evidence that says we should run after it with all our hearts. Christ says the truth will set us free. And that promise is true for all time." (<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/church/worldview-formation/absolute-truth>)

Values & Beliefs Survey

The purpose of this survey is NOT to discuss each of these issues! Nor is the purpose to try to promote your opinion, or even the biblical teaching, on these subjects. THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY IS TO GET YOUR STUDENTS THINKING!

In the lesson today, our goal is to move beyond knowing, understanding, and proclaiming the truth. Our goal is to engage the culture around us with love!

Instructions for the Survey:

- Distribute one copy of the survey to each of your students.
- Tell them: “Please DO NOT put your name on this survey!”
- Ask them to read the directions as you read them aloud.
- Ask the students to indicate their personal beliefs/opinions about each issue by circling the answer that best reflects their point of view.
- Give the students about 3-4 minutes to complete the surveys and then ask them to bring them to you. Do not look at the surveys as they are being turned in. Assure your students that their answers will remain anonymous.

For more information about the results of a Values & Beliefs Poll conducted in the United States by Gallup, go to: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/191903/religious-groups-disagree-five-key-moral-issues.aspx>

Again, the goal of this survey is NOT to discuss each of these issues but rather to get your students to consider that their personal belief system NOT ONLY affects the way that they feel about these issues, but it also affects the culture around them.

After class, spend some time looking at the survey responses. This will help you to better understand your students’ world view, which in turn will give you better perspective in teaching Lesson 3 on Engaging the Culture with the Gospel.

After you have had an opportunity to evaluate the surveys, please return the completed surveys to the camp offices. This will give us an opportunity to assess the overall mindset and worldview of our campers this year and will help to inform the curriculum for next year.

Bible Study Discussion Guide

In our lesson yesterday, we talked about how important truth is and how truth needs to have an impact on our lives. We discussed three main ideas in our lesson yesterday. First, we must believe the truth and be saved. Second, we must allow the truth of God to overcome sinful habits our lives. And third, we must allow the truth of God to transform our thoughts and attitudes by renewing our minds.

In today's lesson, we're going to take this concept one step further. Not only must we engage the culture with truth, but we must also engage the culture with love! Most people in the world today do not care about what you know unless they know that you genuinely care for them. This means that people won't listen to the truth that you have to share if they think you do not like them or are judging them for their lifestyle.

There are many "hot-button" topics in our culture today that the Bible clearly teaches against. The Bible teaches us to stand firm in its absolute truth; while at the same time, showing love and compassion for those who do not know this truth from God's Word.

What are some ways that we can show love and compassion toward people who stand against the truth taught in God's Word?

Read Ephesians 2:4-5 and Ephesians 4:31-32. Why should we show love and compassion to people who are against us? (Consider also Luke 6:27-36)

The only way that we can be merciful and compassionate toward those who stand in opposition against God and His Word is to be conformed to the image of God's Son. As we become more and more like Him, we will demonstrate more and more of His characteristics. This section of the "Sermon on the Mount" concentrates on the ways that our focus should change in light of our new life in Christ.

Focus on the Eternal, not Earthly

Read Matthew 6:19-21. Where does the Bible say that our focus should be? Why?

What are some examples of earthly things and eternal things?

Focus on Good, not Evil

Read Matthew 6:22-23. In this passage, what does light represent? What does darkness represent?

In what ways are we affected by the things we focus on? How important is it to focus on good things? (Consider Philippians 4:8)

Read Matthew 6:24. Jesus is very clear here that there can only be one thing that we are devoted to—only one thing we focus on. What is the primary focus of your life?

Focus on Assurance, not Anxiety

Another aspect of our lives that needs the transforming power of God is in the area of our fears and anxieties. Read Matthew 6:25-32. What assurances does Jesus give us about our day to day life and needs?

Is it easy or hard to trust that God is in control of everything and will provide everything that we will need in our lives? Why?

Read Matthew 6:34. In what ways would your life change if you lived your life by this principle?

Focus on God's Kingdom, not Mine

Read Matthew 6:33. What does Jesus mean when He refers to the kingdom of God?

What does it mean to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness?

God's Message for Me Today

How much time do I spend each day on the following things?

Reading the Bible

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-60 minutes
- 1-3 hours
- 3+ hours

Praying

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-60 minutes
- 1-3 hours
- 3+ hours

Physical Exercise

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-60 minutes
- 1-3 hours
- 3+ hours

Streaming Video

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-60 minutes
- 1-3 hours
- 3+ hours

Scrolling Social Media

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-60 minutes
- 1-3 hours
- 3+ hours

Favorite Hobby

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-60 minutes
- 1-3 hours
- 3+ hours

What changes do I need to make in my personal life as a result of this study?