

Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions

week of 1/11/26

Summary

Pastor Mark explored the baptism of Jesus, focusing on how Jesus was not the kind of Messiah John the Baptist was expecting. When Jesus came to be baptized, John refused because he believed Jesus didn't need to repent. However, Jesus insisted it was necessary 'to fulfill all that righteousness demands.' The sermon emphasizes that repentance isn't just confessing sin, but committing to live for God. Jesus' baptism demonstrated His identification with sinful humanity and His commitment to live in obedience to the Father. The message challenges us to begin the new year with repentance, following Jesus' example of humble submission to God's will, even when we don't fully understand His ways.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today to study Your Word, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us. Help us to be like young Samuel who said, 'Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.' We know that You have something specific for each of us today, so we pray that You would remove any distractions or preconceptions that might hinder us from hearing Your voice. Give

us humble hearts that are willing to be challenged and changed by Your truth. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one thing you did differently this past week compared to your normal routine, and how did it make you feel?

Key Verses

Matthew 3:13-17

Matthew 3:1-12

Isaiah 42:1-9

Matthew 11:2-6

Questions

1. Why do you think John the Baptist was confused about Jesus wanting to be baptized? What does this tell us about our own expectations of Jesus?
2. Jesus said it was necessary 'to fulfill all that righteousness demands.' What do you think this means, and why was baptism important for Jesus?

3. The sermon mentioned that repentance isn't just confessing sin, but committing to live for God. How does this broader understanding of repentance change your perspective?
4. John the Baptist called people to 'produce fruit in keeping with repentance' - sharing with those who don't have and not using power to take advantage of others. How can we apply this in our daily lives?
5. Jesus identified himself with sinful humanity even though He was sinless. What does this teach us about how we should relate to others who are struggling?
6. Pastor Mark said 'blessed are those who let Jesus be Jesus, even if He is different from what they expect.' When have you had to adjust your expectations of who Jesus is?
7. How does Jesus' example of humble obedience to the Father challenge the way you approach decision-making in your own life?
8. What does it mean practically to 'live for God' rather than living for ourselves in today's world?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you've been living for yourself rather than for God. Take a specific step to surrender that area to Him, whether it's how you spend your time, money, or energy. Practice daily repentance - not just confessing wrongdoing, but actively recommitting to live God's way.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus was not the kind of Messiah John the Baptist was expecting, and sometimes Jesus isn't who we expect Him to be either.
- Repentance involves both turning away from sin and turning toward God - it's a commitment to live for Him.
- Jesus identified with sinful humanity through baptism, demonstrating His humility and love for us.
- True repentance produces fruit - it changes how we treat others, especially in sharing with those in need and not abusing power.

- Following Jesus means yielding to His leadership even when we don't fully understand His ways.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your example of humble obedience and identification with us in our need. Help us to follow Your lead in repentance - not just confessing our sins, but truly committing to live for You. Give us the courage to let You be who You are, even when it challenges our expectations. Help us to produce fruit that reflects our repentance, treating others with justice and mercy. As we go into this week, may we live not for ourselves but for You, trusting in Your perfect will for our lives. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.