

[Un]Paved Ministries – Post-Event Bible Study 1

Theme Verse: John 20:31

Them: Belief

Activity Opener: What do you trust?

- For teams of 3, print of pictures of:
 - A well-known news station
 - Various social-media logos
 - A gossip magazine
 - A group of friends talking
 - A teacher
 - Books
 - Parents talking to their kids
 - Etc... sources of information relevant to your group (try to avoid an overtly-religious source to prevent canned answers.)
- Have teams sort their pictures in order of how much they trust those information sources, then hang them up in a well-visible place

Discuss:

1. Why did your team put your pictures in this order? How did you determine which sources were more trustworthy than others?
2. Were there disagreements in your group? Over what?
3. What information sources were a no-brainer for their level of trustworthiness? What made the decision so easy?
4. Does it matter who or what you trust for information? Why? What difference does it make to your life, personally? (*i.e., how would it impact career, sports, school, relationships, etc...?*)

Say Something Like: It's clear who or what we believe in matters immensely for our lives. When we trust the wrong source of information, it impacts every part of how we live. But how do we discern what sources of information are trustworthy? What do we do when two sources of information we rely on offer different perspectives on what truth is? What do we do, then? It can put you in a serious dilemma.

At this point, break into small group circles for deeper discussion. Small groups should comprise three students at minimum, guided by an adult leader. If your group is small, feel free to continue as one group.

Read: Matthew 5:43-47

Discuss:

1. What do you notice about this passage? What is Jesus doing? (*Look for something along the lines of He is comparing a cultural norm to a new standard He is setting.*)
2. Think of a real-life situation where someone could be faced with choosing between these two standards Jesus presents. What would it look like for them to follow the cultural norm? What about the new standard Jesus is setting?
3. Which of these two standards do you think is easier and more natural to put into practice?
4. Why do you think it seems so *logical* and *natural* to hate someone who treats you like an enemy?

Read: John 20:31

Discuss:

1. Life in this passage is referring to all that makes life “real” and “genuine.” People often don’t associate life as a Christian believer as the way to really live life. Why is that, in your opinion? (*Christianity is “boring”, full of rules and hypocrites who don’t follow those “rules”, etc... Try to push them for genuine answers by giving one of your own, if needed.*)
2. As we discussed before, Jesus often calls us to a standard very different from the standards our culture gives us. In light of this passage, why do you think he might do that? (*A follow-up, if they’re struggling, could be “Is it out of some sort of power-trip to control us and make us miserable? Why?”*)
3. Jesus’ call on our life sometimes is counterintuitive, like loving and praying for someone who actively hates us. After this [Un]Paved experience, why might He be worth following, anyway? What does that mean when you go back to your day-to-day life? Does something have to change?

Wrap up any discussion that comes out of this in your small group, then join up in one large group with the other small groups to wrap up.

Say Something Like: The choice before us, as Joshua said to the Israelites, is “Chose this day whom you will serve.” If Jesus is trustworthy, then what He says matters for our lives, but not because He is a giant manipulator on a power-trip. It’s because His desire is for us to experience “real” and “genuine” life, a life we can’t have without Him.

We’re going to pray individually now. I will open the prayer, and then I want you to bring this question before God in your mind: “In what part of my life is Jesus challenging me to live for Him that I have been holding back?” Really be open to God’s leading in this area. Ask God to help your heart be open to living a life focused on Jesus and the “abundant life” He offers. When you have had a few minutes to pray silently, I will close, lifting your prayers up to God because we know He always hears us.

Close in Prayer