



The Spirit Difference: Part 2

Week of December 30, 2018

These Digging Deeper questions can be used the week following the Sunday message. You can use these questions for personal growth and development, or as a guide for your family or Connect Group discussions.

Message Recap:

Read Mark 1:35-39

Jesus knew one of the simplest truths about having a relationship with God – quality time. He knew that in order to have an active and close relationship, he had to spend time alone with his Father. If Jesus, who is the Son of God, had to spend time alone in prayer, then how much more important is it for us to do the same? As humans we try to overcomplicate our relationship, making “to do” lists that, if we check all the boxes off, we feel as if we’ve “connected” with God. But relationships don’t work that way. If we want to experience more love, joy, and peace in the coming new year, we’ve got to get back to the basics. We’ve got to realize the simplicity of being in relationship with Jesus on a regular basis.

Pray

Lord, as humans we constantly try to make things more manageable, and we tend to forget what’s most important. In the new year, help us to focus on what really matters – you. Help us to forget about all of our lists, calendars, and formulas, and just spend more time working on our relationship one-on-one. Thanks for how simple you’ve made it for us to experience life with you, and thanks for the offering of love, joy, and peace we so desperately need in our lives. Amen.

Getting Started

- What are your New Year’s resolutions for 2019?
- What was at least one thing that has held you back from meeting your goals/hopes for 2018?

Digging Deeper

1. How much time do you spend in personal time (relationship) with Jesus right now?
2. If you’re not spending as much time as you’d like, what are the things keeping you from it?
3. What are some of the difficulties you’ve experienced in your life over the past year? Do you think they are holding you back from experiencing more love, joy, and peace?
4. Read John 15:5-11. What would it look like to you, personally, to ‘remain in Christ’?
5. Looking forward to the year ahead, how do you resolve to spend a little more personal time with Jesus?
6. How can the group commit to helping you reach these goals?

Living Jesus

In Revelation 3:20 it says that Christ is always waiting to be with us. All we have to do is open the door and let him in. There’s no complicated process or special formula that we must do correctly to “win” Jesus’ affection. All we have to do is be with him. As with any relationship, that is the main ingredient. Call it personal time, quality time, or whatever else you want, but it all boils down to presence. Jesus knew it, and he wants us to understand it as well. As the Son of God, he had a direct link to Father, but he knew that even he still needed to spend time alone just the two of them. He also knew that we needed to see him praying with God so that we could understand how it works. Of course, we’ve still tried to overcomplicate it, as we often like to do.

Your Story

So, the question is now, are you going to keep trying to complicate your relationship with Jesus, or are you just going to accept the simplicity of it all? Maybe it’s hard for you to grasp how simple it is, or maybe it’s hard just finding time amongst the busyness of life. As you think about the year ahead, decide where your priorities are, and where you want to be before the year’s end.

The year 2019 can be filled with more love, joy, and peace than you’ve ever felt before, but you have to get back to the basics of spending time in relationship with Father. If you can do that, then I can promise you won’t regret it.

So, what’s it going to be?