

Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions

week of 2/1/26

Summary

This sermon focuses on the message of the cross as described in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. Pastor Jonathan emphasized that the cross represents more than just Christ's atoning work - it's a call for believers to daily take up their cross and follow Jesus through sacrificial living. He contrasted worldly wisdom and religious signs with God's choice to use the foolish and weak things of the world to shame the wise and mighty. He shared his personal testimony of leaving a comfortable ministry position to pastor a struggling church in downtown Lima, Ohio, demonstrating how embracing the cross leads to powerful ministry among the poor and broken. The message challenged both intellectual and religious approaches to faith, calling for genuine surrender and daily dying to self.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us. Help us to set aside our preconceptions and be willing to hear Your voice speaking to us through Your Word and through our discussion. Lord, we know that Your ways are higher than our ways, and Your thoughts higher than our thoughts. Give us humble hearts that are ready to be challenged and transformed by Your truth. May we not just hear Your Word, but be doers of it. Prepare us now for this time together, and may we leave changed by our encounter with You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one thing you've done in your life that others might have considered foolish or crazy, but you felt was the right thing to do?

Key Verses

1. 1 Corinthians 1:18
2. 1 Corinthians 1:25
3. 1 Corinthians 1:27-28
4. Matthew 16:24
5. Galatians 2:20

Questions

1. How does our culture today view the message of the cross as 'foolishness,' and how do you see this playing out in your daily life?
2. What's the difference between believing in the cross as a historical event versus embracing the cross as a daily lifestyle?
3. Pastor Jonathan mentioned that God chooses 'the foolish things of the world to shame the wise.' Can you think of examples from your own life or from Scripture where this principle was demonstrated?

4. How do you personally struggle with wanting to appear wise or successful in the world's eyes versus embracing the humility of the cross?
5. What does it practically look like to 'take up your cross daily' in your current life circumstances?
6. How has your understanding of what it means to follow Jesus changed as you've grown in your faith?
7. What areas of your life might God be calling you to surrender or 'die to' in order to experience His power and wisdom?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you've been seeking comfort, security, or worldly success instead of following the way of the cross. Take a practical step to 'die to yourself' in that area - whether it's serving someone who can't repay you, giving sacrificially, or choosing humility over self-promotion. Ask God to show you how embracing the cross in this area might demonstrate His power and wisdom to those around you.

Key Takeaways

- The message of the cross is not just about Christ's atonement, but about our daily call to take up our cross and follow Jesus through sacrificial living.
- God deliberately chooses the foolish, weak, and despised things of the world to shame the wise and mighty, demonstrating His power through unlikely vessels.
- True Christian living often appears foolish to the world but demonstrates the power and wisdom of God to those being saved.
- The cross transforms us not by making us smarter or more religious, but by making us more humble and attuned to the suffering of others.
- Embracing the message of the cross leads to a life of power and purpose that surpasses what we could achieve through worldly wisdom or religious performance.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the powerful reminder that Your ways are not our ways. Help us to embrace the foolishness of the cross in our daily lives,

choosing sacrifice over comfort, humility over pride, and service over self-promotion. Give us courage to live counter-culturally, knowing that in our weakness You are made strong. Transform our hearts to be more like Yours - hearts that are broken for the broken, that serve the least, and that find joy in laying down our lives for others. May we be people who demonstrate Your power not through our own strength or wisdom, but through our willingness to take up our cross and follow You. Use us as instruments of Your grace in a world that desperately needs to see the love of Christ lived out. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.