



This is the final week of the “HD Living: an Inside Look at the Sermon On the Mount” series. We conclude the series by looking back on everything we have learned and asking, “Where do I go from here?” This weeks’ discussion is a challenge to act on everything we’ve learned.

- **What BIG changes have you experienced in your life in the past year?**
- **What BIG changes are you expecting in the coming year?**
- **Do you think these changes will increase or decrease your ability to influence the people around you? Why?**
- **How well do you think you handle changes and storms in life?**
- **READ: Matthew 7:13-14 - What does this passage teach us about living the HD Life?**
- **READ: Matthew 7:15-23**
 - **What does this passage teach us about how our efforts are affected by who we are deep down?**
 - **What does this passage teach us about people who appear to be doing the right things, but are doing them for the wrong reasons?**
 - **Which of the following factors have a significant effect on what you do and why?**
 - *Someone else did it first.*
 - *I just need to get my life right.*
 - *I want Jesus to know I'm trying.*
 - *People will think better of me.*
 - *It will get me in the “in” crowd.*
 - *I want to change the world/make a difference.*
 - *I want to.*
 - *God told me to.*
 - *Other (Explain)*
 - **How does this passage relate to each of those motivations?**
- **READ: Matthew 7:24-27**
 - **What does this passage teach us about the value the entire Sermon on the Mount has in our lives?**
 - **When the storms of life come at you, how do you handle the pressure?**
 - **Do you instinctively rely on your faith in Jesus to carry you through the rough spots?**
 - **What is keeping you from strengthening the foundation of your faith? Is there something Journey Church or your Growth Group can do to help? Do you simply need help knowing what to do?**
- **What is one lesson learned from the HD Living Series that will help you choose to follow Jesus on the narrow road?**
- **What is one lesson learned from this series that will help you do the right things for the right reasons?**
- **What is one lesson learned from this series that will become a foundation for your life in the future?**



Growth Group Leaders:

This is the final week in our HD Living: An Inside Look at the Sermon On the Mount" series. This has been a longer-than-usual series. It has also been fairly intense at times. We've covered a lot of territory during this series. I hope it has helped your Growth Groups get together and evaluate various aspects of their lives with a new perspective.

This week, as we finish up the series, we have an opportunity to look back at what we have learned and challenge our folks to put what they have heard and learned into practice. This is a great "feedback" Travel Guide, which means you can get a lot of feedback from your group, and the Leadership Team would love to get some of that feedback passed on from you so we can evaluate what works and what doesn't for futures series.

We're "Living on a Prayer" for the next few weeks, so let's finish this series strong!

God bless!
Andrew

This is the final week of the "HD Living: an Inside Look at the Sermon On the Mount" series. We conclude the series by looking back on everything we have learned and asking, "Where do I go from here?" This weeks' discussion is a challenge to act on everything we've learned.

This week, we have FOUR closely-related ice-breaker questions. Don't skip by the questions, but be careful not to dwell on them. We have plenty of discussion ahead, so listen to your folks and use what they say as a springboard for the rest of the discussion. Particularly, be thinking of ways you can help them make the jump from what we have learned to the things they are facing in their lives in the near future.

- **What BIG changes have you experienced in your life in the past year?**
- **What BIG changes are you expecting in the coming year?**
- **Do you think these changes will increase or decrease your ability to influence the people around you? Why?**
- **How well do you think you handle changes and storms in life? Be sure to follow up with a "Why?"**
- **READ: Matthew 7:13-14 - What does this passage teach us about living the HD Life?**

Try not to just "give out" answers, but some key elements you will want to be sure your people hit on:

- Living a "normal life" is easy, but is destructive in the end.
- Living an "HD Life" is hard, but leads to life in the end.
- Most people lead a "normal life."
- Only a select few choose an "HD Life."
- **READ: Matthew 7:15-23**
 - **What does this passage teach us about how our efforts are affected by who we are deep down?**

Ultimately, who we are deep down will eventually be revealed in the fruit we bear. You may want to visit some "fruit" passages during this discussion: *Matt 3:8; John 15:1-17; Rom 6:20-23; Gal 5:19-24; Col 1:9-10.*

- **What does this passage teach us about people who appear to be doing the right things, but are doing them for the wrong reasons?**

Although the first portion alludes to “false teachers,” this question should focus more on 7:21-23. Take some extra time here to discuss the contrast between “getting your life right” to please God, and having a “true faith” that leads to genuine repentance. There are plenty of people out there who are trying to do the right thing, thinking it will get them to heaven, but doing the right thing will always fall short. Only through faith in Jesus can we really “get right,” and everything else can follow in line from that faith. *Matt 3:8, John 15:1-17, and Rom 6:20-23* from above may be helpful in strengthening this point.

This discussion should help you to slide easily into the next question:

- **Which of the following factors have a significant effect on what you do and why?**
 - *Someone else did it first.*
 - *I just need to get my life right.*
 - *I want Jesus to know I'm trying.*
 - *People will think better of me.*
 - *It will get me in the “in” crowd.*
 - *I want to change the world/make a difference.*
 - *I want to.*
 - *God told me to.*
 - *Other (Explain)*

The interesting thing about this list is: **every one of these is potentially good.** I would suggest talking about how having these motivations grow out of **faith in Jesus** can be a very good thing. However, if these factors are actually our surface motivations, rather than from God, they become a very bad thing, and we run into the dangerous territory verses 21-23 are talking about. (**Which IS the next question . . .**)

- **How does this passage relate to each of those motivations?**
- READ: Matthew 7:24-27
- **What does this passage teach us about the value the entire Sermon on the Mount has in our lives?**

This passage is Jesus' conclusion to the *Sermon On the Mount*. He's basically saying, “*If you hear and do everything I said in this sermon, you'll be able to handle whatever life throws at you. If you don't do what I said, you won't have a faith to hold you up when life gets tough.*”

Some skeptics argue that “religion is a crutch for the weak.” In a very real way, they are right. However, I would change their argument just a little bit: “Faith in Jesus is for people who recognize that their circumstances are bigger than they are, but not bigger than God.” Whether we admit it or not, we can not control all of our circumstances. Life will eventually throw something at us we just can't handle on our own (sometimes that something is death itself.) But, God is ALWAYS bigger than our circumstances and WILL NOT allow anything to come our way that He can't carry us through if we have faith in Him.

- **When the storms of life come at you, how do you handle the pressure?**

This is a “faith test” question. Be careful not to beat someone up to where they question their faith (unless you have a very real reason to challenge them here), but also challenge folks to evaluate carefully the depth of their belief that God can really handle their circumstances.

- **Do you instinctively rely on your faith in Jesus to carry you through the rough spots?**

This is a follow-up “faith test” question, closely related to the previous one.

- **What is keeping you from strengthening the foundation of your faith? Is there something Journey Church or your Growth Group can do to help? Do you simply need help knowing what to do?**

This is the first in a series of follow-up and challenge questions. This question wraps up this week's passage and leads us into a review of the entire series. This question is a great opportunity for you to get some feedback from your folks. *If something comes up that is a challenge for the leadership team to meet a discipleship-related need, please let us know.* From here, proceed through the rest of the challenge questions. You may want to have the topics off the entire series handy to help remind your folks of what we have learned. I look forward to getting some helpful feedback from you!

- **What is one lesson learned from the HD Living Series that will help you choose to follow Jesus on the narrow road?**
- **What is one lesson learned from this series that will help you do the right things for the right reasons?**
- **What is one lesson learned from this series that will become a foundation for your life in the future?**