

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

DISCUSSION GUIDE
FEBRUARY 14th, 2016

“Intersected” | 1 Peter 2:4-17

GETTING STARTED: What Valentine’s Day traditions do you observe? Are you more of a “I bought the card in January” or a “I’ll pick something up late on February 13” type person?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE:

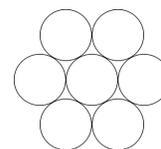
1. Why do topics like Starbuck’s red coffee cup (sans “Merry Christmas”) rise to the forefront of public attention? How does this shape the world’s perspective of Christ-followers?
2. Read 1 Peter 2:4-10. What is the significance of the discarded stone becoming the cornerstone? How had Jesus’ culture overlooked his significance then? How does our culture overlook him now? What is the difference between *intersecting* our culture and *opposing* it?
3. Read just 1 Peter 2:9-10. What hopeful truths does Peter present regarding our identity as believers? How should this lay a positive groundwork for the way a Christ-follower intersects with culture?
4. How do you personally define the word *culture*? Jot down a few notes about how you interact with that definition on a day to day basis. Consider Genesis 1:28 as you spend some time coming up with a working definition for your group discussion.
5. How do you respond to Tim Keller’s quote that, “There is no more crucial issue facing us today than the relationship of the church and the gospel to contemporary culture”? How might a Christ-follower agree with this? What might someone that doesn’t follow Christ identify as the more crucial issue in today’s world?
6. Why is it possible that two Christ-followers might have different opinions on topics within our culture? Consider how Brooks mentioned the fact that these matters aren’t always just black and white.

7. Take a moment to review the seven major spheres of influence (listed on the back of this page). How do these spheres make up our (or any) culture as a whole?

8. What are the “imitate and assimilate” and the “isolate and insulate” methods of interaction with our culture? How do they represent the extremes of interaction? Identify how 1 John 2:15-17 and 1 Peter 2:11-12 suggest we handle this interaction? How are those more effective approaches than the two extremes?

APPLY THE TRUTH:

We will use this chart throughout this entire sermon series to map out a plan to influence culture. This week, focus on the first column and make these spheres personal to your own life. Answer the question, “When and where do I already intersect with this sphere?” Consider re-creating this simple drawing of seven circles to represent the various spheres of culture – your area of greatest influence will exist at the center of all your spheres. Just as no one person has the same influence, no two individual’s sets of circles will be the same.



PRAY:

Our mission partner of the of the month is Isaias and Lenae Gabriel with GO Ministries. Pray for Isaias and Lenae as they establish small groups in their ministry at Central Church. Isaias’ musical group, Cristo Urbano, was recently nominated for top Christian rap artist in the Dominican Republic. Pray for their impact as they personally intersect with their local culture.

NOTES:

Mapping My Spheres

Spheres	When and where do I already intersect with this sphere?	Who do I already know in this sphere?	How will I influence the people and culture of this sphere?
Arts/Media			
Business			
Education			
Government/ Politics			
Science/Medicine/ Technology			
Family			
Religion			

Don't worry – it doesn't have to be perfect! This worksheet will be available each week during our "Spheres of Influence" sermon series. You can use the same one each week or start fresh as you expand your understanding of your spheres of influence.