

“The Valley Fold” | Is Jesus at a Distance or Close?

GETTING STARTED: How do you prepare for tax time? Do you file them as soon as you get your W-2's or wait until closer to April 15th?

EXPLORE THE TOPIC

1. People often hold on to views or ideas about Jesus that simply aren't true or accurate about who Jesus really is. Where do these views and ideas come from? What perpetuates them? How can we help people establish an accurate view of Jesus?
2. Read the following passages and identify the term that Jesus used to address his audience. How might it have felt to be addressed in that way?
 - Matthew 16:8
 - Matthew 6:30
 - Matthew 14:31
3. When Jesus uses the term “little faith,” he is addressing a lack of confidence in God's ability to care and provide. When have you struggled with placing your faith in God's ability to do that? Why is it important to share these struggles with other people (like this group)?
4. Jesus used yeast as a symbol of something that made bread less pure. In what ways were the Pharisees and Sadducees making Jesus' message less pure? Why were the disciples to guard themselves against their influence?
5. What is meant by the phrase, “Jesus' disciples should focus less on what they lack and more on whom they have?”
6. Review the following accounts when Jesus provided an overabundance of food from tiny resources for large numbers of people. What lessons should Jesus' disciples have learned at the time? What can we learn from them today?
 - Matthew 14:13-21
 - Matthew 15:29-39
7. What are some practical ways to “remember” that God cares and provides? Why is it important to routinely do this as individuals and as a church?
8. Why is it important to wrestle with this question: “Are you satisfied with Jesus alone or has the teaching of others got you wanting something more?” How can a person know if they are satisfied by Jesus alone?
9. Consider Brooks' use of the phrase “Beware the tax of politicians.” How does that made-up phrase help us understand why the disciples were confused by what Jesus meant with his comment on bread in Matthew 16:6-7?

APPLY THE TRUTH

Take time this week to remember when God has provided and cared for you. Reflect on what your group talked about for question number 7 and do at least one thing that helps you establish a routine of remembering.

NOTES:
