

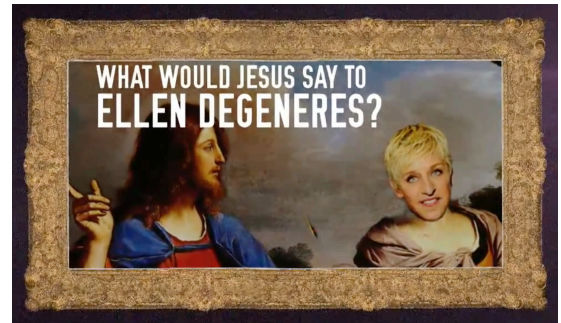


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## bigIdea small group discussion

She's one of today's most popular television personalities. She's known for her humor, her wit and her charm. For a living, she interviews the most famous people in the world, and has fun doing it.

In this message, Chris looks at what would happen in a one-on-one conversation between Ellen DeGeneres and the ultimate guest, Jesus Christ. And as we peek into this interview, we discover some things that are really meant for our lives.



**BIG IDEA:** Christians should be known by who we are for, not what we oppose.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

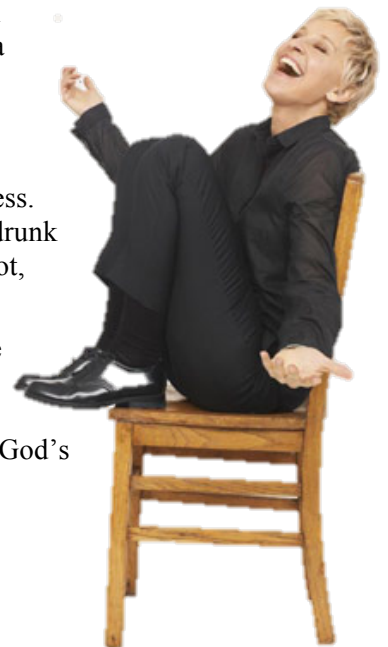
1. As a Christian, have you ever felt backed into a corner by non-Christians in regard to your view of homosexuality?
2. Is it even possible to contend that homosexuality is not sexuality as God intended it without being labeled a 'homophobe'?
3. Why does it harm all Christians when a handful of loud-mouth 'Christians' declare that 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina are God's judgment on homosexuals? How should we express to homosexual friends our feelings about bogus sound-bites?
4. Research indicates that only 14 percent of 'born-again Christians' would be highly motivated to help HIV/AIDS orphans overseas. What are three reasons why that mentality toward this disease and those orphans is ignorant and pathetic? Where in Scripture do we find Jesus dealing much differently than that with people suffering from illnesses with attached stigmas in his day?

*Billy Graham said, "I'm going to quote the Bible now, not myself, that it homosexuality is wrong—it's a sin. But there are other sins. Why do we jump on that sin as through it's the greatest sin? The greatest sin in the Bible is idolatry, worshipping other things besides the true and living God. Jealousy is a sin. Pride is a sin. All of these things are sins. But homosexuality is also a sin and needs to be dealt with and needs to be forgiven, and that's why Christ came and died on the cross."*

5. What do you think of Graham's words? Do you find them helpful or unhelpful? Do you feel like his approach would be received well by people (Christians included) who sit at either extreme end of the Left-Right political spectrum?
6. How can both the mistreatment of other humans or an anything-goes approach to sexuality tamper with the Church's duty to be a light to the world? Is there a third way? a way of living out Christianity with obedience and conviction as well as a generous and gracious love for others?
7. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read John 8:1-11.*

Suppose, for a moment, that the woman in the story wasn't an adulteress. Suppose that she was a lesbian or a woman who had an abortion or a drunk driver or a prostitute. That can put the pharisaical shoe on the other foot, can't it?

8. If one of those possibilities had been the scenario in John 8, would that change your attitude towards the Pharisees? Towards the woman? Towards Jesus? If so, why?
9. Why did the Pharisees resist God's forgiveness? Why do we sometimes resist God's forgiveness?



10. Imagine that you are this woman. What would you have *expected* to see in Jesus' eyes? What is running through your mind?
11. Why do we so easily judge others? What does James 4:11-12 have to say about this tendency?
12. Does this passage in John 8 mean that Jesus doesn't think sin is a big deal? Why or why not?
13. Jesus accepts you "as is." Does that free you to change, or does it support your bad behavior? How so?

#### DIGGING DEEPER

1. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read 1 Peter 5:6-7.* Biblical humility is choosing to put the desires of Gods before your desires. How can you begin to "clothe yourself in humility" and put God's desires above our own?
2. God opposes the proud, those who put their own desires first, by withdrawing His help. Why does God do this? Have you ever felt that you were struggling without God's help because of pride?
3. Grace in this passage refers to the power to do what you need in the moment for the moment. It is God's strength in your situation. Have you ever felt this when you humbly asked for God's help?
4. "In due time" doesn't usually mean immediately. Why would God wait to "lift you up"?
5. What are ways that you can cast your cares upon God?
6. How does it make you feel that God is concerned about you and your desires? Do you approach God as if He intimately cares for you?

#### MOVING FORWARD

Sometimes, with particular sins, we Christians are a little more reluctant to drop our stones, a little more ready to condemn, and a little less glad to hear Jesus say, "I don't condemn you either."

#### WHAT WILL YOU DO?

People all around you are watching you to see whether or not you really live what you say. To change people's perception of Christians, we must be that change.

#### CHANGING YOUR MIND

*God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.* John 3:17

#### VERSES TO GO DEEPER

Matthew 18:15-17, John 3:16-21, Romans 14:13, 19, Galatians 6:1-5, 1 Peter 4:8

