

Looking for a Group to connect and dive deeper in your relationship with God and others? Contact Community Pastor, Beth Yokley, at byokley@myhope.church.



Discussion Questions With Emily LeVault

Be Real: Week 2

Jesus condemns the Pharisees for making converts “twice as much a child of hell” as themselves. How can religious zeal, even with good intentions, sometimes lead people further from God rather than closer to him?

In what ways might we, knowingly or unknowingly, influence others toward a distorted faith rather than authentic discipleship?

Jesus critiques the Pharisees for focusing more on maintaining power and status than on truly guiding others. Have you ever witnessed or experienced religious gatekeeping? How did it impact your faith?

Maybe you actively avoid traditional/outright religious gatekeeping. But sometimes we prioritize our comfort zones over welcoming outsiders into God’s kingdom. What would radical inclusivity look like in our church? Who lives in our community but is NOT at church with us on Sunday morning? Who is missing?

The Pharisees' mission began as a sincere effort to preserve faith but became rigid and exclusionary. How can we guard against our own faith becoming legalistic or performative? If you're comfortable, share a time when you got caught up in this idea.

Jesus’ woes suggest that outward religious perfectionism can mask an inward spiritual decay. Have you ever noticed yourself being more focused on religious performance than genuine faith? What motivates that?

Remember that Jesus did have harsh words for the Pharisees, but he also was deeply sad for them as well-not just for those that their behavior was impacting. If someone were to model their faith after you, what kind of disciple would they become? What areas of your spiritual life might need a reality check? Would they read their bible daily? Would they pray when they were angry, happy, scared? Would they describe Jesus as someone who treasures them with a tender love or as that one friend you can't swear in front of?

Where in your own story, testimony, or daily walk do you struggle with the tension between religious tradition and genuine relationship with God? Can you describe your ideal in this area? What would change for you if this was something completely healed or resolved? Do you think such a change is possible on this side of heaven?

For this week: Spend some time bringing this area before the Lord in prayer each day.