



Discussion Starter

Respond to one of the following.

1. When you first heard the gospel (the good news regarding Christ's substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection), did you immediately surrender your life to Christ? Explain why or why not.
2. When someone invited you to a church gathering for the first time, did you go? Explain why or why not.

Come As You Are

1. Share something that resonated with you during the *Come As You Are* message.
2. Do you think the church in general maligns unbelievers and people who wrestle with sin? Explain and share examples.
3. Based on your knowledge of Scripture, how did Christ interact with *sinners* and outsiders? Cite specific examples in Scripture.

Biblical Connection

1. Read Acts 15:1-20. Record your observations in the chart below. Then discuss your observations.

	Observations
Who are the people involved?	
When do events take place?	
Where do the events take place?	
What's happening?	
What decisions are made?	
Additional observations:	

Jews were the first to receive the gospel. As the apostles obeyed Christ's instructions to be His witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8), the gospel reached Gentiles. For centuries, Jews knew God's moral standards and lived according to the Mosaic Law. This wasn't the case for Gentile converts who often came from pagan cultures accustomed to practices deemed unclean by the Law. Thus, some Jewish believers wanted Gentile converts to uphold the tenants of the Law to be in fellowship with Jewish Christ followers.

2. According to this passage what's required for salvation (see verses 9-10). Also note Romans 10:9-10 and Ephesians 2:8-9. In your church experience, have other criteria for salvation and/or acceptance into the body of Christ been imposed on people. Explain. In your opinion, how do additional criteria impact church growth?



3. Read Titus 3:1-7. Summarize the message presented in this passage.

4. As we grow in Christ, the Holy Spirit works within us to deliver us from the persuasion or influence of sin. (For further study see 2 Corinthians 3:18, Galatians 5:16-25, Colossians 3:5-17, and 1 Peter 1:2.) This process is called sanctification. Sanctification is an ongoing process. How may knowledge that sanctification is an ongoing process that follows conversion impact your view of unbelievers? How may this knowledge impact how you interact with people new to the faith?

Moving Forward

1. Ask God to search your heart and reveal to you any individuals or type of people you find it difficult to accept and/or disciple? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a more accepting heart and a willingness to disciple anyone.

2. Identify 1-2 ways that you can intentionally be loving and accepting of everyone you encounter at The Bridge. Share your responses with fellow group members.

Assignment

- Attend The Bridge's upcoming Sunday worship gathering. If you're unable to attend, listen to the sermon online before the next group gathering. Note anything that resonates with you in preparation for the Week 5 discussion.