

NOTES

Scripture: *Mark 12:13-27, 1 Peter 3:15, Colossians 4:6, Proverbs 26:4-5*

REVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

Looking back over your notes, what did you find most helpful, challenging, or interesting in this week's teaching? Was there anything you've never heard before or something that made you think differently?

What makes you frustrated or annoyed? Come on; something does!

Chris shared his concern that as a society, we've lost the ability to have a conversation with people with whom we disagree. Has this been your observation and/or experience also? Why do you think that is?

Do you think it's easier or more challenging to have a good conversation on social media or in person? Why do you say this? Do you interact with someone you disagree with differently in person than on social media? If so, what can you learn from this?

Do you think it's important to be able to interact with and respond to the culture? Do you wrestle with how to interact and respond to the culture? Why do you think this is?

The Story of Jesus
Part 38
Responding Like Jesus

Chris Dew
Teaching Team
October 3, 2021

Have you found it common or uncommon to experience Christians responding with humility, kindness, and firmness?

MY STORY

Chris shared four ways Christians tend to deal with secular culture (from a Gregory Thompson article): 1. Purify from, 2. Accommodate to, 3. Defense Against, or 4. Faithful presence. What do you think about these four approaches? Do you see or have you experienced any other approaches? Which of these four approaches do you find yourself taking most often? Why do you think you take this approach? Has this approach been effective? Why or why not?

Chris said, "There are times we're called to answer and times we're called to be quiet."

How would your conversations change if each time there was a bit of controversy or difference in opinion, you asked God if now was a time you should answer or a time to be quiet?

When you engage in a conversation, do you find yourself doing more talking or more listening? When you talk, do you tend to ask questions or provide information? Ask someone who knows you (like the members of your life group if you've been meeting for a while) which they think you do.

How can you respond with scripture to someone questioning you? Does this approach seem intimidating or awkward (especially when thinking about responding in a non-church setting)? Why? What can you do to make yourself more comfortable with responding with scripture?

When interacting with the culture around you and responding to people, are you more concerned with obeying Jesus or offending others? Do you think you do this well? What can you do differently?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read through these guiding scriptures and answer the corresponding questions.

Read 1 Peter 3:15, Philippians 4:5, and Colossians 4:6

What does it mean to honor Christ the Lord as holy in your heart?

What is your reason for hope? Are you prepared to make a defense for your reason for hope (even during times when worldly circumstances around you look dire)?

What does Peter mean by "do it with gentleness and respect"? Seriously think about this - does this accurately describe the way you usually communicate (especially with people you disagree with)?

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What does Paul mean by "let your reasonableness be known to everyone"? Do you do that? If so, how do you do it?

Why do you think Paul made it a point to end that sentence with the reminder that "the Lord is at hand"? Does that reminder change the way you think about and address someone?

What does Paul mean when he tells us to let our conversations ALWAYS be full of grace and seasoned with salt? How can you do this?

Paul concludes Colossians 4:6 by saying, "so that you may know how to answer everyone"; the "so that" tells us if our conversations are full of grace and seasoned with salt, then we will know how to answer everyone. Where and how have you seen this?

Read Proverbs 26:4-5

Do these two verses contradict one another?

How can we not be supposed to answer a fool according to his folly (verse 4) but also be supposed to answer a fool according to his folly (verse 5)?

Can you think of any examples when the situation dictated you not to answer or respond to something foolish lest you be made to look foolish and another situation where the circumstances required you to reprove or challenge someone who was arguing something foolish?

Do you sometimes struggle to know which approach to take? How can you become wiser in knowing when to stay quiet and when to answer?

BRINGING IT HOME

How are you dealing with the culture around you? Is it influencing you, or are you influencing it? Are you filtering the scripture you read and your worldview through the news, or are you processing the news through scripture and your Christian worldview? Why does this make a difference?

Read Romans 12:2 - how could this scripture shape the way you interact with and respond to the culture around you?

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Think about a time when someone questioned you (not just asked a basic question, but questioned something you believe that is deep and personal). Can you remember your initial feeling upon being questioned? How did you respond? How did the conversation work out?

Now think about what Chris told us of how Jesus responded when questioned: 1. He answered questions with reason and sound logic, 2. He answered questions with scripture, and 3. He was both kind and firm in His response. How does the way you responded in the above situation compare to the way we see Jesus responding? What specific things can you do to make the way you respond more like how Jesus responded?

Do you struggle with being either too kind or too firm in how you respond? Usually, we tend to lean in one of these two directions (we tend to be overly kind but not firm enough, or we tend to be overly firm and aggressive without being kind). Why do you think you tend to respond the way you do?

What if, rather than shrinking back in silence (or false niceness when our response shouldn't warrant niceness) or screaming in arrogance, your responses were kind and firm? What do you think that would look like?

In Mark 12:17, Jesus told us to "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." How specifically should this verse guide the way you respond to people?

Chris pointed out that we are created in God's image. Have you given yourself to God? Do you live as though His name is written on you? Do you think you are surrendering your life to Him daily?

Your Next Steps are: **1)** Take time and make an effort to master the art of asking and answering questions like Jesus **2)** Consciously surrender your life to God daily and ask Him to guide you in interacting with and responding to culture **3)** If you're not doing life with other believers, join a Life Group – it's not too late (<https://thevineyard.churchcenter.com/groups>).