

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"CM VALUES: THE CULTURE WE CULTIVATE" | JEREMIAH 15: 16 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

- Look quickly at the 5 values, which one jumps out to you as being easy? Which one jumps out as being hard?

"Learning: Experiencing God Through His Word" Jeremiah 15: 16

The church values learning, experiencing God as we believe, read, share and live His Word.

- What is the goal of studying the Bible?

"Participation: Every Believer Has A Part" 1 Peter 4:10

The church values participation, encouraging all believers to discover and use their unique ministry gifts.

- If believers don't need a certain age or degree to start serving, what do they need to serve?

"Character: Becoming Like Christ" Romans 12: 2

The church values Godly character that comes from His work of transforming people to produce genuine fruit.

- How does it impact you to know God is more concerned with your character than your accomplishments?

"Stewardship: Everything Belongs to God" 1 Chronicles 29:14

The church values stewardship: people with generous hearts who invest time, talent and treasure in building God's Kingdom.

- What are ways to change the mindset of trying to get and experience all I can to a mindset of giving and serving for God?

"Relationship: Loving God and People" John 13: 34-35

The church values relationship: encountering God as we center our affections on Christ, sharing His grace and mercy with all.

- What does it look like to share God's grace and mercy with the people placed in your life?

REFLECTION AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Our values describe a Spirit-formed life: learning from God's Word, participating with God's gifts, displaying God's character, generously stewarding God's blessings, and loving in all the relationships God has for us. These are qualities we cultivate as we gather together through active discipleship.

- Who are the people in your life who can help you practice these values and hold you accountable?
- What values or practices do you have now that come into conflict with these values or practices?
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would transform and mold our church to be one that reflects God well to a broken world.

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9-27-26

OUR VALUES - The Kind of People We Want to Become

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those watching online.
- B. Slide1-7 AP: Men's. Fellowship. Rohingya Prayer. WSS Conference. Beyond the Trip. Quick Reminders: Missions Prayer Today. Church Prayer.
- C. Slide8 Baptism 3pm Today at the Terry's: Events page for address.
- D. Slide9 Prayer: Jeremiah, Let him who glories **glory in this**, that he understands and knows Me.

II. Slide10 Intro: OUR VALUES - The Kind of People We Want to Become

- A. A church's **values** are the convictions that shape how we **live out** our mission.
 - 1. **Values** speak to how we desire to live. It's our principles & standards. (not just to define what we believe, but what we will **do** as a result of our beliefs).
 - 2. They answer the question, **"What matters to us as we follow Jesus together?"** These are qualities we want to increasingly see in **our lives** and in the life of **our church**.
- B. Our **motto** tells us **what we are called to do**. Our **mission** tells us **why we exist**. Our **vision** gives us a picture of **where we are going**. Our **values** describe **the kind of people we want to become** along the way.

III. Slide11a 1. LEARNING: Experiencing God Through His Word.

- A. **Learning: Experiencing God** as we believe, read, share and live His Word.
- B. The goal of learning is not merely to become **smarter** about God. It is to know God personally.
 - 1. There is a difference between knowing facts about someone and enjoying a relationship with that person. In the same way, we do not study Scripture merely to master a book. **We open the Bible to know its Author.**

C. Jeremiah said, *Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.* Jeremiah 15:16

1. Jeremiah treated God's Word as food, not simply information to analyze, but nourishment to receive.

D. Slide 1b We Believe His Word

1. Believing means receiving God's Word as true, trustworthy, and authoritative. We do not stand over Scripture as its judge; we place ourselves under it as God's truth.

E. We Read His Word

1. Every believer needs to learn how to feed spiritually from Scripture.
2. Especially for someone new to the Bible: do not think of Scripture as obscure religious information. Think of it as food to eat, water to drink, and air to breathe.
3. God has not left us alone to understand His Word. He has given us the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, to guide us.

F. We Share His Word

1. Jesus said, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.
2. From the beginning, Jesus made His purpose clear: those who follow Him will increasingly help others follow Him.
3. We may respond, "I am not good at that." - Jesus already knows. He did not say, "Follow Me because you already know how." He said, "Follow Me, and I will make you."
4. To follow Jesus is eventually to participate in helping others find and follow Him.

G. We Live His Word

1. Paul told the Corinthians that their lives were like letters from Christ—written not with ink, but by the Spirit of God on human hearts.
2. Every Christian is an open letter about Jesus.

3. People may never read the Bible for themselves, but they are reading our lives. We want them to see the truth of Scripture written in large, legible letters through our character and conduct.

- H. Slide11c We do not study the Bible merely to *master its contents*; we study it to **know its Author and display His character**.
- I. What am I doing to **believe, read, share, and live** God's Word for myself?
- J. In our **Character - God's Spirit changes us**.

IV. Slide12a **2. PARTICIPATION: Every Believer Has A Part**

- A. **Participation:** Encouraging all believers to **discover** and **use** their unique ministry gifts.
- B. Encouraging **all** believers
- C. Does *all believers* really mean everyone? Isn't **ministry** primarily the responsibility of pastors and professionals? **Not according to Scripture**.
- D. 1 Peter 4:10 **As each** has received **a gift**, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. [NLT *God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.*]
- 1. **Jesus** told the man formerly possessed by demons to return home and tell others what God had done for him. He did not have years of training, **but** he had a story of grace to share. (you don't have to wait for a certain level of sp maturity to serve).
- 2. **Paul** told the young Timothy not to allow anyone to despise his youth. (you don't have to wait for a certain age to serve).
- 3. **Apollos** was a gifted teacher who still had more to learn. Priscilla and Aquila helped him understand the way of God more accurately, **and** he continued serving fruitfully. (you don't have to wait for a theological degree to serve).
- E. Slide12b You do not need to know everything before God can use you. You need **humility, faithfulness, and a willingness to keep growing**.

F. **Every gift matters**

G. 1 Cor. 12 teaches that *the Holy Spirit gives gifts to believers for the common good.*

1. God does not give everyone the same role. The church is a body, and every part contributes something necessary.
2. Some teach publicly. Others serve quietly.
 - a) **Here at CM:** Someone opens the building. Someone prepares the coffee. Someone welcomes a guest. Someone teaches a child. Someone visits the sick. Someone prepares Communion. Someone prays when no one else knows.
 - b) **Visible ministry** is not more valuable than **hidden ministry**. **Faithfulness** matters more than *recognition*.
3. **We are called to serve God:** In our **families**. In **His church**. In our **communities**. Throughout **His world**.

H. God has not called you to imitate someone else's ministry. *He has formed, gifted, and placed you for your part in His work.*

I. Not everyone is called to do everything, but every believer is called to do **something**.

J. Where is Jesus asking me to stop watching and start participating?

K. In our **Participation - God's gifts engage us.**

V. Slide13a **3. CHARACTER: Becoming Like Christ.**

A. **Character:** Honoring God as our character is transformed resulting in genuine fruit.

B. Character is who we are beneath our abilities, accomplishments, and public image.

1. **A pastor** may preach well but lack integrity. **A tradesman** may possess great skill but deal dishonestly. **A leader** may appear successful while being unfaithful in private.

C. **Talent** can open doors, but only **character** allows us to honor God *once we walk through them*.

D. One helpful way to examine character is to ask **3 questions:** What makes me laugh? What makes me angry? What makes me weep? (Wiersbe)

1. Do I laugh at *what dishonors people*, or with what brings wholesome joy?
2. Am I angry mainly when *I do not get my way*, or am I grieved by injustice and sin?
3. Do I weep *only over personal loss*, or does my heart break over what breaks the heart of God?

E. **Transformation from the inside out**

F. Romans 12:2 says, *Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

1. **The idea is ongoing: keep allowing God to transform you.**
2. **This is spiritual metamorphosis** - a change that works from the inside outward. **God reshapes our desires, reactions, attitudes, and habits** so that they increasingly resemble **Jesus**. [my halibut. 6 month. Upright/lie flat. Eye migration]
3. This **transformation** produces *the fruit of the Spirit* which is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

G. Fruit is not primarily **how busy we are** in ministry. It is **the character of Christ** becoming **visible** in **us**.

1. Fruit develops slowly. We are all works in progress.

H. **Slide13b** God is not only concerned with what we **accomplish**; **He** is committed to **who we are becoming**.

I. Where is the Holy Spirit asking me to become more like Jesus?

J. At Calvary Murrieta, we want **the character** of **Jesus** to be **AS VISIBLE AS the work we do for Jesus**.

K. In our **Character - God's Spirit changes us**.

VI. **Slide14a 4. STEWARDSHIP: Everything Belongs To God.**

A. **Stewardship:** Serving God with generous hearts as we invest our **time, talent, and treasure** in building His kingdom.

B. 1 Chron. 29:14 For all things come from **you**, and of your own have we given you. [NLT *Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!*]

1. Everything we possess is ultimately something God has entrusted to us. *Our time. Our talents. Our finances. Our homes. Our opportunities. Our influence. Our very lives.*

C. ***Read Illustration.** (see last page)

D. This is **not** how we purchase salvation. **Salvation is God's gift of grace.** But the grace that **saves us** brings **the whole of life under the lordship of Jesus.**

1. We are **not owners** protecting what is ours; we are **stewards** investing what belongs to God.

E. **Slide14b Generosity reflects God**

F. Jesus said that *He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.* [The cross is *the greatest display of generosity imaginable.* God did not give us His leftovers. **He gave us His Son**]

1. **Generosity** is part of **God's character**, so **the church** looks like God when it **gives freely**.

G. **We steward:** **Our time:** the days and opportunities God gives us. **Our talents:** our natural abilities and spiritual gifts. **Our treasure:** our income, possessions, property, and resources.

1. We are to invest these things in building **His kingdom** - **not** just **our personal kingdom, comfort, or reputation.**
2. The stewardship question is **not** simply, "*How much must I give?*" - It is, "*Lord, how do You want me to use what already belongs to You?*"

H. What has God placed in my hands, and how can I use it generously for His kingdom?

I. With our **Stewardship - God's generosity flows through us.**

VII.Slide15a 5. RELATIONSHIP: Loving God and People.

A. **Relationship:** Encountering God as we center our affections on Christ, sharing His grace and mercy with all people.

B. John 13:34-35 Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

C. Christianity begins with **relationship**. [relationship is at the heart of the Christian faith]

1. We were created to **know God**, live in fellowship with **His family**, and **extend His love to others**.

a) **Heaven itself is relational:** living in the presence of God **with** the redeemed people of God.

D. Slide15b Encountering God

E. We **do not** want merely to know *about* God. We want **authentic companionship** with Him.

F. Jeremiah wrote, *Let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me.* 9:24

1. That relationship is possible through Jesus, **No one comes to the Father except through Me**. Jn. 14:6 - We center our affections on Christ because He brings us into relationship with the Father.

G. Encountering Christ in people

1. Jesus taught that when we **feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the vulnerable, and visit the suffering**, we are **serving Him**.

2. Our relationship with **Jesus** cannot be separated from the way we treat **people**.

3. **Many people want to leave a mark on the world**. (by building a house, a business, or an organization, **but the most enduring mark** is often the one we leave on **another person's life**).

a) **Buildings** eventually **crumble** - **The grace of Christ shared** through a relationship can echo into eternity.

H. Grace and mercy for all people

1. We do not fully understand every person's **wounds, hurts, brokenness, choices, or circumstances**.

2. Slide16 The Arithmetic of Poverty, by Appadurai (from India)

Decide, mother who goes without.
 Is it Rama, the strongest? or Baca, the weakest
 who may not need it much longer
 or perhaps Sita? who may be expendable.
 Decide, mother
 kill a part of yourself
 as you resolve the dilemma.
 Decide, mother
 decide... and hate.

3. We don't understand why a mom would pimp-out her 12 yr old little girl.
 Or why a dad would sell his 7 yr old son to a stranger, to go work a
 Cacao plantation for 15 hours a day, in a diff country.

a) Why do we think God sent us to fix people... wasn't it to love people? [this includes people we find difficult to love]

4. The gospel teaches us to pray for people on every side of human conflict.
 We can oppose evil without hating the people caught within it.

- a) I'm learning not to be a hater. (I learned to love Muslims since 9-11.
 You can be pro-Ukraine - and pray for the the Russian people. You can be
 Pro-Israel - and pray for the Palestinian people. Pray for the Iranian people.)
- b) No nationality, ethnicity, religion, political group, or personal history places
 someone beyond the reach of Christian love.

5. Every person bears God's image, and every person needs God's grace.

I. Slide17 The most important things in life are God and people - and our relationship
 with God should transform every relationship with people.

J. Am I centering my affections on Christ? Am I sharing His grace and mercy with
 the people He places before me?

K. In Relationships — God's love defines us.

VIII. BRINGING THE VALUES TOGETHER

A. Slide 18 These 5 Values describe 1 Spirit-formed life:

1. **Learning** - God's Word shapes us.
 2. **Participation** - God's Gifts engage us.
 3. **Character** - God's Spirit changes us.
 4. **Stewardship** - God's Generosity flows through us.
 5. **Relationship** - God's Love defines us.
- a) These are not simply 5 organizational values. This is **discipleship**.
 - b) These are not boxes we check. They are qualities we cultivate **together**.
 - c) Our values will never become our culture merely because we **print** them.
They become our culture when we **practice** them.

B. This is *the kind of people* we believe Jesus is calling us to become.

C. **Prayer:** Father make us a people who **Know** Your Word. Use our gifts. Help us **Reflect** Christ's character. Help us to **Hold** everything with open hands. And help us to **Share** Your grace with everyone.

D. Keywords: Values, Character, Stewardship, Relationship.

***Illustration:**

When man finds Jesus the Pearl of great price, it costs him everything!

A man marvels and asks, *I want this Pearl, how much does it cost?*

The seller says, it's too dear, too costly. But how much? Well, it's very expensive. Do you think I could buy it? It costs everything you have - no more, no less -so anybody can buy it. I'll buy it. What do you have? Let's write it down. I have \$10,000 in the bank. Good, \$10,000. What else? I have nothing more. That's all I have. Have you nothing more? Well, I have some dollars here in my pocket. How many? I'll see: 30, 40, 50, 80, 100,

120 - \$120. That's fine. What else do you have? I have nothing else. That's all. Where do you live? I live in my house. The house, too. Then you mean I must live in the garage? You have a garage, too? That, too. What else? Do you mean that I must live in my car, then? You have a car? I have two. Both become mine. Both cars. What else? Well, you have my house, the garage, the cars, the money, everything. What else? Are you alone in the world? No, I have a wife, two children. Your wife and children, too. Too? Yes, everything you have. What else? I have nothing else, I am left alone now. Oh, **you** too! Everything becomes mine - *wife, children, house, money, cars - everything*. And **you** too.

Now, you can use/enjoy all those things here, **but don't forget** they are mine - as **you** are. When I need any of the things you are using, you must give them to me because now I am the owner. [stewardship]