

DISCUSSION GUIDE

MARCH

***Not everything is
as it seems***

Book of Matthew





APRIL 2ND, 2025

Not everything is as it seems

SUMMARY

Most people have no idea that what they're living for is leading them to destruction. There are clear situations that may be more obvious than others, regarding a life that leads to destruction. Such as, drugs, alcohol, abuse, etc. But there are certain life goals, that if not prioritized after having God first, are empty promises that lead to destruction. The end goal of most is to: Make more money, do what makes them happy, be satisfied by a relationship, advance in a career, etc. While these things are "important" they are not the ultimate goal. This month we'll be exploring how we can truly live for Christ and find fulfillment in Him and not the things of this world.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

Matthew 7:13 (NIV) 13 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and MANY enter through it."

Problem: MANY are living for things that lead them to destruction, because not everything is as it seems.

Matthew 7:15 (NIV) True and False Prophets "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

How do I recognize what's leading me to life or destruction?

Solution: The only way to test what leads to life or destruction is with the TEST OF TIME.

The only thing that has standed the test of TIME, is God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

GOD IS...

1. Love and Mercy
2. Power and Sovereignty
3. Righteous (free from guilt or sin)
4. Truthfulness and Faithfulness
5. Omnipresent (Present Everywhere) and Omniscience (All Knowing)

Hebrews 13:8-9(a) (NIV) 8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. 9 So do not be attracted by strange, new ideas. Your strength comes from God's grace*



01. Submit to God

SUMMARY

Most people, if not ALL people, **don't** want to experience destruction. No one wants to experience pain or destruction. According to the Bible, the only way to receive forgiveness of sins (Salvation) and life in abundance (Freedom) is by accepting Jesus Christ as **LORD** and **SAVIOR**. Most people don't have a problem with having Jesus as their savior, they have a problem with Him being the Lord of their life. In order to accept Jesus as **LORD**, you must understand and accept who He is, what He is and submit to His authority.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

James 4:7 (NIV) Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

John 3:16 (NIV) 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The only reason why people might believe that such an exclusive claim is close-minded and extreme is for 2 reasons:

1. They don't understand their desperate condition.
- OR 2. They don't understand the mercy of God.

Romans 6:23 (NIV) 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to be "submitted" to something/someone?
- Have you ever been "submitted" to something/someone? What did life look like
- Read James 4:1-8. What stands out?
- What does it take to submit to God according to James 4?

****Humility/Recognize your need*

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you want to submit your life to God? Why or why not? What's holding you back?



02. Submit to the Bible || By spending time with God every day

SUMMARY

After accepting Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, the next step is to live for Him. Salvation and Sanctification (freedom) are two different moments. The first one is a free gift, that's received in a moment. The second one, is a lifelong journey of following Jesus and submitting to Him. How is this accomplished? By getting to know God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit through reading the Word and applying it. Many people "believe" in Jesus but few are disciples of Him. In order to experience all of the blessings He has for us and to truly Live for Him, we must obey His Word.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

James 1:22-25 (NLT)

22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

- Time reading God's Word
- Time Worshiping God
- Time praying to Go

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Read James 1:22-25 (NLT). What stands out?
- Read Psalm 5:3 and take 5 minutes to worship (**model what this looks like**)
- Read Philippians 4:6

***Prayer is not asking what I want/need from God, it's aligning myself to Him.

***Don't let prayer be your last resort, instead let it be your first response.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What are some things you'd like to share with God, regarding your life at the moment? What are you grateful for, what are you struggling with?



03. Submit to Godly Accountability

SUMMARY

Just like Adam and Eve hid after sin entered the world because of shame, we too as humans, feel this way when we sin. We must fight the lie of the enemy, to keep sin in secret. Although God forgives us, true healing and freedom occurs with the right Godly accountability. This is not a burden—it's a **blessing**. It keeps believers aligned with God's will, protects against temptation, and promotes growth in Christ. Through honest relationships grounded in Scripture and love, the Church becomes a place of transformation, healing, and strength.

KEY POINTS / VERSES

1. God Designed Us for Community

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NIV) Two are better than one. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.

2. Accountability Helps Us Fight Sin

James 5:16 (NIV) "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

3. Scripture Commands Correction in Love

Galatians 6:1 (NIV) "Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently."

4. It Encourages Growth and Maturity

Hebrews 10:24-25 (ESV) "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together... but encouraging one another..."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How has being in a Godly community impacted you for the better? When you were not in it, how did it affect you?
- 2.. READ Mark 2:1-12 and then discuss...Do the friends in your life carry each other's "mats" and live up to the 4 points discussed today?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Who are the current people God has placed in my life that encourage biblical community. Am I actively seeking to be held accountable by them? Why or Why Not?

LAST 5 MINUTES:

Have students pair up, discuss what they wrote and to close, pray for each other.