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Hey, guys! The first time meeting someone is always awkward, so I thought I’d start by sharing a little bit about myself.

I was born in Tacoma, Washington.
I played baseball in college.
I graduated with a degree in politics and government.
I co-own a company called Claro Candles, which donates its profits to combat injustice around the world.
I have a dog named Aslan (for Narnia!).
I’m married to an amazing, beautiful, sweet woman of God: Alyssa.
I’m a dad! Kinsley Joy Bethke is my sweet little daughter.
I wrote a book (so surreal!).
I like to make creative videos.

Enough about me. I’d love to hear about you and your story as it pertains to our Bible study together. Feel free to share, critique, question, or just say hello. My contact information is below. And use #JesusIsGreater to share any thoughts with the world.

"The Jesus of the Bible is a radical man with a radical message, changing people’s lives in a radical way."
Each of us walk into certain situations with expectations. Those expectations could be high or low and are usually based on previous experiences or preconceived notions.

**When have you been surprised by something that turned out better than you expected?**

**Reflect on a time when you missed out on something great or found yourself in an awkward situation because of a misunderstanding?**

Over the next six weeks you will be challenged to set aside your preconceived ideas about religion and honestly consider (or reconsider) the person of Jesus. The question to keep in mind as we begin our study and watch the first video is this:

**WHAT IF LIFE WITH JESUS IS BETTER THAN YOU THOUGHT?**
watch
HIGHLIGHTS FROM “JESUS > RELIGION” VIDEO.

REMEMBER THIS

▸ Christianity is not about us coming to God. It’s about God coming to us.
▸ Rules and institutions are beautiful when they are a response to a relationship.
▸ We all struggle. We’re all frail, broken, messed-up people.
▸ We’re all looking to be known, to be loved, to have purpose. Only Jesus can provide that.

THINK ABOUT THIS

▸ How would your life be different if you really understood that Jesus is the only One who can give you joy, hope, peace, and life?

LOOK IT UP

▸ Hebrews 3:1, 4:14, 7:27
▸ 1 Corinthians 3:16
▸ Revelation 21:22
▸ Psalm 32:9
▸ Isaiah 30:16
▸ John 1:14
▸ 1 Peter 2:24
▸ Ephesians 2:1
▸ Romans 3:10-12, 4:5, 7:18-19
consider

What does being a Christian mean to you? Explain.

Let’s look to the ultimate source for understanding Christianity and make sure our view lines up with the Bible.

Read Ephesians 2:4-10.

What aspects of God’s character stand out in these verses?

What do these verses say about Jesus?

Read Romans 8:10-11.

According to this passage, what is our hope based on?

What earthly things have you placed your hope and happiness in? What is the danger of putting your hope in anyone or anything besides Jesus?
Read Romans 4:4-5.

**How does the fact that God justifies the ungodly give you freedom in life?**

**Are you encouraged to hear that the Bible is full of broken, messed up people who were loved and changed by God’s grace? Explain.**

**What else did Jeff say in the video that was encouraging, convicting, or helpful?**

respond

Jeff shared that he tried religion and walked away from it, only to realize that he misunderstood Jesus and what being a Christian is really about.

**Is your understanding of Christianity centered on religion or a relationship with Jesus? Explain.**