

# life groups discussion guide

## amazing Jesus



LIFE GROUPS  
doing life together

*“What are you doing today that requires faith?”*

— Francis Chan

*“God doesn’t call us to be comfortable. He calls us to trust Him so completely that we are unafraid to put ourselves in situations where we will be in trouble is He doesn’t come through.”*

— Francis Chan

### What does that look like?

This is one of my favorite questions to ask in light of what Scripture reveals about something that is expected of me as a follower of Christ. I suppose it’s somewhat borne out of a question I used to ask high school kids I used to work with in Young Life. That question was a lot more blunt, and certainly phrased to hopefully tweak something within the heart of an unbelieving young person. It was, simply, “so what?” I always loved the springboard for discussion that question provided after either giving or hearing a message about something of great importance from the Bible. It is, after all, the foundational question we must all answer after coming to understand what Jesus did for us at Calvary. My answer to the great “so what” of the cross is the watershed moment of my faith – I will either personalize it....or trivialize it.

As I have grown older, somewhere along the way, I stopped asking “so what” so much, and started asking “what does that look like”. I sufficiently answered the “so what?” of my faith a long time ago. Besides that, I talk now a lot more to other believers about how to live out our faith in practical terms (insert unabashed plug for the Going Deeper Class which meets Sunday mornings at 11:00 in E108), and the questions put to us are no longer about “Will you believe?”, but more along the lines of “What will living in light of that belief truly look like as you live it out – if you are doing so as you should?”

But here’s the thing. When I am now faced with a revelation from Scripture about what God expects out of me, or how I should be living out my faith, I find that while the core question of “so what?” may have changed, the choice before me remains the same: Personalize...or trivialize.

This may seem irrelevant on the surface, but here’s the deal: If I want to have a faith that amazes Jesus in the right way, that will require me to take how I live my life very, very seriously. No auto-pilot. No just going through the religious motions.

After all, the faith that amazed Jesus because it was so strong was one where the revelation of Jesus had become deeply personalized, and was manifested (evidenced) in the same way. The faith that amazed Jesus by how pitiful it was, was one where the revelation of Jesus was trivialized – and sadly evidenced by people where you would have expected to find it strong.

Q :: How might we tell if our faith has been trivialized in some area of our lives, rather than personalized?

I find the writings of Francis Chan (quoted twice, above), to be almost always challenging in a way that makes me a bit uncomfortable, and hits a little close to home. Consider the first quote above. Scott even asked in his sermon how Jesus would see faith demonstrated in your daily decisions, if He were to peel back the layers of your life. I’d like to ask two questions about that:

Q :: Do you agree with the premise that we should be doing something *every day* that *requires* faith? Explain.

Q :: Let’s talk about what that looks like. What have you done in the past week (I’m easier on you than Francis is) that required faith on your part?

Q :: If we believers not regularly doing things in life that require faith on our part, why might that be?

Q :: As you examine your own life, what are some things you could do – and could actually commit to doing – that would require faith on your part...and not just a trivialized faith or some action stemming from some sense of religious duty, but one wherein who Jesus has revealed Himself to be to you was the driving force behind your action? And if you can't think of something, talk about what you have seen others perhaps do that would fit this description.

Scott talked about what the opposite of this might look like as well. He asked whether Jesus would see this sort of daily faith being exercised in your life, or, “would he find a life of timidity and fear and guilt and complacency and selfishness.” I think this is much more than just a casual question. I think Scott has illuminated some key elements that actually work against us having the sort of vibrant, active, extravagant faith that Jesus commended in the centurion. I'd like to look at each of those...

Q :: How does timidity keep us from daily living out a vibrant faith life?

As we seek to counteract timidity, what does Scripture have to say about it that might help us?

Q :: How does fear keep us from daily living out a vibrant faith life?

As we seek to counteract fear, what does Scripture have to say about it that might help us?

Q :: How does guilt keep us from daily living out a vibrant faith life?

As we seek to counteract guilt, what does Scripture have to say about it that might help us?

Q :: How does complacency keep us from daily living out a vibrant faith life?

As we seek to counteract complacency, what does Scripture have to say about it that might help us?

Q :: How does selfishness keep us from daily living out a vibrant faith life?

As we seek to counteract selfishness, what does Scripture have to say about it that might help us?

Scott also touched on some of the events of Kingsway's recent past that have caused division in the body here. One of the things he said that really struck me was this statement and challenging question:

*“God is on the move in your life and in this church. The question is will we collectively and individually have the faith to follow.”*

What strikes me about that is that it almost runs counter-intuitive to how we think living out a life a extreme faith looks. When told that God is on the move in our life and in our church, and asked if we would respond in faith appropriately, we might ask: “OK, what's that look like?” (I told you it was a favorite question) And our answer would most likely have something to do with action taken on our part. How do I step out in faith? How do I do more for God and His kingdom? But what if, as Scott asks, the boldness of our faith was not evidenced by something we went out and did on our own – but was instead demonstrated by following where our leaders were taking us? Faith that doesn't lead, but instead follows where the leaders God is working through are taking His church is much more of a daunting task, is it not?

Q :: Describe the difference in the faith it takes to step out in action of your own vs. the faith required to follow someone else's lead. Which is easier for you?

If our faith is only in what we can control, what we can understand from a human perspective or in what meets our approval, isn't our faith more in ourselves than in God? Is our faith personal – or trivial? Does it radically impact our lives so that they look different from unbelievers – or Christians who Jesus would call out for a lack of faith? I think Francis Chan puts it best:

“Something is wrong when our lives make sense to unbelievers.”

Indeed!