

Ben's Story – Talk it over

*Facilitator note: Feel free to follow the Holy Spirit if more questions come to you. These are just a somewhat guideline for us to use

Section 1: Living Out Loud

1/28/18

Read aloud to the group: “As Mahatma Ghandi famously (and sadly) said: “I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.” As many non-Christian websites about this topic indicate, a primary reason Christians are not reaching many unbelievers is because of hypocrisy. As we as Christians take in that harsh criticism, I ask that we be honest and ask God to reveal to us where are we living out hypocrisy.

Have someone read James 2:20-26

1. How is living hypocritically damaging to how others perceive Christ followers?
2. What are some things we (individually as Christ followers) could do differently to prove our faith is not dead?

Have someone read Acts 5:15-16 - **¹⁵As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.¹⁶Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.**

Peter made a huge mistake as a follower of Jesus by literally denying Jesus 3 times, and God totally used that to **fuel** Peter in making an impact on his peers and more.

3. How has God used your past mistakes to fuel you to make an impact on others?
4. Peter lived out counter-culturally in a way that was clearly appealing to many, what are some ways we can make our faith look appealing to our non-believing friends while not “watering down” the Gospel?

Section 2: Owning our faith

Read aloud to the group: Using Ben's personal story about the professor singling him out in front of a class and discounting Ben's faith basically calling Ben stupid for being a Christian.

1. Has anyone here ever had his or her faith attacked by another? If so what happened? How did you respond?

Have someone read 1 Peter 3:15 - **But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect**

2. What are some ways that we are actively preparing our cases for not **if** but **when** people ask for the reasons we have faith? What tools or resources are we using?

Final Challenge

Our challenge first is to prove our faith by our actions (especially through the way we love others). Pray this week that God reveals how we can best do that.

Also let's sharpen each other and feel safe enough to have those deeper conversations, being vulnerable enough to share and even more so show gentleness and respect and extending grace, as we grow closer to Jesus.