

Response Guide 4/14/24

Matthew 13:53–58 - [53] *And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, [54] and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? [55] Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? [56] And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" [57] And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." [58] And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief. (ESV)*

Revelation

We must repent of our skeptical unbelief and accept the astonishing works and teaching of Jesus.

God in Creation

In the futility of our thinking, we often doubt God and are skeptical to trust in him and exercise our faith in Christ. Psalm 37 begins by encouraging us not to be anxious or envious concerning those who do wrong; they will fade away. Instead, we should trust in the Lord, do good, and delight in him (Ps. 37:1-4). **How can obedience and delighting in the Lord undo our skeptical unbelief?**

Sin and Unbelief

Skeptical unbelief often comes from being offended in different ways by Jesus.

In what ways does Jesus offend people?

At times we can be offended by his ordinariness. **Do you ever doubt God because you aren't seeing "miraculous" things, or experiencing the exciting goose bump moments you expected from new life in Christ? Share.**

Another aspect of Jesus that can cause people to feel skeptical and offended is his lordship as God. We often comment that Jesus must be a person's Savior *and Lord*. **Jesus asks us to change our lives in ways that we don't always agree with. In what area of life do you remain unwilling to fully submit to the authority and lordship of Jesus? Explain.**

Redemption

Galatians 3:13 tells us that Jesus delivered us from the curse by becoming a curse on the cross. The only thing in the world that is truly offensive is our sin against God. In becoming our sin on the cross, Jesus became offensive to God as well. **How does this understanding of the cross help you to accept the aspects of Jesus' lordship that are difficult for you?**

New Life in Christ

Think about the "ordinariness" of your life and make a list describing who you are (i.e., titles, roles, responsibilities, etc.). **What is the difference in seeking to grow in faithfulness, purpose, and enjoyment, and wanting to grow and change to something "bigger and better"? How can you cultivate the former?**

There are consequences to being a follower of Christ and publicly, unapologetically aligning yourself with him.

How do you most commonly experience these types of consequences in your life?

How can you more faithfully accept those consequences rather than dodging them?

Prayer

Pray that God would be at work to change the areas of our hearts where sin and unbelief have been revealed.

Pray that God would cause us to accept Jesus fully, embracing his lordship in our lives and the consequences of being his disciple.

Pray that God would cause us to love the ordinary things in life as a primary means of honoring him and demonstrating our faithfulness.