

Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of February 22, 2015

Matthew 5:14-16

NRSV (New Revised Standard Version)

¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

NIV (New International Version)

¹⁴ *You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Connection Questions:

1. Discuss why the gospel expressed by Jesus was outlawed for the first three centuries of the church.

2. Discuss what you think the following statement means. "Jesus came to planet Earth as a peacemaker but he was not a peacekeeper."

3. What was it about Jesus' message that encouraged Jewish listeners to see his message as an alternative to what they grew up with?

4. In certain ways Jesus said to the Pharisees that his message was more difficult to live out than a life that followed the Jewish law. What do you think Jesus meant in referring to living out the lifestyle he was purposing?

5. Jesus said, ". . . I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery." Do you believe here that Jesus was condemning divorce? If not, what do you think he is saying?

6. Discuss the following statement. Jesus was confronted with the self-righteous religion of Jesus' time that too often gave easy answers to difficult life issues.

7. The key difference between Jesus and the Pharisees was not their often shared ideals but Jesus' insistence on grace. Discuss the differences between Jesus' and the Pharisees' approach to life.

