

Journey CHURCH

Pastor James Greer

James@jcpineville.com

www.jcpineville.com



Session 3 Insiders, Outsiders

People who aren't followers of Jesus and don't consider themselves Christians often expect more of us than we expect of ourselves. They say don't act like they imagine Jesus would. So there's this tension.

Walter Isaacson, in his biography of Apple Founder, Steve Jobs, includes this observation from Jobs: "The juice goes out of Christianity when it becomes too based on faith rather than on living like Jesus or seeing the world as Jesus saw it."

Jesus said that the defining characteristics of those who follow him is how they love one another- not simply what they believe. It's a challenging assignment. When Jesus gave it to us (in John 13:34-35) he was speaking primarily of loving those within the Jesus community.

But how should Jesus followers treat people who aren't Jesus followers- those who are outside the faith?

Discussion Starter

When it comes to Christians judging those who are not Christians what has been your experience- either as the one judging or the one being judged?

In your own church perhaps other churches in the community, to what degree have you seen Christians wrongly judging those who are not followers of Jesus?

Video Overview For session 3 of DVD

At the end of the gospel of Matthew, as the followers of Jesus were gathered on a hillside before he left the earth, Jesus gave them their marching orders, "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19). He didn't say "Go make Christians."

His closest followers obeyed this command and developed Jesus communities. They lived their lives and spoke about Jesus in such way that other were drawn to him and became his followers as well.

This movement grew dramatically for the first three hundred years. Then the Roman Empire adopted Christianity as its official religion, and things went bad. Now the church had earthy power. They decided not to leverage love anymore, but to leverage other things.

So the marching orders began to sound more like this: "Therefore go and impose Christian teachings, values, and worldview on everyone." That's the message of a group that's in control. But it wasn't the message of Jesus or of the New Testament.

Anytime the church leverages anything other than love, we go backward, not forward, in our influence.

Journey CHURCH

Pastor James Greer

James@jcpineville.com

www.jcpineville.com



Earlier, Jesus followers had understood that their goal was to win others to the faith. Paul was the ultimate example of this. He wanted to create Jesus followers out of people who had no interest in that—people who had their own religions and ways of life, their own world-views. And they weren't looking for a new one.

Here was Paul's approach: "Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible" (1 Corinthians 9:19). He didn't "power up" or become judgmental; rather he made himself a slave of others—in order to win them. Paul said that around Jews, he became like a Jew to win them to Christ. It was all to win as many as possible. Paul knew this was the only way to cause others to become Jesus followers.

We learn more about Paul's approach in 1 Corinthians 5. In addressing a situation of gross sexual immorality by a man who was part of the church at Corinth, Paul stated that while we should not divorce ourselves relationally from those who aren't Jesus followers and whose behavior or morality we don't agree with, we are to discipline those inside the Jesus community when their lifestyles are inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus. That discipline may include distancing ourselves from them relationally.

We're not to judge outsiders; we are to judge insiders.