

CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

– COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE –

Jesus Encounters Series “Jesus & the Cynic” – John 18:28-38

FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Brian Brodersen shared these opening thoughts from his sermon regarding the encounter between Jesus and Pontius Pilate:

*There are many cynical people in the world today. A cynic is a person who is so jaded by experience that they find it hard to believe in things like virtue, goodness and truth. A person, who at the suggestion that there is something like true love or absolute moral truth, will roll their eyes and slowly shake their heads from side to side. Cynicism and Skepticism are closely connected especially in regard to truth claims, but the cynic is often times worse off than the skeptic inasmuch as the skeptic's objections are of an intellectual nature and can be overcome by the facts, while the cynic's objections stem from a bias that is rooted in the heart. **Pilate was a cynic.** He knew firsthand the intrigue and the corruption of Roman and Jewish politics, and he had seen up close and personal the underbelly of Judaism: the religion of the one true God, Yahweh. To Pilate the idea of absolute moral and spiritual truth was a joke. There are people all around us just like that today. Perhaps you know someone like that. How do we respond to the cynic? We give them the truth, but not just the truth philosophically, we give them the truth incarnationally!*

Whether it was Pilate's own life path or his observations of other's, he had definitely developed a world-view that was shaped by self-interests. Webster defines cynicism as, “An attitude of scornful or jaded negativity, especially a general distrust of the integrity or professed motives of others.” One can only be burnt so many times before they begin to distrust institutions or relationships.

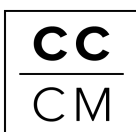
READ & DISCUSS

Read out loud together as a group John 18:28-38 and discuss any observations you make from the stage of his real story where leaders from the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of heaven are discussing truth and power. What an awesome moment in the history of humanity.

Jn 18:36-38 “Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.” Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say *rightly* that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I find no fault in Him at all.”

- John's gospel uses the word, “world” (cosmos) to describe something quite different than just the physical earth. How is the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of heaven different? How are their philosophies different? How are their governances different? Who are their leaders? Who are their subjects? Which one do you belong to?
- Read John 14:6. What was really on trial that day before Pilate and the Jews? Read John 1:5, 9-10. Why does darkness and the world not understand? How can this be reconciled? Read John 1:12-13.
- The culture and society are full of cynics today. The world has educated itself to look out for themselves first. Their ethics are purely pragmatic and morally relative. Webster defines pragmatism as: “An approach that assesses the truth of meaning of theories or beliefs in terms of the success of their practical application.” How can the Christian broach this emotional or philosophical wall that people have built to protect themselves? Read John 15:12-17. Truth, love, and ultimately God pierced the world of darkness by an incarnational miracle. Jesus made it possible to have a tangible way to know God. How have you been that relational bridge to someone who was ready to move from cynicism to faith?

PRAY



Community Group Discussion Guide

Based on Pastor Brian Brodersen's message on July 16, 2017.

Watch: <https://cccm.com/teaching/jesus-encounters/video/jesus-and-the-cynic/>