


A Divine Light in a Dark World
Part 3 A Forgiving Savior

2021.1.21&24



TALKING WALKING

Leaders' Guide

A publication of  the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Community Group Discussion

- 1 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- 2 Read Mark 2:1-12. If you were that paralyzed man or one of his friends, do you think **you** would have been disappointed when Jesus pronounced forgiveness rather than healing? **Why** do you think that?
- 3 Who do you know who's **dropped out of** church due to "disappointment with God"? Tell us about it.
- 4 Who do you know who's **refused to abandon** their faith, in spite of great suffering or disappointment?
- 5 Review Pastor Doug's illustration of "**Jim, Bob, and George**" (see the [Sermon Summary](#)). Now read Psalm 51:4, and it's background passage, 2 Samuel 11:1—12:7. Be honest now—how does Psalm 51:4 strike you? Do this woman and her dead husband **not even matter**?! Are you OK with that? **Why or why not**?
- 6 **Yes**, they **do** matter to God (see 2 Samuel 12:8-10)—but we **still** have to grapple with the truth found in Psalm 51:4 and 2 Samuel 12:13-14. How do we resolve such a tension? Were Bathsheba, Uriah, and Bathsheba's unborn baby unimportant? ...expendable?
- 7 God's infinite holiness renders our sin against him infinitely evil and infinitely offensive, whereas our sin against finite humans is finitely evil and finitely offensive (much like the penalty for breaking a Ming vase is greater than that for breaking something from Pottery Barn). **How** does that strike you—and **why**?
- 8 Hebrews 2:1–3 warns us not to neglect "so great a salvation". **Are we**? How?

Application-Challenge

Be surprised by Jesus!

- Believe that sin is your biggest problem—and that Jesus can solve it.
- Believe that Jesus is more eager to forgive you than you can imagine.
- Believe that salvation is so very costly—**only** Jesus can forgive sins.

Are you surprised—or bored—by God?
To connect with a discipler, e-mail:
Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

- 1 The standard, soft-ball opener—and a great opportunity to have your antennae up for misunderstanding of concepts, or, correct understanding, but strong reaction to them (positive or negative).
- 2 Read the passage, then answer the question. Try to help folks feel free to be honest about their reaction. Honest reactions are critical to quality discussions and real life-change.
- 3 Be prepared with an example of your own, but try to get one or two group members to speak up first. (ie, don't be unnerved by silence for a while. It will **feel like** an eternity. It's better to hear from them.)
- 4 Be prepared with an example of your own, but try to get one or two group members to speak up first. (ie, don't be unnerved by silence for a while. It will **feel like** an eternity. It's better to hear from them.)

Caution! Personally, as the leader, preview the “flow” of questions 5, 6 & 7 **before** the group meets. The theological concept covered by these three questions is extremely distasteful to natural human thinking. So, you'll need to know where you're going before you ask question 5 in your group meeting.

- 5 Take this question step-by-step: **First** read Pastor Doug's illustration of **Jim, Bob, and George**. **Second**, read Psalm 51:4 and 2 Samuel 11:1—12:7. (It's a long passage, but it goes quickly. They'll need this background in order to get the full effect out of this question. Have readers keep their fingers in these passages so you can return to them again in a moment.) **Finally**, ask all of these questions as one long string—**“Be honest now—how does Psalm 51:4 strike you? Do this woman and her dead husband *not even matter*?! Are you OK with that? *Why or why not*?”** This question, and the following two, could either anger group members or else lead them to great growth. We are grappling with the absolute holiness, the shocking “otherness” of God, and, as a result, a clearer view of the depth of our sin and the impossibility of anything less than the blood of God himself as payment. Church, salvation, and the Christian life are either “Ho, hum. Heard that before.” or else they are shocking realities of cosmic consequence and eternal importance. And it all hinges on folks wrestling with Psalm 51:4.
- 6 Notice that I've included additional verses from the 2 Samuel passage. **First**, I've added in v. 8-10, which show what a horrible betrayal of God were David's sins. It also shows the price David will pay. This passage should help people with a bit of the disgust they may be feeling with Psalm 51:4. **But then**, v. 13-14 begin with a word of grace (David is forgiven and will not die), but ends with a really hard statement: the innocent baby David fathered through rape will die! Note: based on v. 23, (it's important to read the entire context of v. 15–23), evangelical scholars generally teach that God makes provision for infants (born and pre-born), applying the virtues of the blood of Christ to them even though they lacked opportunity to do so themselves. This eases the situation to a degree, but there still is the issue of the fact that the greatest wickedness in the universe is what we do against God, **not** what we do against each other. Question 7 explains this further.
- 7 **My hope** is that this concluding bit of logic makes sense, and helps folks accept this “hard teaching”. As Hebrews 5:12–14 says, this doctrine qualifies as “solid food”. Immature Christians (and **all** non-believers!) will find this truth disgusting and reject it. This is teaching which “disciplines our thinking” (Hebrews 12:11); the rewards of it are great, but the road to maturity requires submission to God! My question, “How does that strike you—and why?” will help you judge how your “flock” is doing with this. Which brings us to...
- 8 Only when we accept the truths of 5 6 7 does the greatness of salvation become evident.

- 9 These two items go together:
The **Application-Challenge** urges us in the right direction.
The **offer of discipleship** helps us get there.

Application-Challenge 9

Be surprised by Jesus!

- Believe that sin is your biggest problem—and that Jesus can solve it.
- Believe that Jesus is more eager to forgive you than you can imagine.
- Believe that salvation is so very costly—**only** Jesus can forgive sins.

Are you surprised—or bored—by God?
To connect with a discipler, e-mail:
Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Time is
RUNNING OUT!



PointMan **JOHN**
JESUS—THE WORD, THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD
Men's Bible Study

- Gospel of John
- 13 weeks, beginning January 11
- Open to all men
- Just \$10 (for materials)
- Choose the time that fits you best...

Mornings:

- Mondays
- 7-8:30am
- begins January 11 (ends early April)
- zoom only

Evenings:

- Mondays
- 7-8:30pm
- begins January 11 (ends early April)
- zoom **or** face-to-face option (at **TCC**)

• **Go to:** **tcc.org** **Keyword:** **PointMan**

Life is best lived
in circles not
rows.
MEN'S
GROUPS
TCC.org/Men

Men—
Don't miss this opportunity
for spiritual growth!