

A Community Without Barriers

Questions for Discussion

August 13, 2023

Exploring Our Assumptions and Standards:

- How might our understanding of conforming to culture and setting ourselves apart from the world be influenced by biases and misconceptions about Jesus, God, and the world?
- Can we identify any biases in the standards we set for ourselves? How might these biases conflict with God's purpose in our lives and the world?
- Reflecting on history, how do we reconcile the idea of being open-hearted to LGBTQ Christians with the world's historical mistreatment of them?

Scriptures to Consider:

- Galatians 3:28 - "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
- Matthew 7:1-2 - "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged..."

Learning from Jesus' Example:

- How can studying the stories and actions of Jesus help us interpret complex scriptures and understand their meaning?
- In what ways does being understood by others deepen our connection with God? How might our assumptions limit our view of God's will in diverse lives?

Scriptures to Consider:

- John 13:34-35 - "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- Luke 5:30-32 - "But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?'" Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

Addressing Fear and Concern:

- How does fear play a role in our discussions about LGBTQ inclusion? Why might we prioritize whether it's okay to be gay over truly understanding someone's experiences?
- What potential impact might arise if our church affirmed LGBTQ individuals? Is this topic a matter of salvation or driven by other concerns?

Scriptures to Consider:

- 1 John 4:18 - "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear..."
- Romans 14:1 - "Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters."