

42 Seconds Bible Class, Introduction

Opening Discussion

What's the last book you read?
Was it business or pleasure?

Besides *42 Seconds*, what other book would you like to read next? Why?

The introduction to *42 Seconds* states, "*Our goal is simply for Jesus to be a natural part of our lives and everyday interactions with people.*"

What do you think about that goal?
What emotional responses might people have to a goal like that?

The Foot Washing Example (John 13:12-17 NIV)

¹²When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵**I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.** ¹⁶Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

The Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-8 NIV)

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. **If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.** ⁶If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Our goal is simply for
Jesus to be a natural
part of our lives
and everyday interactions
with people.

42
SECONDS

Example, or Not?

On the one hand, Jesus explicitly says that the foot washing is an example.
On the other hand, a vine is not exactly an example to a branch.

Talk about how a copy or imitation is related to the original example.
Then talk about how a branch is related to a vine. When do these dynamics apply or not apply to following Jesus?

3 “Uses of the Law”

The first way God uses the Law is as a curb: natural law in human hearts keeps the world from being even worse off than it is.

When talking about Jesus as our example, it’s helpful to contrast the second and third use of the Law.

2nd Use of the Law

Condemns sin and makes us aware of our need for a savior from sin.

Law and Gospel both happen outside of us and for us, for our benefit.

Jesus is NOT our example but our substitute.

Complete dependence on Jesus, who saves and forgives.

3rd Use of the Law

Describes what the Christian life looks like as we begin to live out our faith.

Inside of us, through us, and with us, for the benefit of others.

Jesus is NOT our substitute.
Jesus is SOMETIMES our example.

Complete dependence on Jesus, who calls, shapes, sends, and empowers.

So ... Example, or Not?!

Go back to the foot washing and the vine and branches. Are these talking primarily about the 2nd or the 3rd use of the Law? Is Jesus an example for us in either?

Hebrews 10:10 says: “We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Jesus said, “Everyone who wants to come after me must take up their cross and follow me.”

So, is the cross an example, or not? Discuss.

42 Seconds Bible Class, Week 1: Be Kind

Opening Discussion

How have you experienced
Openness to People and Expression?

1. In your church home?
2. In your everyday communities?

Humility is not
thinking less
of yourself
but thinking about
yourself less.

42
SECONDS

Self-Justification

The Arbinger Institute's *Leadership and Self-Deception* tells the story of a husband who naturally and unwittingly justifies his action (not getting up with a crying baby) by blaming his wife (66-73). That situation leads to a wonderful summary of the problem we all face: when I sin, "my thoughts and feelings will begin to tell me that I'm justified in whatever I'm doing or failing to do" (73).

On Living as "True Sinners"

As long as we are circles turned in on ourselves, we will never truly confess our sinfulness, because we can't. We will always have ready-made excuses for every sin, large or small.

In fact, our thoughts and emotions will begin to justify and rationalize our sin, leading to more sin and more self-justification.

Confession is the only way to break this cycle. Only when you give up on justifying yourself—only when you admit your sin is real sin—can you even begin to be interested in real forgiveness.

God cannot help those who are hell-bent on helping themselves. The self-justified have no need for Jesus or his cross. Only a true sinner can receive true pardon.

Always Give an Answer to Everything? (1 Peter 3:15, NIV)

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

What does this mean?

What does this NOT mean?

Barter Up (1 Corinthians 9:19-23 ESV)

¹⁹ For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might **win** more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to **win** Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might **win** those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might **win** those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might **win** the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, **that I may share with them** in its blessings.

The Greek word behind our English word “win” does not come from competition, Olympics, or warfare.

It is a barter word, a marketplace word. It means giving up something of value to gain possession of something of even greater value (to you).

1. Describe the difference between **winning something in a competition** and **bartering up to get something of more value**.
2. What did Paul have to give up? What did he get by bartering up?
3. What will you have to give up? What do you expect to receive by bartering up?

What I Won't Give Up (Galatians 1:6-9 ESV)

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

Paul will not let go of the truth of the Gospel, but he will give up his own privilege and rights as far as he can so he can barter up for real people and their eternity. He does this, not for the sake of the doctrine that is the Gospel, but for the people who will share in the blessings of the Gospel with him.

42 Seconds Bible Class, Week 2: Be Present

Opening Discussion

How have you experienced

Connection through Authentic Relationship?

1. In your church home?
2. In your everyday communities?

Real conversations involve
really listening
to the person and
to the Holy Spirit.

42
SECONDS

Brené Brown, PhD

Brené Brown, a PhD researcher and storyteller who discovered her own need for vulnerability, has one of the top 5 most viewed TED Talks of all time:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzlf7o> Published 3 Jan 2011.

Watch her TED talk and discuss one or more of the following quotes. Do they resonate with you? How would they affect your everyday life? How do they point you to Jesus?

1. “The original definition [of courage] was to tell the story of who you are with your whole heart. And so these folks had, very simply, the courage to be imperfect... they had connection, and — this was the hard part — as a result of authenticity, they were willing to let go of who they thought they should be in order to be who they were.”

2. Whole-hearted people “didn’t talk about vulnerability being comfortable, nor did they really talk about it being excruciating — as I had heard it earlier in the shame interviewing. They just talked about it being necessary. They talked about the willingness to say, ‘I love you’ first, the willingness to do something where there are no guarantees, the willingness to breathe through waiting for the doctor to call after your mammogram. They’re willing to invest in a relationship that may or may not work out. They thought this was fundamental.”

3. “Let me tell you what we think about children. They’re hardwired for struggle when they get here. And when you hold those perfect little babies in your hand, our job is not to say, ‘Look at her, she’s perfect. My job is just to keep her perfect — make sure she makes the tennis team by fifth grade and Yale by seventh grade.’ That’s not our job. Our job is to look and say, ‘You know what? You’re imperfect, and you’re wired for struggle, but you are worthy of love and belonging.’ That’s our job.”

On Being Truly Present

“We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the Word of God”
(*Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 99).

Be Present

Give the appearance of listening.
Eye contact, receptive body language

Use your eyes.
“Hear” the nonverbals.
60% nonverbal, 33% tone of voice

Learn to concentrate.
We think 4+ times faster than we speak

Avoid interrupting.
Clarify, but don’t change focus

Clarify messages.
“I heard you say . . .”
“It sounds like you’re angry about that.”

Develop the gift of brevity in speech.
Care don’t Cure

One Anothering, vol. 1, (41-42)
by Richard C. Meyer

Care don’t Cure

Cure Statements
“Don’t worry. It will work out.”

“Have you tried . . .”

“I struggled with that once too.
It will pass.”

“Why don’t you . . .”

“My Aunt Paula faced a similar
situation, and here is what she did.”

Care Statements
“How can I support you in this?”

“That sounds painful.”
(or hard or frustrating)

“Thank you for sharing that part of you
with me.”

“I wish I could do something. I feel so
helpless.”

“Is it OK to call you in a couple of days
and see how you are doing with this?”

One Anothering, vol. 1, (45)
by Richard Meyer

42 Seconds Bible Class, Week 3: Be Brave

Opening Discussion

How have you experienced
Faithfulness to Complex Truth?

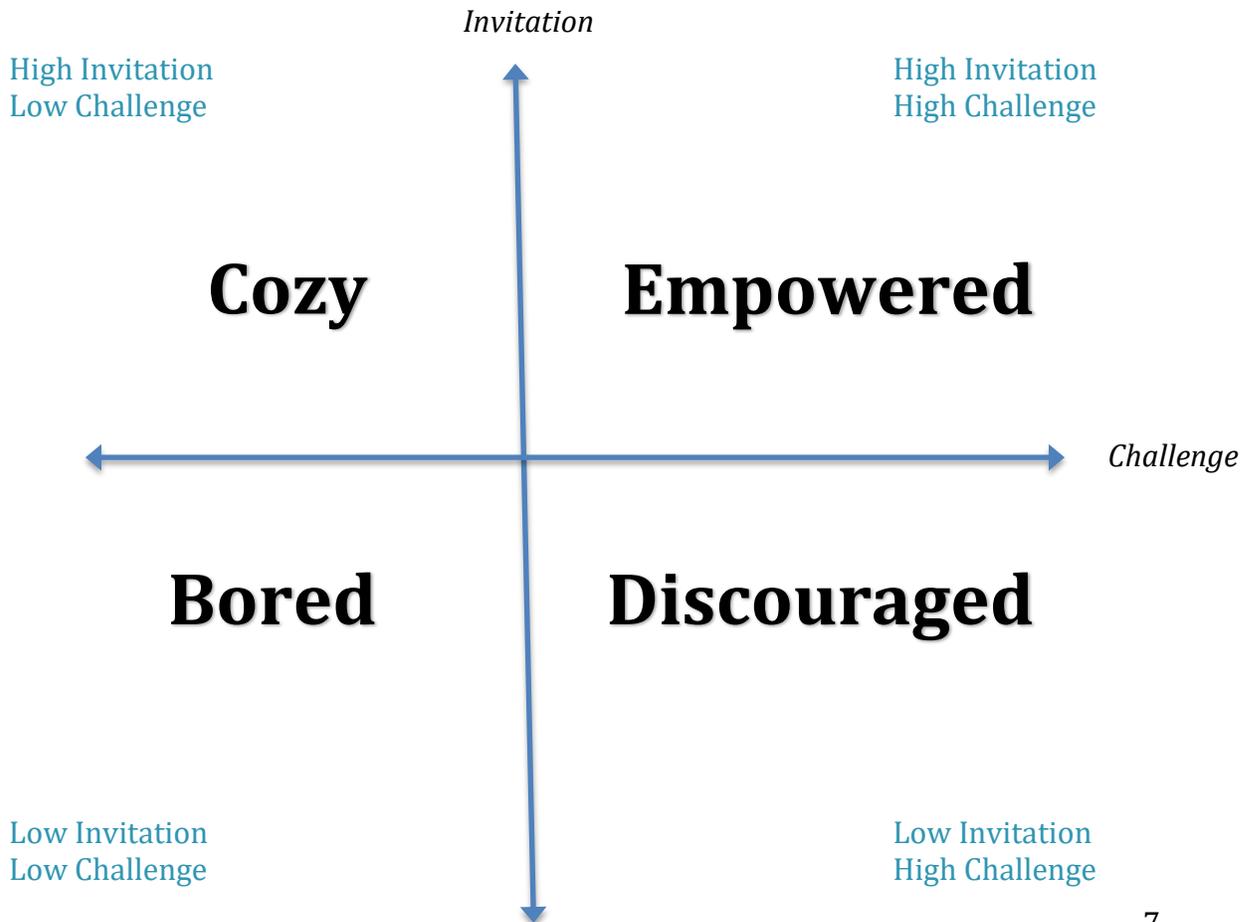
1. In your church home?
2. In your everyday communities?

**Speak out of a heart
that genuinely cares.
Trust God
to take care of the rest.**

42
SECONDS

The Invitation/Challenge Matrix (from Mike Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture*)
The Great Commission has High Challenge (disciple the nations) and High Invitation (I am with you always). Where do you find yourself on this matrix when it comes to interacting with people who don't know Jesus?

Flip your perspective. Where on this matrix do you think people who don't know Jesus are when they interact with you? How might you bring both Invitation and Challenge to that conversation?



On Being Brave

“Bravery isn’t bravery if your ego and need to be right get in the way. True bravery is bold love. True bravery is being like Jesus.” *42 Seconds* by Carl Medearis (74).

Responding to Distrust

1. Pray, don’t Defend.

Pray for your own heart but also hold them in prayer before God.

2. Learn, don’t Bruise.

Rather than taking offense, be genuinely interested in their story.

3. Bond, don’t Avoid.

Actually go out of your way to meet them on their turf.

4. Affirm, don’t Judge.

Look for real good and affirm it. Adopt their values as far as possible.

5. Welcome, don’t Argue.

You don’t have to convince them. But do invite them into your space.

I Once Was Lost: What Postmodern Skeptic Taught Us About Their Path to Jesus, by Don Everts and Doug Schaupp (36-46).

Is this my “barley field”?

1. Is this a problem (and how do I know if this is a problem)?

2. Is this the time and place?

3. What are the chances of at least a small measure of success initially?

4. Am I willing to invest time and energy, and endure some risk, in order to make this change?

5. Will I stay relatively calm while I try some new behaviors, not letting fear or anxieties overwhelm me?

Speaking the Truth in Love, by Ruth Koch and Kenneth Haugk (94-97).

42 Seconds Bible Class, Week 4: Be Jesus

Opening Discussion

How have you experienced
Dependence on Jesus?

1. In your church home?
2. In your everyday communities?

The Holy Spirit and the Word

“Luther presupposes that God the Father sends his life-giving, enlightening Holy Spirit through his word. And so the student of theology ... **prays that the Holy Spirit will use the Scriptures to interpret him and his experience** so that he sees himself and others as God does. In this way he trusts in God’s word as a means of grace, the channel of the Holy Spirit” (Kleinig, 7).

Oratio: Prayer

The reading and praying of God’s Word.

Meditatio: Meditation

Physical, mental, emotional engagement, as if God were speaking this word to me.

Tentatio: Struggle

Living out of God’s Word in real life, which invites the attack of the devil, which drives me back to God’s Word.

The Vita Passiva: The Receptive Life

“The Spirit-filled word attunes us to God the Father by conforming us to his dear Son. We do not internalize [God’s Word] in us and assimilate it to our way of being; no, [God’s Word] assimilates us and makes us godly. We do not use [God’s Word] to make something of ourselves; [God’s Word] makes us” (Kleinig, 7).

http://www.johnkleinig.com/files/1813/2730/7611/Oratio_Meditatio_Tentatio.pdf

**We follow Jesus
Right into the humility
of dependence**

42
SECONDS

Bonhoeffer on Meditation

10-15 verses every day for a week.

No One Journeys Alone

Begin with a prayer for the Holy Spirit and for others who are meditating.

The Word of a Person Dear to Me

“Accept the Word and ponder it in your heart, ... until it is entirely within you and has taken possession of you.”

Don’t Be an Over-Achiever

“It is not necessary every day to go through the entire text we have chosen... Often we will hold on to one word of it for the entire day.”

Don’t Stress

“Passages that we do not understand we can simply pass over.”

Use Distractions as Prayer Requests

“Let the Word of Scripture tell you what you ought to pray for them.”

Don’t Forget to Say Thank You

“At the close of the meditation ... say a prayer of thanksgiving from a heart that is full.”

Meditating on the Word,
by Dietrich Bonhoeffer,
(Pages 24-25).

Martin Luther, *A Simple Way to Pray*, Concordia Publishing House.

Take 20 minutes to meditate on John 14:8-10 and jot some notes for each section:

1. First, I read and consider what God is teaching me [about what He is like and how He acts].
2. Second, I turn to thanksgiving on account of what God has done.
3. Third, I confess my sin based upon the text.
4. Fourth, I use the text to say a prayer for strong faith [discipleship growth].