

When Everything is Unravelling Hybrid Christianity LifeGroup Leader Discussion Guide

Sermon Summary: It's tempting to think you can take away core parts of Christianity and build your own faith based on a buffet of religions and worldviews. But the Jesus presented to us in the Bible doesn't leave that as an option. Jesus is either liar, lunatic or lord.

1. What is a key idea you remember or question you have from Pete's sermon on Sunday about Hybrid Christianity?

Facilitator Tip: Consider sending out the sermon video to your group, or watching 5 or 10 minutes of the sermon when you're together in group for a re-cap.

<https://www.youtube.com/@CreeksideChurchOn>

Another helpful tool to engage group members with the content is the sermon notes.

2. What has been your experience with religions or worldviews outside of Christianity? Has there been a time in your life when you have wrestled with the idea of hybrid Christianity? Share your story with the group.

Facilitator Tip: To get conversation going ask your group – “What is hybrid Christianity?” This can lead to group members considering whether or to what extent they have embraced it.

3. When it comes to the leading voices in word religions and world views, Jesus stands out as unique. Read John 8:48-59. What do you notice here about Jesus' claims regarding His identity? What do you notice about how the religious leaders of His day responded to Jesus' claims?

Facilitator Tip: Here are some insights from the passage: Jesus claimed God as “my Father” – implying He has a unique relationship as the Son. He claimed that those who keep His word would never see death (vs. 51) asserting His authority over death. Jesus claimed divinity when He said, “... before Abraham was born, I am!” The leaders responded by picking up stones to stone Jesus for blasphemy because they recognized Jesus' claim to be God.

4. Jesus not only claimed His unique identity with His words, He also showed it with His actions. Read Mark 2:1-12. What do notice Jesus doing in this account that demonstrates He is God in the flesh?

Facilitator Tip: Here's some insights from the passage: He forgave sins (vs. 5) to which the teaching of the law thought – “He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (vs. 7) Then Jesus demonstrated His authority to forgive sins by healing the man. The people rightly praised God and said “We have never seen anything like this!” (vs. 12)

5. The most powerful evidence of Jesus’ uniqueness and deity is His resurrection from the dead. Read John 11:25-26 and 1 Corinthians 15:20-28. How might you use these passages to help someone who is wrestling with the uniqueness of Jesus?

Facilitator Tip: Many have set out to disprove Christianity, but when they look at Jesus’ prophecies about His resurrection, the actual event and how the early followers taught about it and were willing to die for it, many skeptics have put their faith in Jesus. John 11 is powerful because Jesus claims to be the resurrection and the life and then He proves it by raising Lazarus. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul powerfully argues that Jesus’ resurrection is core to our faith. We can’t deny the resurrection of Jesus unless we’re willing to deny all of Christianity (see vs. 14).

6. On Sunday Pete challenged us to consider the argument from C.S. Lewis in his book, Mere Christianity – “A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.” What do you think of this argument? How does it help when we consider who Jesus is?

Facilitator Tip: C.S. Lewis’ argument is powerful because it pushes back against the idea that we can see Jesus as only a great teacher, or moral example, but not God. Based on what He said about Himself and what He did, we do not have that option.

7. How might you engage a friend or family member who believes Christianity and other religious teachings and worldviews can be mixed? What approaches do you think are not helpful? What do you think can help?

Facilitator Tip: It is not often helpful to argue or debate with someone. Helpful approaches can be to listen and love. Be open to listening to their story and being genuine, curious and humble. Show love for them by honouring and respecting them, while gently pointing them to the claims of Jesus. Invite them to Alpha!