

*Hey Ladies! Just a reminder, don't expect to be able to cover all of the homework in your group. If necessary, you can pull out one or two passages read through them as a group and discuss them. The ladies are hopefully doing the homework on their own. Your time together is only meant to supplement what they are doing on their own. I would love to know what God is teaching the ladies in your group!*  
XOXO Alisa

## **Week 5 Unexplainable Jesus**

### **Day 1**

There is lots of practical application in this day. Jesus tells many parables, warning us about hypocrisy, reminding us to honor and fear God over anything else- that if we acknowledge Him, He will acknowledge us. He warns about covetousness, and getting wrapped up in material wealth. He reminds us not to be anxious- that it cannot add one hour to our lives- but rather to focus on being obedient to what God has laid before us. He tells us to be ready for His return.

Which of these lessons or reminders stood out to the ladies in your group? What has God given to the ladies in your group to manage? Have they been faithful to that calling? Or are they getting distracted by the world's pull on their lives?

### **Day 2**

This day is filled with more teaching from Jesus. I really like Erica's summary statement at the bottom of page 141: "Often Jesus starts with a false belief commonly held by the people of His day, puts it into a story to which they can readily relate, and attempts to open their eyes to their distorted views about God and their fellow man." You can poll your group- has anyone's eyes been opened to a distorted view they held about God or their fellow man? What new truth has God given them to correct that distorted view?

In this day we look at some of the distorted views that we can have regarding an outward appearance of righteousness. Jesus is warning us that people may look the right way or say the right things; however they can have hearts that are far from Him. He says we need to look at the fruit produced in individual lives. Are you producing spiritual fruit? What is it?

We wrap up with some foreshadowing about the mission of Jesus- to die for the sins of the people that He loves. Despite the warnings, Jesus is going to stay the course and go to Jerusalem to be crucified. Jesus is going to be loyal to us, and He expects us to be loyal to Him.

### **Day 3**

Personally, I found this day applicable and convicting. How have we become puffed up with religious pride? In what ways are we blind to the poor and needy around us? What kingdom work are we missing out on because we are too self-absorbed? This prideful, selfish or stubborn way of thinking

most likely develops over time, and can be very subtle, so it may take some thought. Christianity crosses all social boundaries- age, race, status, wealth, intellect- all types of backgrounds and personalities are tied together by one commonality- our forgiveness by Jesus and our submission and loyalty to Jesus.

This is a good day to read these teachings with a fresh ear (many of these passages are familiar if you have grown up in church) and examine the state of your heart. Is God calling you to make adjustments to your way of thinking or your priorities to fulfill the Great Commission in a more intentional way in your life? When you honestly assess your day to day life- what is most important to you? What should be most important to you?

I like how Erica points out on page 150, that the banquets are about relationships. God calls us to relationship with Him, and God calls us to share the gospel through relationship with others.

#### **Day 4**

In this day, we focus on how we serve a God who pursues us. God loves us as individuals- each one of us is precious and valuable to Him. This is a very different viewpoint- in the ancient near east culture, gods were believed to have created humanity in order to be served- and if humanity failed to do the bidding of these gods- disaster would strike, or things like rain or fertility would be withheld. Jesus, on the other hand, portrays the character of a personal, loving God who cares about the one lost sheep, or coin, or the prodigal son.

If we want “on earth as it is in heaven” as it states in the Lord’s Prayer, then we should be modeling our behavior after the shepherd, the woman and the father in these parables that Jesus shares. Are we like the Pharisees or are we like the shepherd, woman and father? Do we care about those who are lost? Do we only care about certain people who are lost? How do we search for them? Do we celebrate when the lost are found? Or are we like the older brother- resentful that they were able to waste their inheritance and then be let back into the family?

#### **Day 5**

I really appreciated Erica’s insight on the parable from Luke 16:1-13. I thought it was really helpful, because I have often been confused by this one. At the bottom of page 159, she says that this parable is not about the shrewdness of the manager but the mercy of the master. (It reminds me a bit of the parable about prayer that we read last week from Luke 11:5-13- it is not about the neighbor asking, but about the neighbor who gives what is asked).

It is easy to lose sight of the mercy and goodness of God when we are struggling in life. When things are hard, Satan will position himself to be the first to jump in your head and justify your feelings of resentment, entitlement or anger towards God because life is not turning out the way you expected. I huge breakthrough for me personally was when I realized that God never promised that this life would be fair. He promises us many victories and comforts, but for this life to be fair is not something God promised. He actually warns us that because of sin, we will have struggles and be like aliens in the

world. One day, sin and death will be gone for good because Jesus defeated them at the cross. But until that time, it is helpful to stop expecting God to make life “fair” and instead trust that God is good and loves us and will lead us through whatever trials we face in life. And in the end, everything will be perfect in heaven.