

# THE POINT OF IMPACT

## WEEK 1

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

His daughter was sick, and he was bringing Jesus home to heal her. But on the way he heard the words, “She’s dead. Why bother the teacher?” Everyone who wrestles with hopelessness knows these words. But Jesus says, “Just believe.” And the choice between not bothering or just believing all comes down to the truth of Easter.

**1** Describe how you met Jesus. When did Jesus first make a significant impact on your life? What happened in your life that you didn’t think was possible before you met Jesus?

**2** Mark 5:21-42, tells the story of Jairus’ daughter, and how Jesus raised her from death to life. It also tells the story of how her miracle was delayed. When have you had to wait on God to do something for you? What did God want you to learn during this time? If you are in the midst of that time right now, does it seem “too late for Jesus” to respond?

**3** Hebrews 4:16 encourages us to approach God’s throne of grace. Do you feel you can “boldly” approach God’s throne of grace in prayer? If not, what would it take for you to be even bolder in taking your requests to God (like Jairus and the woman who interrupted Jesus in Mark 5 did)? Jairus and the woman didn’t have much in common except for this: they both approached Jesus with their requests. What can we learn from their example?

**4** Mark 5:35 gives the account of men from Jairus’ house saying “your daughter is dead, why bother the teacher anymore”. Is there a part of your life (marriage, finances, fitness, being responsible at work, staying sexually pure, getting free of an addiction, seeking reconciliation) where you are tempted to give up hope, to quit trying, to just accept the status quo, to decide it’s too late? Where do these “why bother?” voices come from in your life (the crowd, family, friends, from inside your own mind)?

**5** Mark 5:40 tells us when Jesus arrived at Jairus’ house, he “put out” those who laughed, and went into the room with just a few people. What doubts, false beliefs, and attitudes do you need to “put out” of your life to get closer to a greater hope in Jesus? What can you do to tune out the voice of doubt in your life?

**6** Hebrews 6:18-19 tells us hope is an anchor to the soul. What practical things can we do in our lives to make hope an even greater anchor for our soul? What step can you take today in the hope direction?

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## WEEK 2

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

He was an outcast, a sinner, a person no one would want to hang out with—except Jesus. What did Jesus see in him and his friends? Could it be the same thing he sees in everyone—a person in desperate need of mercy, a person who can become new?

**1** Read **Matthew 9:9-13**. Why would getting close to someone like Matthew be seen as a bad Public Relations move? How did the Pharisees expect Jesus to respond?

**2** Jesus saw **MORE** in Matthew than his occupation, He saw a potential Kingdom difference-maker, and Jesus “friended” Matthew. Why is it so important to make friends of those whom we seek to make disciples? Who are some people you need to invite to dinner before inviting them to church?

**3** There are 3 surprises in this story:

1. Matthew is surprised that he was called.
2. The Pharisees are surprised that he was called.
3. Jesus is surprised that they would be surprised.

What do you find most surprising in this story?

**4** **Matthew 9:10-11** shows the Pharisees disapproval of Jesus’ favor toward Matthew. How does their attitude show a deep misunderstanding of God’s attitude towards sinners and the outcast? According to **Matthew 9:12-13**, what point were they missing?

**5** Read **Titus 3:4-5** and **Ephesians 2:4-5**. How does your theology of God impact the way you have mercy on others?

**6** This lesson reminded us that **MERCY IMPACTS** the way we hear scripture, the way we see people, and the way we follow Jesus. With that in mind, spend some time discussing these 3 questions:

1. How does knowing that God desires mercy help you better understand and apply scripture?
2. How does knowing that we all need God’s grace help you see people like Jesus sees people?
3. What do you see in Jesus that makes you want to follow him today?

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## WEEK 3

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

She was an outcast. Five divorces will do that to you. Then she met a stranger who knew everything about her and still bestowed dignity on her. And she found her worth in a new kind of relationship.

**1** In **John 4**, Jesus engaged a woman most avoided. What kind of thinking and courage does that take? **John 4:4** says, “Now he had to go through Samaria.” Share an example of a “divine appointment” you’ve had.

**2** Read **John 4:5-10** There was a “high wall” around that well (the wall of race, gender, sin, and worthlessness). How did Jesus overcome these obstacles during his conversation with the woman? Think of at least one person in your life who often feels like this woman must have felt. What is one thing you can do to break down a wall in that relationship?

**3** Read **John 4:13-18**. Does this give you a better idea of why she was at the well at noon and not in the early morning when women normally went to get water? What must her life have been like?

**4** She kept trying to find her worth with men. What “wells” do you go to in order to find a sense of worth.

**5** The woman thought she needed a bigger bucket, but Jesus knew she needed a better well; so he greatly exposed the futility of her search for “water.” How do you respond when the Holy Spirit reveals a “thirsty place” to you?

**6** Only Jesus can satisfy the thirst for worth. Read **John 7:37-39**. The Holy Spirit saturates our hearts with the love of God. How do you experience this affirmation from the Holy Spirit? How does it change you?

**7** The woman left her bucket at the well, but she carried water. She was a bucket for Jesus. Water this good must be shared. How do you share the living water of Jesus with others?

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## WEEK 4

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

He just wanted to see the Master. He never expected to have lunch with him. And Jesus offered what he expected even less—salvation. It changed his life, starting with the way he decided to use his money to change the lives of others.

**1** Read **Luke 19:1-10**. In this passage, Jesus encountered a man who didn't "measure up." As a tax collector what were some of the key shortcomings Zacchaeus must have dealt with on a daily basis? Are there times in your life when you feel like you don't "measure up?" How do you deal with these shortcomings?

**2** In **Luke 19:5-6**, Zacchaeus climbs up a tree to see Jesus. What compelled him to "go out on a limb"? Was this simply a "fleeting curiosity" or does this reveal a "deeper longing" in his soul?

**3** In this story Zacchaeus didn't really find Jesus; Jesus found him. Why is that significant? How do you think Zacchaeus must have felt when Jesus called him by name? On the other hand how did all the other people respond to this situation? Why?

**4** What does this story show us about everyone's need for Jesus? Why do we often deny "our shortness" by comparing ourselves to other people? Why does that fall short (**Romans 3:23**)?

**5** When the good news of God's grace collides with our shortcomings the impact creates a new person (**Romans 6:4** and **2 Corinthians 5:17**). Jesus helps us find our identity in his gospel instead of someone else's label. How has this been true in your life? Are you living out your new future or are you still defined by your past?

**6** The impact of the gospel creates a new person...with a new passion. The gospel is both forgiveness and formation. How was this demonstrated in the life of Zacchaeus (**Luke 19:8**)? One sure evidence of the "new you" is the transformation from a "taker" to a "giver." How has that been true in your life? On the other hand, in what ways are you sometimes still "short-sighted?"

**7** Read **Luke 19:9-10**. Saved people want to partner with God in His work of renewal. What are some ways you've recently partnered with God to impact the world? What else can you do as an individual, a family or a group to help bring renewal?

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## WEEK 5

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

She was brought before him caught in sin and drenched in shame. She expected judgment, and she deserved it. What she got was “a stone not thrown.” She got grace; she received forgiveness. It’s good news!

**1** Read **John 8:2-11**. This story is best known as the woman caught in the act of adultery. How would it have more impact if we referred to it as the man caught in the act of forgiveness?

**2** How do you think this woman must have felt when she was brought into the temple courts? In what ways were her accusers using her as bait?

**3** The woman was guilty. She deserved and she expected condemnation. What no one expected was for Jesus to start writing in the dirt. In your opinion, why did Jesus do this? What do you think he wrote?

**4** Reflect on these verses: *“There is no condemnation now for those who live in union with Christ Jesus... What the Law could not do, because human nature was weak, God did. He condemned sin in human nature by sending his own Son, who came with a nature like our sinful nature, to do away with sin”* (**Romans 8:1, 3, TEV**). How did God reconcile mercy and grace at the cross? What is significant about the point **Jesus condemns condemnation**?

**5** **Forgiven people are rock-droppers.** Why should you be a rock-dropper (**take a look at Romans 3:10**)? How should that truth impact how you treat people?

**6** **Forgiven people are excuse-droppers.** Read **John 8:9-11**. In what ways did Jesus not allow the woman to play the “victim” card? Why does our past not excuse us from becoming the person God calls us to be? What impact should God’s kindness have on your behavior (**see Romans 2:4**)?

**7** **Forgiven people are name droppers.** How does Jesus rise to your defense when the Accuser tries to assault you with the memories from your past (**see Romans 8:34**)?

**8** Close your discussion by focusing on this question: **Have you been caught in the act of forgiveness?** Share your story... What impact has this had on your life?

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## WEEK 6

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

He was excited to meet Jesus. He left the encounter sad. What happened? Jesus gave him a choice, and he decided to keep instead of release. Everyone makes this decision whether realizing it or not. What will you choose to lose?

**1** Read **Luke 9:23-24**. What do you make of Jesus' strong words on being a disciple in this passage? What is one way you need to deny yourself as you follow Jesus today?

**2** Read **Luke 18:18-30**. This man was excited to meet Jesus but he left the encounter sad. What impact did his conversation with Jesus have on his life?

**3** Focus on Jesus' response in **Luke 18:22**, "*You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.*" What problem is Jesus really confronting in this story?

**4** The rich young ruler looked to his wealth to do what only God can do. What are some other allegiances Jesus might name?

**5** Read **Matthew 13:44**. How do you explain this man's joy? What are some examples of losing something in order to gain something significant?

**6** What the young man saw as a burden Jesus saw as a bargain. Satan's greatest aim is to keep you from seeing life following Jesus for the win that it really is. He wants you to focus on what you will lose and never consider what you will gain. What are some areas of obedience that feel like "losing" to you?

**7** Read **Philippians 3:7**. We tend to focus on what we will miss if we give Jesus a whole-hearted "yes;" perhaps we should focus on what we miss with a half-hearted "yes." What do you actually gain by losing?

**8** Jesus wants to know if you will lose in order to gain him. And by the way, he made the same decision about us. In order for us to gain eternal life Jesus had to lose his. And in the garden he wrestled, he prayed, and he decided. How should Jesus' whole-hearted decision for you in the garden impact the decisions you make each day?

**9** Read **Luke 9:24-25**. What will you choose to lose? Identify the idol in your life that only allows you to offer Jesus half of your heart. Once everyone has identified their idol spend some time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to help each of you to let it go, and to open your eyes to what you have been missing in Jesus.