

STARTING POINT (PART 2) “A SHOCKING DISCOVERY!”

Scripture used: I Corinthians 15:1-3 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

Big Idea: Everyone’s faith has a starting point.

Welcome to the second week of our six-week series Starting Point. The church developed this unique curriculum to help us all consider the most important questions of our faith. No matter where we are starting, this series will give us a chance to engage with other NBCC partners in a new and fresh way. We will be asked to explore many areas of our faith, and support each other as we try to get to know Jesus better. Let’s get started!

KEY POINTS

- 1) **Our questions about Jesus put us into four broad categories.** Knowing where we are can help us to understand what we need to do at this moment to bring us closer to God.
 - a. **Skeptics.** These are the people who constantly question Christianity, Jesus, and The Gospel.
 - b. **Seekers.** While they may not completely believe, these people hope that the Gospel is true.
 - c. **Followers outside community.** These people are devoted followers of Christ, but have temporarily separated themselves from the organized aspects of faith.
 - d. **Followers inside community.** These people embrace the church as a body, and draw strength and courage from regular, constant fellowship.
- 2) **We grow in three areas as we follow Jesus.** We should pay attention to these parts of ourselves. Think back six months or a year, and consider whether you are more or less like Jesus today than in the past.
 - a. **Trust in Him.** This should be growing over time as we come to know Him better.
 - b. **Commitment to Him.** We should be growing in our ability to live like Him.
 - c. **Heart.** Measure yourself according to your openness, your generosity, and your capacity to care.
- 3) **Sin separates us from Jesus, but He offers us reconciliation.** Sin is more than a mistake. This is not about being mistaken, or about lacking knowledge. Sin is what pulls us away from doing the things we know to be right, as Paul describes in Romans 7: 19-20 (NLT).
 - a. **We are all sinners.** Jesus set the bar high. It is so high, in fact, that every single person has sinned and deserves punishment. Simply being angry or thinking lustfully about someone is sin, as Jesus describes in Matthew 5:21, 27-28 (NLT).
 - b. **But Jesus loves sinners.** The story doesn’t end with sin. Jesus sought out the people who could hear His message of reconciliation and love. Only the sick need a physician! Mark 2:16-17 (NLT)
 - c. **And He died for sinners.** The focus of Jesus’ ministry was to reconcile our sinful selves to God Romans 8:1 (NLT). Following Jesus means that we are trying to “get it right” to honor God, and to get the best out of the life that He made for us.
 - d. **We are all the Prodigal Son.** Luke Chapter 15 tells the story of a disgraced son who returns home to a loving father. This story was told by Jesus to explain how God perceives us when we finally acknowledge our sin, and come running back to him. We repent and confess, opening the floodgates of grace for God to forgive and, ultimately, reconcile with us. There is no need for explanation or probation. We all have this to look forward to!

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** – Read through and review NBCC’s Vision, Values, and the Triangle of Discipleship (pages 6-8). Which aspect of the Triangle of Discipleship is most difficult for you?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** – One of our values is: “The most important person in our church is the one who isn’t here yet.” It’s easy to say that we agree, but do our actions reflect that? Discuss with the group.
- 3) **DO** – Consider the question “I am a sinner?” and discuss it with your group. Try to get at least 3 different perspectives.

Suggested Booklet Activities:

- *NBCC’s Vision & Values (pages 6-7)*
- *Triangle of Discipleship (page 8)*
- *Rainbow Footprint activity (page 10) - Optional Icebreaker (for groups that are just getting started)*