

## Holey Jeans or A Holy Life

### 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Ezekiel 3:14-15, Psalm 137:1, Matthew 16:24

In a society that caters to individual beliefs, as Christians, we often subconsciously begin to view ourselves as unconnected or outdated. In an attempt to stay relevant or avoid offending others, we forget the power of the Gospel and slowly begin to compromise our beliefs.

A relevant life is not one of compromise, though; rather, it's one of conviction. People around you notice when you live with unwavering principles in the midst of trials and demands to bend your beliefs. Even when people disagree with you, they'll—more often than not—respect your authenticity. Living in a world marked by compromise, the Christian's power is found in his or her conviction.

As followers of Jesus, we need to live lives that are pleasing to God while seeking to understand the situations and circumstances our friends and family find themselves in. How will people recognize the power of the Gospel if we're not living lives of conviction? At the same time, how can we ever show the world this transformative power if we're not in it, forming relationships with those around us? Simply put, they won't and we can't. We're called to be in the world, not of it—not of the world but not in it.

Like most aspects of the Christian life, this is easier said than done. Only the Holy Spirit can empower us to live authentically, abiding by God's guidelines and precepts. The Holy Spirit isn't an impersonal "it" or force; He's a person that desires to use us to draw others to Christ.

Though the Holy Spirit uses us most effectively when we live authentically, that doesn't mean we won't meet opposition. In fact, we need to be prepared for it. Though Paul sought to be all things to all people, he was quite familiar with jail cells. While we may not be imprisoned for living lives of integrity, our lifestyle will inevitably bring about disapproval, jealousy, and even isolation. Still, living a life consecrated to God increases your influence and ability to impact the eternities of those around you.

### *Church Highlights*

- Our Seven "All In" Weekends
- Heart for the House
- Upcoming 30<sup>th</sup> Hillsong Conference

### *Pray Together*

- **Salvations - that people come to know Jesus. Who can you bring?**
- **Ps Brian & Bobbie Houston**

### *Nation Builders*

We can make a difference as a connect group by praying for the Nation Builders causes we support and by giving together. Our offering extends the reach of our church locally to reach and influence the world for Jesus.

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### **Connection and Action**

*Questions to promote conversation and connection*

#### **Living with Understanding**

- Q Describe a time when you saw things through someone else's eyes. What difference did it make – to you, to your relationship or how you engage with the world?
- Q What do you think of Stephen Covey's saying: *"Seek first to understand, then to be understood"*?

#### **Living with Relevance**

- Q Imagine looking at Christians through a non-Christian's eyes. What would make Christians relevant or irrelevant to you?
- Q What place ought fashion, music and "cool-ness" have in being a relevant to the world?

#### **Living with Conviction**

- Q A life of conviction can be attractive or repelling. What makes the difference?
- Q What are your thoughts on Pastor Brian's comment: *"Relevance, should be judged by the distance between the life we live and the faith we espouse"*?  
*(Leaders Tip: it's about authenticity)*

### **Bible and Belief**

*Questions to help believers develop a biblical world view*

#### **Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

- Q What are your initial thoughts on this passage?
- Q Paul describes himself as a slave to all, though he is free. What do you think he means by this?
- Q Paul describes becoming like a Jew, like someone under the Law. What do you imagine that looked like?
- Q By contrast, he also describes becoming like someone not having the Law. What might that have looked like?
- Q How do you think Paul became "all things to all people" without losing his Christian distinctives and convictions?
- Q What does this mean for the way we live, behave and evangelise as a body of believers today?
- Q How far do we go then to be relevant to the people we are trying to reach?
- Q What possible dangers can the Church fall into by trying to be too relevant to the world?

### **Growing Leadership**

*Questions to help people grow as leaders in church, work and life*

#### **Relevant Leadership**

- Q When it comes to leading people, what do you think of the maxim: *"Seek first to understand, then to be understood"*?
- Q How well do you as a leader go in relating to the different kinds of people in your circles of influence?
- Q What are the similarities and differences between being relevant to the marketplace in business and being relevant to the world as the church?
- Q As a boss, is it important to be relevant to those you manage? Why? How? In what ways?

#### **Leading with Conviction**

- Q What Christian convictions ought we take with us into the workplace?
- Q How can we be leaders of conviction without becoming off-putting? Is this important? Why?

### **Pastoral Care**

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people through life's challenges
- With their permission, should anyone in your connect group experience sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, or surgeries, please contact our church office: Sydney (02) 8853 5353, Melbourne (03) 9720 2099, Brisbane (07) 3422 8500, Newcastle (02) 4927 1888, Darwin (08) 8932 3280