

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Dirty Gospel – Part 1  
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**Main Idea** – God enables us to come to terms with our past so we can better serve Him in the present. God preserves us in the present because He has more for us to do in the future. Throughout the time of our lives, our job is simply to share with others our own experience with the good news of the Gospel.

### Sharing the Gospel sometimes requires getting dirty

- Jesus interacted with people in whatever circumstances were required at the moment. He “got dirty” when it was necessary.
- The Gospel message is for everyone, everywhere. **Romans 3: 22b-23 – For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**
- Sin is the condition of being separated from God and from where He is. However, salvation (becoming reconnected with God) is available everywhere and at any time. **Romans 10: 8-9 – But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**
- Understanding this enables us to willingly go anywhere, at any time, to interact with people.

### God is not limited by time

- **Revelation 1: 8 – “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”**
- The past, present, and future are all the same to God. He operates in all three.
- Therefore, we should know that all three are useful to Him as He uses us.
- “If we learn from it, the past is our teacher. But if we live in it, the past becomes our master.”
- Satan attempts to use our past to accuse us before God. But, when our past is covered by Jesus’ sacrifice, our past cannot be used against us. God will only use our past to help us.

## God forgives our past

- **Luke 5: 27-32 – After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, “Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus answered and said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. *I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*”**
- Repentance is the word “metanoia” in Greek, which means “a change of mind.”
- Once we have repented from the wrongs in our past, we are able to use those past experiences to better understand and help others.
- We can learn from, and improve upon, what happened in our past.
- “Mismanaged success is the leading cause of failure, but well-managed failure is the leading cause of success.”

## God heals our present

- Jesus is a healer. Although we may still carry scars from the memory of past wounds, we also have present wounds that need healing.
- Each of the four Gospels tell of what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, as Jesus was being taken captive to be crucified. These accounts are found in **Matthew 26: 36-58, Mark 14: 32-52, Luke 22: 39-54, and John 18: 1-13.**
- **John 18: 4-6 - Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?” They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. Now when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.**
- During this Garden of Gethsemane event, Peter cut off the ear of a high priest’s servant.
- But Jesus, being all-powerful and fully God, immediately healed the man’s wound.
- Jesus healed even in the midst of confusion and evil activity designed to destroy Him.
- If Jesus had not healed the ear, it is possible Peter would have been arrested and put on trial. Jesus was not only healing the high priest’s servant, but was preserving Peter for what He needed Peter for in the future.
- In the same way, Jesus often keeps us whole in the present time so He can use us in a pre-ordained way in the future.

## God values our future

- Jesus protected Peter from legal prosecution because He had a future assignment for Peter. **John 21: 15-17 – So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.” He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.”**
- Jesus may have a Great Commission assignment just for you.
- Whether we are new believers, or long-time followers in the Christian faith, Jesus will provide each of us with a fresh understanding of where He is taking us.
- There is a fresh Great Commission assignment for everyone, regardless of how long we have been a believer.
- We, like Peter, need to be available to God.

## Reflective Questions for Dirty Gospel – Part 1

1. “Getting dirty” sometimes requires functioning outside our comfort zones in our interaction with others. Tell about a time when you risked discomfort, or safety, to do something you felt was important.
2. When you think about your life experiences, what painful – or uncomfortable – experience has actually been helpful to you in better understanding others?
3. Can you identify a time when God kept you out of trouble despite your own foolish behavior? Like Jesus did for Peter, might He have been preserving you for a future purpose?
4. Have you practiced telling a story about yourself, in a concise way, so that you can comfortably share the Gospel message through that story?