

Christ & Culture (6 of 7)

Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the [recent sermons page](#) at our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

Sunday, October 16th, 2022



Series Focus: As followers of Jesus, we are called to embrace his teachings and example, proclaim the truth of the gospel, and engage the world around us by embodying the good news. What does that look like today? As we read the Bible, we can see that it takes a mixed view of all human cultures. While many elements of culture can be affirmed, we must avoid uncritically accepting aspects of culture without first examining them in light of Christ and the gospel. Therefore, we must learn to contextualize the gospel and use cultural discernment as we live in the world as faithful disciples. In this 7-part sermon series—*Christ & Culture*—disciples of Jesus are invited to apply the gospel to every area of life as we seek to follow him in a fallen world.

Sermon Title: Cultural Convictions of Conscience

Scripture Reading: Acts 15:19-20; Romans 14:1-23; Ephesians 4:2-6

Sermon Focus: From the very beginning of the church, there were cultural differences among followers of Jesus. As the Apostle Paul evangelized non-Jews and the gospel spread across the empire, issues and disagreements arose between ethnic Jews and new Gentile converts. This still happens today. Disciples do not always share the same cultural convictions of conscience. When that happens, what should we do? In the sixth message of our series, Pastor David shares what it looks like to be unified in Christ.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person or by video call. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Read Romans 14:1-23 together. You may want to take turns reading a paragraph at a time. Paul is addressing Jewish and Gentile Christians who have different cultural convictions about two specific issues: what you can eat and whether you should observe certain holy days. So, they were having disagreements over what Paul clearly sees are *non-essential* issues. Have you ever experienced this before in a church, in your family, or among friends? How did things turn out?
2. Paul says there are Christians who have “strong” faith and those who have “weak” faith. He seems to mean that the “weak” are those who don’t discern the difference between essential and non-essential issues. So, you can be a disciple a long time but also be immature and legalistic in your faith—judging others and thinking that they should follow all your convictions, rules, etc. How have you experienced this in your life? How have you seen this in the church?
3. Think back to the list Pastor David gave that represented some of our “clashing cultural convictions” today. For example: alcohol, tobacco, music, tv/movies, social media, marriage roles, education, vaccines, medicine, politics, etc. Are you experiencing tension in any of these areas with loved ones or church members? Based on Romans 14, how is the Spirit inviting you to respond?
4. Go back and look at the concentric circles graphic that Pastor David used in his slides. This is to illustrate how some matters of belief and behavior are essential and some are not, i.e., dogma, doctrine, and opinion. Is this helpful to you? Also, what questions might you have in applying this to our differences today?
5. Think about your own convictions. What do you feel most passionate about? Be honest. Have those convictions been shaped by Christ, the Scriptures, and the gospel, or something else? Talk openly about all the influences in your personal development and formation that have shaped your beliefs, views, and values.
6. Read Ephesians 4:1-6. Do you catch yourself judging others who have different convictions than you? How is God inviting you to be more loving, humble, and patient with others as you keep the unity of the Spirit? Is there someone the Spirit is inviting you to pray for or to know better? Who would that be?