

# SG

Your group matters.

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

*When you get dressed in the morning, which shoe do you put on first, left or right? Do a quick online search, the reason makes sense.*

1. Pastor Tom started off with a recap of what Jesus thinks of the church. What was new, or jumped out at you?
2. What are some ways that you have seen [Isaiah 5:20](#) played out in your life? What about when you have done the opposite of what it says?
3. Which of the facts about religious people surprised you the most, and which of the list would you say could be seen in your life? (See message notes point 3, subpoints A-E.)
4. Read [2 Corinthians 5:17](#). How has this truth made you look more like the list from question 3 than you did before you said 'YES!' to Jesus as Lord?
5. Pastor Tom said, "Saying 'YES!' to Jesus as Lord and following Him sincerely makes an incredible difference." Read [1 Peter 2:9-12](#) and take some time to discuss what these realities could look like in your life and steps you will take this week to move that direction.

Day One: [Psalm 23](#)

Day Two: [Proverbs 23](#)

Day Three: [Joshua 23](#)

Day Four: [Isaiah 23](#)

Day Five: [Acts 23](#)

*This Personal Guide has been adapted from Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.*

## PERSONAL GUIDE



# RIVERSIDE CHURCH



# Your story matters.

## MYTHUNDERSTANDING

PASTOR TOM LUNDEEN

MAY 1, 2022

# MYRC.CHURCH



# "FAKE NEWS? (PART 2)"

Pastor Tom Lundeen

...and one of the biggest targets of fake news (from a variety of \_\_\_\_\_) is the Christian Church and Jesus followers.

There's a lot of fake news about the Church Jesus bled and died and rose to \_\_\_\_\_.

Last Sunday we laid a very important foundation for this entire series by seeing:

## 1. What Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ of the Church

Today let's dive into a number of fake news talking points and "mythunderstandings" about the Christian faith/Church...

## 2. Don't Confuse Me with the \_\_\_\_\_

It's a lack of \_\_\_\_\_ in a world today that closes the door to any factual data that doesn't line up with what we want the facts to be.

Note [Isaiah 5:20](#)

The vast amount of evidence shows that religion and spiritual commitment has an \_\_\_\_\_ positive impact...it's not even close to negative.

## 3. The \_\_\_\_\_ Reality (note [2 Corinthians 5:17](#))

Dr. Rodney Stark, *America's Blessings: How Religion Benefits Everyone*, Including \_\_\_\_\_

Religious/spiritually committed people are:

### A. More \_\_\_\_\_:

- Are the primary source of secular charitable funds that benefit victims of misfortune whatever their beliefs
- Dominate the ranks of blood donors and other \_\_\_\_\_ behaviors
- Far more likely to donate their money and time to socially beneficial programs and to be active in \_\_\_\_\_ affairs. (The impact of religious people on volunteering alone is an estimated \$47 billion annually in the United States alone!)

### B. \_\_\_\_\_:

- Enjoy superior mental health - are deemed happier, less \_\_\_\_\_, and far less likely to commit suicide
- Enjoy superior physical health - have an average life expectancy more than \_\_\_\_\_ years longer than that of the irreligious

### C. Intellectually \_\_\_\_\_:

- \_\_\_\_\_ more than their irreligious friends and neighbors
- Are less likely to believe in the occult, UFO's, Bigfoot, etc.
- Although often portrayed as "ignorant" and "backwards", more likely to \_\_\_\_\_ and sustain "high culture".

### D. Better \_\_\_\_\_ Lives:

- More apt to marry, less likely to divorce, and report higher degrees of \_\_\_\_\_ with their spouse. More likely to have children.
- Religious husbands are far less likely to \_\_\_\_\_ their wives or children. This is of course contrary to the story that religions create systems of oppression in the home because of 'male patriarchy'.
- Religious fathers are more likely to be involved in youth-related activities such as coaching sports teams or leading Scout troops, etc.
- Religious couples enjoy their sex lives more, women are more likely to have regular orgasms, and \_\_\_\_\_ happens more often. They are also far less likely to have an affair.

### E. Better \_\_\_\_\_:

- Religious students perform better on standardized achievement tests, are far less likely to drop out of school, obtain better jobs upon graduation, and are far less likely to be on unemployment or welfare (the studies for all of these and especially this one and all surrounding crime stats, etc., factor in \_\_\_\_\_/geographies across the US)
- In \_\_\_\_\_ studies done over a 66-year period (up to 2010): religion has a positive effect on society in regard to crime, deviance, and delinquency.
- Crime rates in the US compared to the decidedly less religious countries of Western Europe are glaringly less in many categories, with the exception of homicide rates: Denmark has nearly 2½ times as many burglaries per 100,000 people, and is exceeded by Austria, Switzerland, the UK, Sweden, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The same is true for theft & assault rates.
- Urban stats going from present-day back to the 1920s show that the higher a city's church membership rate, the lower its burglary, larceny, robbery, assault and \_\_\_\_\_ rates.

## MYTHUNDERSTANDING:

- Saying 'YES!' to Jesus as Lord and following Him sincerely..make an \_\_\_\_\_ difference...
- Note [1 Peter 2:9-10](#)
- Are you a member of God's \_\_\_\_\_ family?
- Note [1 Peter 2:11-12](#)

**Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!**

Let us know, too, by filling out a connect card (digital\* or hard copy).

\*[MyRC.link/connect](http://MyRC.link/connect) or text **riverside** to **94000**



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It's a lack of humility in a world today that closes the door to any factual data that doesn't line up with what we want the facts to be.

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The vast amount of evidence shows that religion and spiritual commitment has an overwhelmingly positive impact...it's not even close to negative.

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#### B. Healthier:

- Enjoy superior mental health - are deemed happier, less neurotic, and far less likely to commit suicide
- Enjoy superior physical health - have an average life expectancy more than seven years longer than that of the irreligious

#### C. Intellectually Engaged:

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