

What Really Matters?

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Week of July 9, 2023

BELONG

Ask this Ice Breaker Question: Has there ever been a time when you have had to blend in to fit into a new group or a new job or a new church?

BELIEVE

Have someone in your group read aloud: 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Ask these questions to prompt group discussion:

1. In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul is interacting with a common term - CULTURE. How do you define the word culture? And, is there a way that you normally interact with the culture around you?

Leader Context (Not to be read aloud):

- *Culture* - the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.
- "culture" has become a buzzword in post-modern society and it is trendy for intellectual leaders to want to interact with various cultures and sub-cultures as a way to frame conversations of meaning.
- Your group may struggle to define this term, but will likely be more subconsciously aware of the culture around them.

2. Paul offers a peek into his ministry strategy:

- a. He adopts some of the cultural features**
- b. He adapts his language to that of the larger culture**
- c. His ultimate aim is to preach The Gospel to that culture**

Has there ever been a time when you have had to *adopt* or *adapt* to try to minister to the new culture around you? Were you successful in this effort?

3. A common analogy for interacting with culture says Christians should think *thermostat* and not *thermometer* when approaching Gospel ministry (A thermostat changes the temperature in the room. A thermometer adjusts to the temperature in the room). How do you think Paul would respond to this

analogy?

BECOME:

- 4. Some Christians draw a strong line between sacred and secular culture (especially in the popular arts such as music, film, television, and style). Other Christians try to see all truth as God's truth as it relates to culture. With Paul's teaching in view, do you think you will approach ministry by drawing clearer lines or will you approach ministry by striving to locate truth in all areas? Or are you thinking of another approach?**

Close by praying together.