

Introduction:

1. Even if you did not call them a self-centered idiot, describe a time when you were not very winsome with someone and thus they were NOT interested in listening to your opinion.
2. When has someone been so kind that you were willing to listen to them even though you were pretty sure you were going to disagree with them?

Understanding:

3. Bill Maher says: "Faith means making a virtue out of not thinking." Based on what you have learned in today's message and the whole "Friend" series, how could you respond to Maher?
4. In the 1970s in Cambodia, Pol Pot killed about 7 million people. David Aikman, a Christian journalist, claimed that this was due to a "worldview that deemed there were no absolutes, no good or evil, and no values worth honoring beyond those of revolution." Explain the ways that biblical Christianity is the exact opposite of each point that Aikman lists.
5. Christian slaveholders had some weird ways of trying to justify slavery from the Bible. But they ignored the strong scriptural arguments of those who favored the abolition of slavery. Why do you think the slaveholders were so dismissive? What warning does that give to us about how we interpret scripture?
6. Pastor Dave said that in order to change the evil in our own hearts, we need more than just a good example. See Romans 6:6. What does this say about the cross? What is the danger of those who falsely claim that the only reason Christ went to the cross was to set an example for us?
7. Dave described how when we begin to form our identity based on the gospel, we start to change deeply. Explore what scripture says about several of these qualities:
 - A. Humility. See James 4:6
 - B. Slow to judge. See Matt 7:1-5
 - C. Forgiving. See Colossians 3
 - D. Sacrificial. See John 15:13
 - E. Generous. See 2 Cor 9:6-15 especially v 11.
8. It is often overlooked how much Martin Luther King Jr. was affected by scripture. In his famous "I Have a Dream" speech he said:

"I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Read Isaiah 40:4-5. How does the "Dream" quote correspond to the Scripture passage? Why is this connection so largely ignored?
9. Every couple of years a book comes out that says Jesus WILL return that year. Is it scriptural to predict the exact time of Jesus' return? Read Acts 1:6-8 especially verse 7. How do unbelievers react to these failed predictions?
10. You'll often hear secular people say "All claims about religious truth are intolerant." Do you see a flaw in the logic of that statement?

Application:

11. If Christians are currently representing "faith" as being a belief held to completely without reason, this idea is not based in a Biblical understanding of Christianity. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 it says "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ ". What are some practical steps that you can take to have more of this in your life?

12. In Matthew 9:36 it says about Jesus "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." How does this show that Christianity is good for the world? And how can you apply this in your own life?