



Sermon Discussion Guide

Oct. 18 & 19, 2025

"How Should Christians Relate to Agnostics & Atheists?"

[Luke 19:1-5](#)

This five-part series in our year-long theme **52 Questions for 2025** explores what we believe and why. Over the next few weeks, we'll look at what sets Christianity apart, why there are so many denominations, what we believe about the Reformation and the church, and how faith compares to atheism and agnosticism. Join us each week as we take a closer look at what we believe.

PRAY & CONNECT

Open in prayer and invite the Holy Spirit into your conversation. Ask God for wisdom and discernment and trust him to guide you. Take time to recap the message or view it on [hopeonline.tv](#). Did you have any ah-ha moments where you felt convicted, compelled, or inspired during the sermon? What's been on your mind this week? Have you been able to apply the message to your everyday life?

GROW

Read [Luke 19:1-10](#) – "**Jesus and Zacchaeus**"

- What do you think drew Zacchaeus to climb a tree and risk being seen? How can curiosity be a first step toward faith for people who don't yet believe? In what ways might God already be using your relationships with nonbelievers to stir curiosity about him?
- When Jesus called Zacchaeus, he met him with compassion. What does this reveal about God's heart for those who feel far from him?
- What does this passage show about faith that's more than words? How could you put your faith into action this week?
- What might help you move from judgment to joy when outsiders experience grace?

Read [Luke 18:18-25](#) – "**The Rich Man**"

- Jesus told the rich man to sell everything and follow him. What do you think Jesus was really testing in that moment?
- The man walked away sad because he was very rich, while Zacchaeus later rejoiced to give everything away. Why do you think wealth and security can make it harder to experience real transformation? How can surrender actually lead to freedom?
- Jesus said, "It is very hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God." How does this passage relate to the reminder that even Christians can live like functional atheists, trusting their stuff more than their Savior?

Read [Luke 18:35-43](#) – "**Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar**"

- What does the blind man's boldness reveal about faith that refuses to stay silent?
- Why do you think Jesus asked the blind man what he wanted, even though it seemed obvious? How might this question show that God desires relationship, not just results? What would it look like for you to answer that question honestly in your own life right now?
- How can a single changed life point others to Jesus? What might this story teach us about seeing worth in people the world overlooks? Who around you might need you to stop, listen, and lift them up instead of walking past?

Read [John 3:16-17](#) – "**Jesus and Nicodemus**"

- What does this verse reveal about the initiative of God's love—that he gives first, before we believe or behave?
- What makes belief in Jesus different from simply believing something?
- Why do you think so many people see Christians as judgmental instead of compassionate?
- These verses remind us that God's heart is *for* the world. How might this shape the way you engage those who believe differently than you?

APPLY

Pick one of the applications below to put into practice this week.

- **Be curious, not combative.** Intentionally start a conversation with someone who believes differently than you—not to argue or convince, but to listen. Ask them about what gives their life meaning or hope. Practice empathy by learning their story before sharing yours, trusting that curiosity opens doors where debate builds walls.
- **Show God's image in how you treat people.** Remember that every person bears the image of God. Look for one way to affirm someone's worth this week. Compliment their kindness, thank them, or invite them to lunch. Let your actions preach grace.
- **Anchor your faith beyond circumstances.** Reflect on what truly grounds your hope when life feels uncertain. Identify one area where you've been tempted to trust your comfort, possessions, or performance more than God. Offer that area back to him in prayer and choose a simple act (like journaling gratitude or serving someone) that reminds you where your real foundation lies.