



When faced with the options of welcoming the siren song, withdrawing from the fight by stuffing up his ears, or conquering through violent power and might, he chose to offer up a more beautiful song. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

These questions are intended to deepen your experience of the message. Use them for your personal or family study time, or with an open Bible as you share the good news with your neighbor.

Group Ice-Breaker questions:

In ancient Greek mythology, Ulysses stuffed his ears with wax to avoid the Siren's song. But Orpheus drew his lyre and played more beautiful music, drowning out all other sounds. How is this a parable about the kingdom of God?

How is the gospel a more beautiful song than what the world has to offer?

LEARNING FROM THREE METAPHORS.

(1) Adopt a gentle nature that seeks to preserve, not coerce. Jesus rejected forcing people into goodness and truth (Jn 6:15) and said the kingdom is about humble (Phil 2:5), bottom-up service (Mt 20:25; Mk 10:42) through voluntary love (Gal 5:23) among equals (Gal 3:28). Discuss "freedom of religion" and diversity and how Christians can be salt and light in such an arena.

(2) Appreciate the real power to expose darkness. How do our three metaphors remind us of this? **Read Matt 5:13-16.** Are we willing to bring our own faults into the light for disinfecting?

(3) Aspire to maintain a prolonged (long-term) connection. **Read Luke 15:1-2; Acts 17:17.** Nathan said "if you wish to make opposing a particular sin or cause your life's work, spend 3 years serving them first." Discuss your thoughts on this.

(4) Accept that the goal is to preserve and make better. **Read Matt 5:6.** "righteousness" can also be translated "justice." **Now read Matt 5:7 & 9.** How can we thirst for justice *and* mercy/peace? Discuss the story of Brandt Jean.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO BE SALT, LIGHT & SWEET AROMA.

Reflect on stories from your own experience where Christians did a good job (or not so good a job) of being salt, light, and sweet aroma. Share any situations you are now facing and ask for creative ideas from the group.

VOWING A DIFFERENT SET OF LENSES.

As a group, take each vow—affirm it—and share how you plan to implement them this week.

(1) I will daily confess that Jesus is Lord of my life and nothing else is.

(2) I will pledge ultimate allegiance to the kingdom of God.

(3) I will choose to become a better listener to God and other people.

(4) I will resist allowing any media outlet to become the primary way I think about culture and the world.

(5) I will strive to be a peacemaker, refusing to see the world as "us" vs. "them."

(6) I will practice hospitality and serve others as I grow in grace and invest in people.