



## Forest For The Trees | August 17, 2016

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

When it comes to praying, personal struggle, or judging others, we typically treat God like a vending machine.

#### Key Verse

**Luke 23:40-43 (NLT)**

*But the other criminal protested, "Don't you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."*

*And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

#### Discussion

When riding dirt bikes the key to not crashing is seeing further down the trail than what is immediately in front of you. Although counterintuitive, it is the same when it comes to life circumstances both in our lives and the lives of those around us.

1. What is one struggle in your past personal life where in the moment you could not see how you would grow from that moment or could not see a way out of that moment?

Treating our faith like a vending machine is equally limiting. When we want an answer to our problems we look at the selection of options, pick the best fit, and then expect immediate delivery.

2. In what situations do you find yourself looking for immediate answers in your personal life?
3. In what situations do you find yourself reading the Bible for answers on how to judge others?

Jesus sees beyond the immediate and has a much bigger picture perspective. When interacting with the criminal sentenced to death on the cross, Jesus sees beyond this man's entire life and tells him that he will be in heaven.

4. For what things in your life do you feel appreciative that Jesus has this "big picture" perspective?
5. With what life issues or type of people do you struggle to share Jesus's perspective?

#### What's Next?

The good news is God wants us to live for the big picture in our personal life struggles and when interacting with others on their journey. Be encouraged to see beyond a life circumstance or specific topic of heated frustration. Ultimately, God wants you to encounter Jesus so that you can join him in paradise. This week be intentional about keeping the entirety of God's story at the front of your mind when dealing with personal struggle or attempting to sort out feelings about the wrongdoings of others.