

- How does our own self-effort work against a supernatural lifestyle? What's the solution?
- How many areas of life can you think of that are measured differently by God and the world? Which measurements do our natural tendencies usually follow?
- In what ways do our instincts often contradict God's purposes?
- What's the difference between being "unburdened" and being "irresponsible"?
- Is ambition always wrong? What kinds of ambition are contrary to God's plan? Which kinds might be godly?

WEEK 8: OCTOBER 22-26 Luke 6:35-49

Christianity is more than a matter of mind and heart. What we believe must translate into action, otherwise we have what James called dead faith (James 2:26). We are not only to learn from Jesus, but to become like Him—in character and in works.

- In what aspects do you want to be like Jesus? In what aspects are you reluctant to be like Him?
- Why is it not enough simply to say that Jesus is Lord? How many Christians do you think fit that category?
- How do you respond to someone who says that people don't change? Are there any ways in which His transforming work makes you uncomfortable?
- Are you currently holding a grudge against someone? If so, what makes it hard to let it go? What would happen if you did?
- What's the difference between being discerning and being judgmental?

WEEK 9: OCTOBER 29-31 Matthew 11:28-30

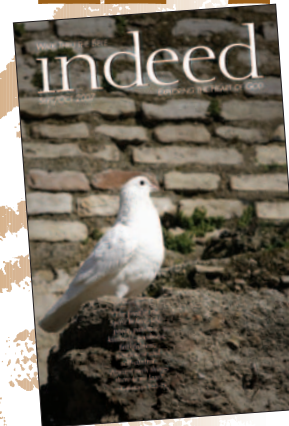
The unburdened life—it sounds unrealistic, doesn't it? That's because we all carry heavy burdens for something or someone. Circumstances and worries frequently weigh us down, sometimes overwhelmingly. Jesus, however, calls us away from the weight of those burdens and offers us a lighter load.

- What is the source of our burdens? Why do you think they feel so heavy?
- Do you see Jesus as more of a taskmaster or a teacher? Which is a better description? Why?
- In what ways are our burdens and our pride related? How does understanding the connection between them help us release those burdens to God?

WALK THRU THE BIBLE

Indepth

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indeed can be used not only as a personal devotional guide, but also as a teaching or discussion tool for small groups. The following questions will help you go deeper with each week's readings, whether individually or in a group. More *indeed* resources can be found at www.indeedmagazine.org.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2007

Much of the life of a disciple takes place between the ears. The mind is a battlefield where the Holy Spirit, the world, the flesh, the devil, and our own mixed-up thinking compete for the truth. Though our faith is not primarily a mental exercise, Jesus often addressed the perspectives and attitudes God wants us to have.

WEEK 1: SEPTEMBER 3-7 Mark 14:3-9; Luke 17:11-19;
Mark 12:41-44

Love, gratitude, faith, worship—all should shape the mind of the believer. Our perspectives and attitudes determine what we do; if they aren't consistent with God's character, our actions won't be either.

- Have you ever felt that your service for God was being wasted? What made you feel that way? How would Jesus respond to those feelings?
- Which do you spend more time thinking about: how you should worship God or what you should do for Him? Why should worship always come first in your mind?
- Do your prayers consist more of asking God for something or thanking Him for what He has already given? Why?
- Why is our relationship with God dependent on faith? Why does He sometimes withhold blessings in the absence of faith?
- How much of your discipleship flows out of duty? How much out of love?

WEEK 2: SEPTEMBER 10-14 Matthew 10

Wisdom is critical for a disciple of Jesus. Why? Because by loving Him wholeheartedly, we are choosing not to love the things of the world. That often creates conflict and division. In wisdom, we need to make sure our love for Him is greater than all other loves; and we need to make sure we are standing strong in that love.

- What does it mean to be wise as a snake? What does it mean to be innocent as a dove? How can we balance those two characteristics?
- In your heart, what people, places, or things rival your love for Jesus?
- Is Jesus opposed to our love for family, friends, work, and other worthwhile affections? Why or why not?
- How does a desire for the respect and admiration of others interfere with our ability to love and serve Jesus?
- What kind of peace does Jesus promise? In what ways does the world's definition of peace conflict with His?

WEEK 3: SEPTEMBER 17-21 Matthew 6

What are the true desires of a person's heart? And how can they be discovered? Motivation is often hard to discern—even our own. But our experience of the gospel shows up in several ways, including how we act in private, how we deal with money, and how gracious we feel toward other people.

- It's often said that who you are when no one is watching is the real you. How does that apply to your relationship with God?
- Why isn't it possible to serve two masters?
- How would you respond if God asked you to give up everything you currently have? Why?
- Why do many believers fast today? How important do you think this discipline is?
- How easily do you forgive others? How does experiencing forgiveness make it more natural to forgive others?

WEEK 4: SEPTEMBER 24-28 Luke 6:24-26; Matthew 5:3-12

Living in the kingdom of God requires a radically different perspective than living in the world. Our attitudes are often a direct contradiction to the world's values. Learning to be a disciple is, in many ways, like being immersed in a completely new culture.

- Is it wrong to take comfort in the world's "fringe benefits" like wealth, pleasure, etc.? Why or why not? How would you describe a healthy attitude toward these things?
- Why do you think Jesus is so offensive to so many? Should we try to make Him inoffensive to others?
- Why should we celebrate suffering for Christ? Why is that so hard to do?

- In what ways have you experienced a clash between your attitudes and the world's?
- How do you balance living in the world while not being "of the world"?

WEEK 5: OCTOBER 1-5 Luke 11:33-36; 12:13-34

There's tension in our lives. Fear wars against joy, and worry wars against peace. Yet we're called to reflect both the joy and peace of Jesus. How can we do that? It all depends on where we place our affections. Whatever we magnify in our hearts and minds will determine the level of joy and peace we have.

- What things fill your thoughts each day? With what are you preoccupied most?
- How do your worries reflect your perceptions of God? What do they say about Him?
- What are some practical ways to take our minds off of circumstances and place them on God?
- How does worry affect faith, and vice versa?
- How much time do you spend thinking of eternity compared to thinking of immediate concerns? Which is more worthy of your time?

WEEK 6: OCTOBER 8-12 Matthew 23:13-36; John 8:31-47

At the core of all of our doubts, fears, anxieties, and frustrations is deception. Our attitudes and perceptions get out of line when we buy into lies. In fact, that's one of the enemy's primary means of warfare against us. That's why Jesus was so careful to teach His disciples—and us—to be discerning and on guard.

- Which minor issues in life might you give too much attention? Which major issues might you give too little attention?
- How do you think God feels when we question His goodness?
- Has there ever been a point in your life when you've thought, "Now I have enough and I've done enough, because I'm content in God"? Why or why not?
- In what ways does Satan distort your perception of yourself? Of God?
- What deceptions can you see in our culture that lead people away from God's truth?

WEEK 7: OCTOBER 15-19 Matthew 11:25-26; 18:1-4; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48

Humility, weakness, dependence, and death don't seem like the path to spiritual success, but in many ways they are. Jesus modeled them for us perfectly, and God worked through Him more mightily than anyone else in history. When we take on those characteristics, He works powerfully through us too.