



INTRODUCTION

In his online article, "Twelve Half-Truths We Live With," Linton Weeks explains how easily we mistake a partial truth for the real thing. Here are some examples of "misleading notions that we accept in real life" ... Peanuts are real nuts, the American buffalo is a buffalo, a koala is a bear, a starfish is a fish and a palm is a tree. Just like these common misconceptions, it's easy for us to accept half-truths about God's plan for our lives. Some claim believing in God is all it takes to get to Heaven. Yet, Scripture tell us we can only find salvation by committing our life to Christ [Ephesians 2:8-10]. Most Christians believe Jesus will meet all our "needs"; this sounds right, even scriptural, but our definition of needs doesn't always align with God's will [1 John 5:14]. We can be assured God will meet our greatest need, which is to be reconciled to Him and forgiven of all our sins.

DISCUSSION

Read Ephesians 2:8-10, John 3:36, James 2:26, John 14:12-14 and 1 John 5:14. Then discuss the following.

1. Jesse and Alicia are praying for a new home and believe that Jesus will meet this "need," even if it means asking their parents for a \$20,000 loan to make a down payment. What would you suggest to help them clarify their "needs"?
2. Robert is your co-worker and one of the nicest guys you've ever met. While discussing politics over lunch, he suddenly switches the conversation. "I'm pretty sure I'll go to Heaven because I've always believed in God. I just don't believe that I have to pray and read the Bible to get there, but I think about God whenever I'm out in nature." How would you respond to Robert's comment?
3. Ashley invites you to lunch on Friday and picks you up in her new BMW roadster. When the conversation turns to weekend plans, she says she and Jim have decided to quit church. "They are always asking for money, and I'm wondering if they think we're made of gold. And the pastor has gotten a little weird lately with his sermons about making Jesus personal in our lives." Ashley then complains about maxing out her VISA card limit. Got any words for Ashley?

THINK ABOUT IT

Read the story of how God provided for Elijah and his hostess when his source of nourishment dried up [1 Kings 7:7-16]. F.B. Meyer uses this story to illustrate God's provisions for our needs. "We must learn the difference between trusting in the gift and trusting in the giver. The gift may last for a season, but the giver is eternal. If the Lord had led Elijah directly to the widow at Zarephath, he'd have missed something that helped make him a better man – living by faith. Whenever our earthly resources dry up, it's so we may learn that our hope and health are in God."

DO SOMETHING

1. Make a list of the things you've done over the past 48 hours. Then circle those you consider to be of eternal value. As you plan and prioritize your next 48 hours, consider these words of C.T. Studd, "Only one life, twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last."
2. Make a wish list of all you'd like in your life for 2017. Circle those things that are clearly needs rather than wants. Then pray daily for these needs, and trust God to filter out the rest.