Culture says "whatever" as a way of meaning nothing matters, but Christians say "whatever" because everything matters. Disciples of Jesus do not divide life into sacred and secular. Following Jesus is a 24/7 commitment, and this series explores what that looks like.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 How is the word ***"whatever"*** typically used by most people today? How does that differ from how followers of Jesus use it (see **1 Corinthians 10:31**)?

2 **"WHATEVER" MEANS *I represent Christ wherever I am, whoever I'm with, however I can.*** When Jesus called people to follow him, he never extended any part-time invitations. And he never mentioned anything about sacred/secular distinctions. Why is that significant? **Read Colossians 3:15-17.** What stands out to you from this passage?

3 Let's get more personal and take a closer look at verse 17. The Message puts it like this, *"Let every detail in your lives—words, actions,* ***whatever****—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus."* How has that been going in your life lately? What area (words, actions, whatever) do you need to focus on more as you seek to ***"live differently"***? Share one thing you can work on this week.

4 **"WHATEVER" REQUIRES... a diet of *Word and worship.*** Look back at **Colossians 3:16.** We will represent Christ poorly if his words and praise do not dwell in us richly. That is why ***"worship regularly"*** and ***"connect with God"*** are two of our Next Steps at The Hills. How have these things increased your intimacy with God? How have they shaped the way you represent Christ?

5 **"WHATEVER" REQUIRES... a commitment *to thanksgiving.*** Paul emphasizes this truth three times in this passage, *"be thankful"* (v. 15b), *"singing to God with gratitude in your hearts"* (16b), and *"giving thanks to God the Father"* (17b). This is not just wise counsel; it is counsel to help you be more wise. How have you experienced this to be true in your life?

6 **"WHATEVER" REQUIRES... a focus *on relationships.*** It is significant that right after Paul says "represent Christ whatever you do" he brings up the two areas where it is hardest: home and work. **Read Colossians 3:18-23.** How are your relationships going in these two areas? What is one thing you can focus on this week to improve them?

7 **MY "WHAT" DEPENDS on knowing my "why?"** Rick reminded us that "what" is built on the foundation of "why?" How should that influence every part of your life if Jesus is your "why"?

Reminder
Make plans to do the Bible Reading Plan that Rick mentioned. You can find a link for it in the sermon notes for this message on The Hills APP.

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1 When we gave Jesus our word that we would follow him, we need to understand that we gave Jesus our words. **Read James 1:26 and Colossians 3:17.** What do you find most challenging about these verses?

2 **IT MATTERS BECAUSE... Words *direct our paths.*** Our words give direction to our lives and they can change the direction of the lives of others. **Proverbs 18:21** says, *"The tongue has the power of life and death."* How have you experienced that to be true in your life?

3 **IT MATTERS BECAUSE... Words *reflect our hearts.*** We are often quick to excuse our careless words by saying things like *"I didn't mean that...* or *that's not who I am"* but Jesus reminds us that the reason it came out of you is because it was in you. **Read Matthew 12:34 and 15:18.** Do you think Jesus is exaggerating? Do bad words really mean we have a bad character?

APPLICATION: IT MATTERS SO... the next several questions can serve as a filter for discerning ***whatever*** we say.

4 **Is it *true?*** Lying is a language our culture is fluent in, to the degree that we expect a certain level of deception as normal. Share some examples of ways you've experienced this. **Read Ephesians 4:23-25.** How can these verses help us to only say things that are true?

5 **Is it *helpful?*** Just because something you say is true doesn't mean it is good and helpful. **Read Ephesians 4:29.** What is something practical you could do that would remind you to only say or text or post on social media things that are helpful?

6 **Is it *inspiring?*** Words have the power to give life. **Read Colossians 4:8** We all gravitate to those people in our lives whose words inspire us to be better people. Who are those people in your life and how have they inspired you?

7 **Is it *necessary?*** Scripture says a lot about the wisdom of not saying a lot (see **James 1:19, Proverbs 10:19,** and **17:27-28**). Share an example of a time when you were glad you held your tongue.

8 **Is it *kind?* Proverbs 12:18b** says, *"wise words bring healing."* Share an example of a time when someone spoke words of life to you just when you needed it.

Final thoughts: As you reflect on those questions, which one(s) do you struggle with the most? What step could you take today to grow in this area so that your tongue is tied ***to the Spirit of God*** at all times? Pray **Psalm 141:3** every day this week, *"Take control of what I say, O Lord, and guard my lips."*

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1 The first two messages in this series focused on ***whatever you do*** and ***whatever you say***. As you reflect on those messages what has been your biggest takeaway? How have you applied what you've learned so far?

2 ***THINK ABOUT WHATEVER YOU THINK ABOUT.*** Have you ever put yourself in an uncomfortable situation because you weren't thinking about what you should have been thinking about? Explain. **Read Proverbs 4:23.** What's so significant about the truth this verse reminds us of? How does it relate to Jesus' invitation to follow him always beginning with the word "Repent!" (which means to "change your mind")?

3 **THOUGHTS ON THOUGHTS... Am I thinking *like a new person?*** The gospel does not just redeem our past; it renews us in the present so we can have a different kind of future. **Read Ephesians 4:17-23.** How do our old ways of thinking keep many of us from new ways of living? Follow up questions: Look back at verse 23, *"Let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes."* What's so encouraging about that verse? How has the Spirit renewed your thoughts and attitudes recently?

4 **THOUGHTS ON THOUGHTS... Are these thoughts *bringing me freedom and peace?*** The mind is the key, and hell is always ready to fight for it (Satan travels at the speed of thought). **Read 2 Corinthians 10:5.** What does it look like practically for you to *"take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ"*? How can you protect your mind from unwanted thoughts (**see Philippians 4:4-7**) and how can that change your perspective as you go through various trials in life?

5 **THOUGHTS ON THOUGHTS... Is this how *Jesus would think?*** We cannot follow in the way of Jesus if we do not learn to follow his way of thinking. **Read Philippians 2:5.** How is having the "mind of Christ" different than simply filling your brain with a lot of Bible knowledge? How does thinking like Jesus impact your whole life (get specific)?

6 ***WE CAN THINK ABOUT* WHATEVER *WE WANT TO THINK ABOUT.*** Though Satan is a master of deceit, he is not the master of your mind. You can change your mind, because you can choose your "whatever." **Read Philippians 4:8.** How challenging is it for you to put this verse into practice? What is one thing you can work on this week to take responsibility for your thoughts?

Final thoughts: Reflect on these words from Rick as you go through your week, *"We must stop letting old ways of thinking rob us of new ways of living. We must think into the freedom Jesus has purchased for us. So, think about his forgiveness whatever you've done. Think about his nearness whatever you're going through. Think about his promises whatever lies ahead. And let his underserved grace saturate whatever you think."* Spend some time in prayer.

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1 This message focuses on the second half of the first chapter of Philippians. So, read **Philippians 1:12-30** to get the context as you begin this study. What is one thing that resonates with your from this passage?

2 **THE "WHATEVER LIFE"** ***is consistent no matter what.*** Paul wrote this letter from prison after having been illegally arrested. Yet 19 times he mentions joy, gladness, or rejoicing. Rick noted that his favorite phrase in the text is from **Philippians 1:18**, when Paul says, ***"But what does it matter?"*** Why is that phrase so significant and what encourages you about Paul's example?

3 **THE "WHATEVER LIFE" SAYS... Life** ***is hard...*** Followers of Jesus shouldn't be surprised when they face hard times since Jesus even said, *"In this world you will have trouble"* (**John 16:33**). Paul experienced his share of trouble but his source of happiness didn't depend on how most people keep score. Look at **Philippians 1:12, 13, 18, 20, and 21.** What do these verses tell us about where Paul found his joy even in the midst of hard times? To what degree do you share Paul's passion for the gospel (especially when life is hard)?

4 **THE "WHATEVER LIFE" SAYS... But** ***Jesus is Lord...*** Paul believed any circumstance he was going through could be an opportunity to display Christ for those who were willing to look for it (see **Philippians 1:12**). Share an example of a time you had an opportunity to display Christ in the midst of hard circumstances. How did God use it to bring good out of a bad situation?

5 **THE "WHATEVER LIFE" SAYS... So** ***I will rejoice...*** When Paul says that he will ***"continue to rejoice"*** (**1:18**), he is not saying he would have chosen what he was going through. He is saying that nothing he is going through can keep him from choosing joy. Why was that the case for Paul and how is that also true from your personal experience? How did the video testimony of Jake and Alyssa Moore inspire you to continue to rejoice?

6 **THE "WHATEVER LIFE" stays on mission no matter what.** Paul was not preoccupied with his circumstances; he was preoccupied with exalting Christ ***whatever*** his circumstances were. He knew he could seek the kingdom of God wherever he was, whoever he was with, whenever he wanted, ***whatever*** he was going through. What is one thing you can do this week to make sure you stay on mission no matter what happens?

Final thoughts:
Reflect on these words from Paul as you go through your week, ***"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ"*** Spend some time in prayer.