

Growth Group Homework

For the week of September 22, 2013

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Most of us have had strange food encounters. What's the oddest food you've ever eaten?

2. We all have different preferences in how much we share about what's going on in our life. Where would you put yourself on the sharing continuum below:



3. This week we launched our new series, Mind Games. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This week we saw how transparent living is one of the marks of an accountable life. The Apostle Paul lived a transparent life even as a leader. Looking back again at Romans 7:14-20, identify some of the ways in which Paul was transparent.

Romans 7:14-20

14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16 And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18 For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. [NIV]

What do you think helps someone be this honest about their struggle with sin?

What do you think your response would be to someone who was this honest with you about their struggle with sin?

2. An important part of being a follower of Christ and part of a Growth Group is creating an environment where someone can be honest about their shortcomings. What specifics do the following verses give to help create this kind of environment?

Romans 12:10

10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. [NIV]

Hebrews 3:13

13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. [NIV]

1 Thessalonians 5:15

5 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. [NIV]

Ephesians 4:29

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. [NIV]

Ephesians 4:32

32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. [NIV]

Which one of these verses do you want to make sure you put into action this week?

3. All of us want to be strong and able to handle our own load. In fact, it's what God calls us to do in Galatians 6:5. On the other hand, we also have to be careful to not isolate ourselves to the point that we don't allow others to speak into our life. How do the following verses reinforce this point?

Galatians 6:5

5 for each one should carry their own load. [NIV]

On the other hand, we also have to be careful to not isolate ourselves to the point that we don't allow others to speak into our life. How do the following verses reinforce this point?

Proverbs 12:15

15 The way of fools seems right to them,
but the wise listen to advice. [NIV]

Proverbs 27:5-6

5 Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.

6 Wounds from a friend can be trusted,
but an enemy multiplies kisses. [NIV]

1 Corinthians 10:12

12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! [NIV]

Which of these verses is most important to remember and why?

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back at this week's teaching and study, what's the most important thing to remember?

Do you have any prayer requests you'd like to share with your group?

Tips on Group Prayer

Prayer is an important part of being in Growth Group. Over the years we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one's required to pray out loud.