

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of March 16, 2014

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This week is the final meeting of our Winter Quarter. (*Note: the Jordan groups are on a different schedule*) We'll take a two-week break and then the nine-week Spring Quarter will begin April 6 and run through June 7.

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## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## MY STORY

1. If a friend who's not a Christian approached you tomorrow and genuinely asked, "Why are you a Christian?" what would be your first gut reaction? (Circle any that apply)

|          |                    |                      |
|----------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Excited  | Ready to fire      | Eternity is at stake |
| Panic    | Frozen             | Going to blow it     |
| Run away | Nervous            | Clueless             |
| Denial   | Quote entire Bible | Other                |

2. The story of your own spiritual journey is one of the most powerful tools you have to tell others about Jesus. If someone were to ask you, "What has God done for you?" or "What difference has being a follower of Jesus made in your life?" what might you say regarding...

... how you relate to and view others?

... how you view what's most important?

... how you view yourself?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. When asked about our faith we all want to be able to get our point across and speak in such a way that our words have an impact. What advice do the following verses give to accomplish this?

2 Timothy 2:23-25

Titus 3:1-2

James 3:17

What advice would you give a Christian who continually wins the spiritual arguments, but ends up offending or ostracizing others?

2. We heard this weekend that we're to be ready to give a reason for the hope we have in following Christ. In addition to impacting others by giving a reason for our faith, we can also have differing preferences or styles of influence. Read the passages below and then draw a line to match the passage with the style (or method) of spiritual influence that seems to fit best.

John 4:27-30; 39-41

A Relational Style - "Let's get together"

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Acts 17:16-21; 32-34 | A <i>Serving</i> Style - "Let me show you"       |
| Luke 5:27-32         | An <i>Invitational</i> Style - "Come with me"    |
| Acts 2:29-41         | A <i>Testimonial</i> Style - "Look what God did" |
| Acts 9:36-43         | An <i>Intellectual</i> Style - "Give me answers" |

God expects us to use the unique personality and gift mix that he gave us to influence others. Which of these styles of spiritual influence best fit who you are?

What are some of the dangers of thinking there is only one way to influence others?

3. This week we heard that it's not just about giving a reason for our faith, but also living in such a way that our lives are different from those around us. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 gives us a great picture of what a spiritually influential life can look like. Read the passage and answer the following questions.

What do you think he meant by sharing the Gospel?

What do you think he meant by sharing his life?

Why does it work best to share the Gospel and your life?

List a few of the character qualities that Paul modeled as a spiritually influential person.

### **TAKING IT HOME**

Based on this week's sermon and homework, what is the most important thing for you to remember and why?

### **Communion Option**

Communion is an important way we remember all that God has done for us through the sacrifice of his Son on the cross. As we remember Jesus' sacrifice, Communion also becomes a great time to express our thankfulness for all that he's done for us and the hope he gives us. This week you may conclude Growth Group by taking Communion together. To prepare for this, take a moment to read Psalm 103:8-14 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, reflecting on the significance of Christ's forgiveness of our sins.

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Prayer Requests:



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1. When asked about our faith we all want to be able to get our point across and speak in such a way that our words have an impact. What advice do the following verses give to accomplish this?

### 2 Timothy 2:23-25

23 Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, [NIV]

### Titus 3:1-2

Saved in Order to Do Good

1 Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, 2 to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone. [NIV]

### James 3:17

17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. [NIV]

What advice would you give a Christian who continually wins the spiritual arguments, but ends up offending or ostracizing others?

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### **1 Thessalonians 2:1-13**

Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica

1 You know, brothers and sisters that our visit to you was not without results. 2 We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition. 3 For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you. 4 On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. 5 You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. 6 We were not looking for praise from people, not from you or anyone else, even though as apostles of Christ we could have asserted our authority. 7 Instead, we were like young children among you.

Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, 8 so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. 9 Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. 10 You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. 11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

13 And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe. [NIV]

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