

Growth Group Homework

For the week of April 6, 2014

Welcome to the Spring Quarter of Growth Groups!

This week we kick off our Spring Growth Group quarter. Your first meeting will most likely include a potluck dinner, time to get acquainted with any new members, as well as time to discuss the Growth Group Covenant. The homework has been shortened this week to allow ample time to accomplish each of these.

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great first meeting as you come together to connect and encourage one another to grow and to see God change your lives from the inside out!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Some of us love surprises, while others of us would prefer to see something coming even if the "surprise" is something positive. Which side of the spectrum do you tend to fall on?
2. If you could know certain things about your future (like when you're going to die, who you will marry, what your kids will do in the future, major illnesses you'll have, etc.) would you want to know that information? What would be some benefits and drawbacks from knowing that information?
3. Looking back at your notes from *End Times Living*, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend about the importance of avoiding speculation when it comes to assigning a specific time for Christ's return or trying to fill in all the specific details. However, there are a number of future events that are clearly spelled out in Scripture even if we don't understand all the details about them. Read the following passages and identify the events yet to happen in each one.

Revelation 21:1-4

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

2 Corinthians 5:10

Does reading these passages bring you a sense of hope, fear, a desire to change, or something else?

2. We heard this weekend that one of the key action points for *End Times Living* is to love each other deeply (1 Peter 4:8). What do the following verses tell us about this kind of love in action?

Romans 12:9-10

Hebrews 6:10-12

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Which of the statements about love is most important for you to remember?

Can you think of any ways you could integrate any of these statements about love as "Front End Prayers" for you and your Growth Group?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Looking back at the four points from this weekend's teaching on *End Times Living*, which one is most important for you to remember and why?

2. As we begin a new Growth Group quarter, what are one or two things you're looking forward to?

THE PURPOSE OF GROWTH GROUPS

Growth Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here's how it will happen:

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

SERVE

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve and make a difference in God's Kingdom.

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Revelation 21:1-4

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." [NIV]

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words. [NIV]

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. [NIV]

Does reading these passages bring you a sense of hope, fear, a desire to change, or something else?

2. We heard this weekend that one of the key action points for *End Times Living* is to love each other deeply (1 Peter 4:8). What do the following verses tell us about this kind of love in action?

Romans 12:9-10

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. [NIV]

Hebrews 6:10-12

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. 11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. 12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. [NIV]

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. 14 Do everything in love. [NIV]

Which of the statements about love is most important for you to remember?

Can you think of any ways you could integrate any of these statements about love as "Front End Prayers" for you and your Growth Group?

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