

Growth Group Homework

For the week of January 11, 2015

Welcome to the Winter Quarter of Growth Groups!

This week we kick off our Winter Growth Group Quarter. Your first meeting will include a potluck dinner, time to get acquainted, as well as time to discuss your Growth Group Covenant. The homework has been shortened this week to allow ample time to accomplish this.

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 work!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. If you could go back in time to any year, time-period or event in history, what would it be and why?

2. As you look to 2015, what are one or two things you're looking forward to?

3. 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. In this week's sermon, we saw that God gives us what we need, when we need it – not beforehand! Based on the passages below, what other insights can we learn about waiting for and trusting in God's provision?

Psalm 40:1-5

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

¹ I waited patiently for the Lord;

he turned to me and heard my cry.

² He lifted me out of the slimy pit,

out of the mud and mire;

he set my feet on a rock

and gave me a firm place to stand.

³ He put a new song in my mouth,

a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear the Lord

and put their trust in him.

⁴ Blessed is the one
 who trusts in the Lord,
who does not look to the proud,
 to those who turn aside to false gods.
⁵ Many, Lord my God,
 are the wonders you have done,
 the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
 were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
 they would be too many to declare. *[NIV]*

Proverbs 3:5-8

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart
 and lean not on your own understanding;
⁶ in all your ways submit to him,
 and he will make your paths straight.
⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes;
 fear the Lord and shun evil.
⁸ This will bring health to your body
 and nourishment to your bones. *[NIV]*

Isaiah 40:27-31

²⁷ Why do you complain, Jacob?
 Why do you say, Israel,
“My way is hidden from the Lord;
 my cause is disregarded by my God”?
²⁸ Do you not know?
 Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
 the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
 and his understanding no one can fathom.
²⁹ He gives strength to the weary
 and increases the power of the weak.
³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary,
 and young men stumble and fall;
³¹ but those who hope in the Lord
 will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
 they will run and not grow weary,
 they will walk and not be faint. *[NIV]*

2. None of us want to get caught up in the same trap as the Ephesians did in losing the heart of what it means to follow Jesus: to love God and love others. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13:3-7, helps us understand what this kind of love looks like and that it's much more about our actions, than our feelings. Take a moment to read through the passage and replace the word “love” with your name. What actions of love are you doing well? Any actions of love you need to take a look at?

LAUNCHING YOUR GROWTH GROUP QUARTER

Every quarter a group meets, it's interesting to see how God works as you get to know each other better, apply God's Word, and encourage each other to grow. Before you go over the Covenant in your group, take a moment and write down your responses to the two questions below:

What are you looking forward to in your Growth Group this quarter?

Looking back at what you jotted down in Digging Deeper #2, what are one or two actions of love that you would like to make sure you put into action this quarter?

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 because we are 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.
