

SHINE! SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

WEEK 2

DECEMBER 11, 2011

THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL
WORSHIP WITH YOUR LIFE:

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER, GIVE BACK TO HIM



JESUS: HIS LIFE

A lot of people have a false view of Jesus - maybe you do too. Maybe you see Jesus as someone who you always disappoint because His standards are so high. Maybe you see Him more as a fictional character than a real person. Today we're going to talk about who Jesus really is. He's a real person who lived and is alive today, and He came to save us, set us free, and show us love - not condemn us.

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT...

* BEGIN AGAIN. READ JOHN 3:1-21 TOGETHER.

- Have you ever received a "do-over"? Maybe in a sport, a class, or another area of life? When have you been given a second chance and how did it affect you the second time around?
- We hear the phrase "born again" a lot in church. Try explaining it without using "churchy" terms, like you would to someone who isn't familiar with God or Christianity.

* WATCH JESUS.

- Who in your life is a role model for you? What do you admire about that person or people?
- Have you ever thought of Jesus as a role model? How might thinking of Jesus as a role model be helpful as you grow in your faith?

* REMEMBER WHAT'S TRUE.

- John 3:16 is one of the most well-known verses in the Bible... but verse 17 is not as well-known. Why do you think that is? Why is the addition of verse 17 important?
- Rephrase John 3:16-17 in your own words. What is the most meaningful part of these verses to you personally?

* SHARE THE LIGHT.

- Read John 3:18-21 - spiritually speaking, what is the darkest place you visit on a regular basis? Your school? Your home? Your neighborhood? Why is it so dark spiritually?
- How can you pray for this dark place? How can you light it up?

* TAKING IT HOME.

- How do your choices create either darkness or light for yourself and for those around you?
- How can you help change someone's false view of God if they believe that He is an angry judge who wants to condemn us? What could you say or do to help them see God differently?

MEMORIZE: "God sent his son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17).

DECEMBER'S FAITH SKILL

#5 WORSHIP

WITH YOUR LIFE

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER,
GIVE BACK TO HIM

WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING TO KNOW GOD BETTER, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT EVERY JESUS-FOLLOWER NEEDS TO KNOW. WE CALL THEM **THE 5 FAITH SKILLS**, AND EVERY MONTH IN SHINE! YOUR SMALL GROUP LEADER IS GOING TO HELP YOU BETTER DEVELOP ONE OF THESE SKILLS. WE CAME UP WITH A FEW IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOU GROW IN THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL, BUT YOU CAN COME UP WITH YOUR OWN TOO...

#1 WORSHIP GOD TOGETHER FOR WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR YOU

worshiping God isn't difficult or complicated. It should be easy and even natural for a follower of Jesus, because worship is simply our response to everything God is and everything He has done for us! As a small group or on your own, spend time writing down what God has done in your life personally, and who He is. Then talk to Him - thank and praise Him for who He is and what He's done.
SMALL GROUP LEADERS: we've got blank paper and stuff to write with at the Small Group supply station.

#2 GIVE TO GOD BY GIVING TO OTHERS THIS CHRISTMAS

In Matthew 25, Jesus tells us that every time we love, help, or serve someone in need with the heart of Jesus, it's as if we did it for God Himself. This Christmas, there are many people in need both around the world and in our own communities. This month, either as a small group or with your family, give to God by giving to others.
SMALL GROUP LEADERS: Pick up a guide to helping your students find ways to serve and give to others this Christmas. They're at the Small Group supply station!

#3 SPEND 3 WEEKS IN YOUR QUIET TIME LEARNING HOW TO WORSHIP GOD BETTER

If you want to better understand what it means to worship God in your everyday life, check out this 3-week quiet time plan that you can either do on your own, or with your small group. This reading plan will walk you through what God's word says about worshiping God with our talents, worshiping through a heart of thankfulness, and praising Him for what He's done for us.

SMALL GROUP LEADERS: This reading plan is at the Small Group Supply station, and is also accessible on youversion.com or on the "Bible" mobile phone app (it's actually 3 plans combined: "Stewardship," "Thankfulness," and "God's Promises").