

SHINE!

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

WEEK 2

JUNE 13, 2011

THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL:
WORSHIP WITH YOUR LIFE

If you want to know God better, give back to Him!



A LIFE...INTERRUPTED:

Responding With Action Nehemiah wept over the destruction in Jerusalem, and his grief led to action. He traveled to Jerusalem to fix the problem. Today, we'll talk about how we can begin taking steps to fix the real-life issues and needs in our families, schools + communities that God wants us to recognize and respond to.

Some things to think about...

- * Read Nehemiah 2 together as a group.
 - How do you know when it's time to act? what information, evidence, or feelings might you rely on if you're trying to determine if God wants you to turn your compassion into action?
 - It's human nature to let something impact our hearts, but then fail to do anything about it. Have you ever experienced that?
 - When deciding how or when to act, what is the role of prayer?
 - Lots of people see problems in the world that they could tackle, but they don't. what are some reasons why people don't get involved?
- * In verses 11-18, why didn't Nehemiah immediately tell anyone in Jerusalem why he had traveled to the city?
 - what can we learn from Nehemiah and the way he handled himself in these verses? why might it be wise to sometimes hold our tongues when we are first figuring out what God wants us to do?
- * In verse 17, people were excited about rebuilding the walls. They knew the walls were in bad shape. But why do you think they didn't act until Nehemiah arrived, saw the problem, and spoke to them about the need?
 - why might it be better to involve others with our vision instead of trying to do it on our own?
 - when might it NOT be better to involve others?
 - what are things that could keep us from getting others involved?
- * Read James 2:14-17 together. James encourages us to live out our faith in tangible, practical ways. what does he mean when he says our faith is "dead and useless" without action?
- * How might your family, school, community, and world be different if you turned your compassion into action? what is one specific area where God might be calling you to act?

MEMORIZE: "You know very well what trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!" (Nehemiah 2:17)

FAITH SKILL FOR JUNE

WORSHIP WITH YOUR LIFE

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

Students should be able to give back to God through private and public worship and acts of service toward God and others.

SMALL GROUP LEADERS: This month, spend time diagnosing where your group is spiritually - specifically as it relates to worshiping with your life. what are their strengths? what are their weaknesses? Then think creatively to find ways to help them grow!

Here are some simple ideas to get you started...

- 1) **SERVE TOGETHER!** Talk with your group (and their parents!) about charities or organizations that they are passionate about, and then act on one of them. Take a trip to serve somewhere together. Take up a collection during small group or at a small group party to benefit someone in need. The key to cultivating in students a desire to serve is to help them see what an impact they can make! Students will never believe they are significant if they never have anything significant to do... so give them something to do!
- 2) **TALK ABOUT WORSHIP.** Spend some time this month talking with your group about what it means to worship. It's not just what you do when the band is playing on Sunday mornings - it's how you live, the choices you make, and what you do to give back to God even when no one else sees or knows about it.
- 3) **PRAISE + THANK GOD FOR STUFF!** Give your group a fun and practical way to give back to God through praise and worship. Create a bulletin board, a book, a painting, or anything else that you can think of where you can keep track of your students' praises. Each week, ask them what they are thankful for and remind them to keep track of things during the week too. Record them all, and at the end of the month give every student a copy as a reminder of all the things we have to praise God for.