

# SHINE! SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

## WEEK 2

### NOVEMBER 6, 2011

#### THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL DIALOGUE WITH GOD

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER, TALK TO HIM.



#### THE LAW & PROPHETS WHY THE LAW MATTERS TODAY

Last week we talked about why God gave Israel the old testament Law, including the 10 commandments. Today, we'll talk about how we can't earn right standing with God through trying to obey the Law. Instead, the Law was given to expose our sin and show us how much we need God to help us, because we can't earn our salvation.

#### THINGS TO TALK ABOUT...

##### \* THE LAW HELPS US UNDERSTAND OUR SIN. READ ROMANS 3:19-31.

- What would life be like if no one ever told you the rules, but still expected you to follow them, and punished you if you didn't?
- Look at verse 19. What's an excuse you've given recently after you did something wrong (a sin you willingly committed)?
- Look at verse 20. Why would God tell us we had to perfectly keep His commandments when he knew it was impossible?

##### \* THE LAW HELPS US BELIEVE IN JESUS.

- Is verse 21 saying that we no longer have to follow any of God's commandments from the Old Testament? Explain what you think.
- What's the difference between knowing ABOUT Jesus and KNOWING Him intimately and as your personal Savior?

##### \* THE LAW HELPS US ACCEPT GOD'S GRACE.

- When was the last time you graciously forgave someone who hurt or betrayed you? Why did you choose to practice forgiveness?
- Why do you think God gives us the option of accepting or rejecting His gift of grace and forgiveness through Jesus?
- How would salvation be a different experience if God forced everyone to follow Him?
- Do you ever feel like you have to earn God's love or favor, even if you've already accepted His gift of forgiveness and grace? Why is it important for us to understand and accept His grace even after we've come to know Him and follow Him?

##### \* LIVING IT OUT

- If something really good has happened to one of your friends, how can you tell, and how do you find out about it?
- If the grace we've received through Jesus is so wonderful, why don't we always show it or get excited about it?
- How can you brag about God's grace to your friends this week?

**MEMORIZE:** For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins (Romans 3:23-24).

## NOVEMBER'S FAITH SKILL

# #3 DIALOGUE WITH GOD

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER,  
TALK 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 WRITE DOWN AND SWAP YOUR PRAYER REQUESTS

It's so important for followers of Jesus to pray for each other! As a small group, God has brought all of you together to encourage, help, and challenge each other - that's what healthy community is all about. And one of the best ways that we can be there for each other and make our relationships grow stronger is to pray for each other. So this month, come up with a plan to pray for each other!

**SMALL GROUP LEADERS:** We've got blank Prayer Request cards at the Small Group Supply station and suggestions on how to use them with your group.

## #2 LEARN HOW TO PRAY FROM JESUS HIMSELF

What do your prayers usually sound like? Did you ever stop to think that maybe God meant prayer to be more than just us listing off all of the things that we want God to do for us? Well, prayer is so much more than that! Take a look at what Jesus said when His followers asked Him, "How should we pray?" It will forever change the way that you talk to God!

**SMALL GROUP LEADERS:** Pick up a guide to helping your students digest this passage, and spend a week (or a few) discussing it together. They're at the Small Group supply station!

## #3 SPEND 3 WEEKS STUDYING WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT PRAYER IN YOUR QUIET TIME

The Bible has a lot to say about prayer - that's because it's so important. After all, we can't get to know God if we never spend any time talking with Him! Check out this 3-week quiet time plan about talking with God and hearing back from Him. You can read through it on your own, or do it with your small group.

**SMALL GROUP LEADERS:** This reading plan is at the Small Group Supply station, and is also accessible on [youversion.com](http://youversion.com) or on the Bible mobile phone app.