

SHINE! SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION WEEK 3

NOVEMBER 13, 2011
THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL
DIALOGUE WITH GOD

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



THE LAW & PROPHETS THE ROLE OF THE PROPHETS

Today, we're talking about who the Old Testament prophets were and what they were called to do. Every so often, God sent a prophet to bring Israel back into a right relationship with Him. The prophets, then, were a voice for God among God's people - His representatives to a nation of people who had strayed from Him.

THINGS TO TALK ABOUT...

- * GOD WANTS TO GIVE YOU A NEW HEART. READ EZEKIEL 36:26-28 TOGETHER.
 - what are some things we do to keep our physical hearts healthy?
 - verse 26 talks about a "stony, stubborn heart" and a "tender, responsive heart." How can you know what kind of heart you have?
 - what does sin do to our spiritual hearts?
 - when God promises to give us a new heart (verse 26), what practical impact does that have on our daily lives?
 - How did the prophets offer HOPE at the same time that they spoke judgment and corrected Israel's bad behavior and poor choices?
- * GOD WANTS YOU TO RELY ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.
 - what does it mean to rely on the Holy Spirit? what are some of the results of relying on the Holy Spirit?
 - what are some of the risks or consequences of NOT relying on Him?
- * GOD WANTS YOU TO LIVE A LIFE THAT HONORS HIM.
 - what role have your friends played in helping you honor God? when have you played that role in your friends' lives?
 - Look at verse 28. What does it mean when God says he wants us to be His people, and He wants to be our God? How does that affect our lives?
- * LIVING IT OUT
 - Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. How is this passage similar or different from the one we read today in Ezekiel 36?
 - what specific things (choices, events, people) can harden your heart? what can soften your heart?
 - How can you make choices this week that will help you have a heart that is soft before God and His word?
 - How well are you doing at choosing priorities that honor God and His desire for your life? Do you need to make any changes?

MEMORIZE: "And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart" (Ezekiel 36:26).

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 or on the "Bible" mobile phone app.