

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

No Second Class Citizens
June 25, 2006

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Small Group Leaders and Hosts** – Have you changed your phone number or email address recently? Have you moved? Has the time of your group changed? Please email andy@therocksandiego.org with any contact info and/or small group updates.
- **Interested in leading your own small group?** Ask your Small Group Leader about being an Apprentice or contact Carolyn York at 619.226.7625 x247 or carolyn@therocksandiego.org.
- **Have you and your small group signed up to volunteer for the 4th of July Revolution yet?** We can definitely use your help for Usher/Greeters, Altar Call Counselors, Security or Prayer Warriors. Download the Volunteer Application at <http://www.milesahead.com/revolution.php> and bring it with you to one of the trainings (schedule also available online). Contact johnnym@milesahead.com or 619.226.7625 x243 with any questions.
- **Women...**do you want to get away for a weekend to relax, spend time with Jesus and other Christian women, and glean from dynamic and down-to-earth speakers? Join us for our annual Rock Women's Retreat "Extreme Makeover to Extreme Takeover," August 11-13. \$165. Register online at <http://www.therocksandiego.org/ministries/womens/womensretreat/>. Scholarships also available.
- **For all other Rock Announcements** please go to <http://www.therocksandiego.org/announcements/> or see the Rock Event Calendar at <http://www.therocksandiego.org/eventcalendar/>.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – NO SECOND CLASS CITIZENS

One of the major claims of the Da Vinci Code is that throughout history the church has demeaned women and relegated certain types of people to second-class status. Regrettably there is a lot of truth to this claim, but the conclusions some draw from this truth are completely false. For example, as Pastor Miles talked about, there is no evidence that women were demeaned to cover up the alleged marriage between Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

However, there is still that troubling truth about the way the church has treated different kinds of people through the centuries. When you get right down to it though, the reason for the church's behavior comes from the attitudes and beliefs of people in it; people like you and me really. This week we want to look at beliefs some of us might have about those around us.

Getting Started

1. Think back through your personal history; maybe during your school days or your early work life. Have you ever been discriminated against? Has anyone ever treated you less than others for some arbitrary reason, whether it was your skin color, ethnic background, gender, financial status, or whatever? Has anyone ever treated you like a second-class citizen? What was that like for you? What did you think or feel?
2. Some say that mistreatment or discrimination is an attempt to marginalize certain kinds of people. Who are some of the people in our San Diego culture who live on the margins of our world? Are there people in our church who are marginalized?
3. Some people in our world still feel like outsiders, like they are not treated the same as others. How would you feel if others were given opportunities and advantages that were off limits to you?

Digging Deeper

4. Based on the following verses, who were some of the “marginalized” people during the time of the early church? What were they marginalized for? (Don’t feel like you have to cover all these verses in your group.)

- Galatians 3:26-29
- Colossians 3:11
- Mark 1:40-41
- Mark 12:41-44
- Mark 10:13-16
- Luke 7:36-39
- Luke 18:9-14
- John 4:7-10
- John 9:1-2

5. Let’s get specific for a moment. Are there certain kinds of people you have difficulty loving and valuing? Sometimes people lose value to us because of the social category they fall into. Take a moment to look through the list of people below. Do your best to set aside any social or political opinions you may have.

- Teenagers
 - The homeless
 - Single moms
 - The wealthy
 - The physically ill
 - Women
 - Different ethnic origin
 - The handicapped
 - Homosexuals
 - Divorced people
 - The poor
 - The uneducated
- What are some of the ways these people might be devalued in our world today?
- Are there ways to accept and love people even if you don’t approve of their behavior or life choices?

6. One of the things we see clearly about God in the Old Testament is His desire to protect the marginalized in society. What do you learn about God’s heart for the marginalized/vulnerable in the following verses?

- Exodus 22:21-27
- Deuteronomy 10:17-19
- Deuteronomy 24:19-22

7. Jesus had an amazing ability to look past someone’s appearance or social standing, love them deeply, and then relate to them appropriately. He was able to get “eye contact” with people and see their true value.

What can you do to get “eye contact” with people? In other words, how can you begin to look beyond what you see externally with people and see their true value?

Bringing it Home

1. Have there been people in your life whom you have had difficulty accepting and loving? Do those people tend to fall into a certain category (e.g., the poor, divorced people, religious people, etc...)?
2. Is there a difficult person in your life right now that you feel God is asking you to view differently? How can you get “eye contact” with that person and look past their appearance or behavior to love them the way Jesus would? How do you think Jesus would relate to that person?