

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

Extreme Home Takeover, Part 8

Questions written by Pastor Mark Collins

May 13, 2007



MINISTRY PRAYER REQUESTS

As “small groupies,” you are the heart and soul of this ministry--who better than you to lift up the Small Group Ministry in prayer? So, it’s up to you, you can spend time in your small group praying for these things (weekly or occasionally), or you can pray during the week on your own time. And if you’d like to be added to our Pastor’s Prayer Team(s), just let us know. John Dehnert, Mark Collins, or Paul Garrison, our small group pastors, would love your prayers! We send out a monthly email of their personal and ministry prayer requests. Just contact Andy Rodgers at andy@therocksandiego.org. May God work through your prayers mightily!

Reaching the Lost: Can you pray that God would continue to give you and your small group opportunities to share Jesus with those far from Him? Pray for the courage and wisdom to know how to build relationships with them.

Current Small Group Leaders/Small Groups: Can you continue praying for each other’s small groups? What are the needs in your groups...they are probably similar to all the Rock Small Groups.

Potential Small Group Leaders: He had 55 people show up for the Tuesday night Foundations in Leadership Class...so exciting! Can you pray that they’d stick with it for the next 7 weeks? Our goal is to equip them to start their own groups in September. Also we have our final training this Saturday for our Phase One Leaders. We hope they’ll be blessed with small group tips, tools, and encouragement as they continue on with their new groups.

Small Group Staff: Can you continue praying for the upcoming trainings we’ll be delivering over the next couple of months (preparation, materials, and that the room/sound/set-up details would come together)?

MEMORY VERSE

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Matthew 5:14-15

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – AVOIDING A FATAL DESTINATION

In today’s pop culture the term “sin” is not very popular. Instead, we are classified as victims of dysfunction who make “mistakes” and “bad choices.” From contemporary psychologists to TV talk show hosts, the message we often hear is “I’m okay you’re okay.” But the Bible gives us a very different message—we have a serious sin problem that will eventually destroy our lives from the inside out. The good news is that God has always provided a solution and a place of safety from the battle that rages all around us and even within. We no longer have to be victims. Instead, we can turn away from sin to find a “place of refuge” and an alternative for a “fatal destination.”

One of Joshua's last tasks as Israel's leader was to set up six cities of refuge for those who needed a safe place after they had sinned (read Joshua 20). These cities were set atop mountains throughout the countryside to remind the people of God's grace. No matter our sin, God always provides a way out of our lifestyle and the eternal consequences by providing a place of safety in Jesus. When a sinner approached one of these cities, he or she stood outside until they could be escorted in by the Levitical priests. Since we have received God's grace, we are commanded to "escort others into a place of safety."

Getting Started

1. Why do you think it is so hard for people in our contemporary society to think of themselves as sinners? How comfortable is our society with the notion of God as Judge?

2. How would you define the word "sin"? Is it merely violating cultural norms or one's own conscience? What are the ramifications if there are no definite standards toward good and evil?

Digging Deeper

3. The Bible is incredibly clear that sin results in terrible consequences both in this world and the next. Can you think of some of these? If you're stuck take a look at some of these verses:
 - a. Ephesians 4:30-31 (Sin grieves God.): Have you ever thought how you could hurt God's feelings?

 - b. Psalm 7:14-15 (Sin hurts you and results in misery.)

 - c. Matthew 19:9 and 1 Corinthians 7:15 (Sin hurts others.)

 - d. Proverbs 6:27-29 and Isaiah 42:14; 42:24-25 (God punishes sin.)

 - e. Matthew 18:6 (God punishes those who leads others to sin.)

 - f. Ephesians 4:26-27 (Sin gives Satan an opening.)

 - g. Matthew 25:24-30 (Sin harms your potential.)

 - h. 2 Corinthians 6:3 (Sin harms your witness for Christ.)

4. It's encouraging to realize that just as there are consequences to sin, there are consequences when we choose righteousness. Take a look at these verses:
 - a. Hosea 10:12 (You please God.)
 - b. John 15:10-11 (You experience joy.)
 - c. Psalm 1:1-6 (You'll experience true prosperity.)
 - d. Galatians 5:16-26 (You'll grow in the Spirit.)
5. Joshua 20:4 describes the process by which a sinner could enter a city of refuge to find safety from pursuers seeking revenge. Can you share with the group a time when you felt all alone and vulnerable because of choices that you made? At this time was there anyone "who stood in the gap" for you and reached out, bringing you back to God?
6. Another unpopular word in our society is the word "repent." How would you explain this term to someone who had little understanding of its meaning?
7. Look back at Joshua 20:3, what kinds of sins were the cities of refuge designed to provide safety for, intentional or unintentional? Read Hebrews 9:11-14. How has Jesus' sacrifice provided an even greater "place of safety?"

Bringing it Home

8. Since Jesus has provided such a wonderful way to deal with sin in our lives, ask your group to split up into prayer partners or triplets (remember men with men, women with women) and talk about the areas of your life that seem to be alienating you from God right now.
9. This passage (Joshua 20) shows us that it is incredibly important to deal with our personal sins not only for our sake, but for the sake of others. Maybe there was a time in your life when God sent someone to you to "escort you into the city of refuge." Take some time to list a few names who God is calling you to return the favor. Brainstorm with the group ways that you could reach out to them.