

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

The Good Samaritan

Questions written by Pastor Miles McPherson

November 4, 2007



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Would you like to lead or host a small group? Go to <http://www.therocksandiego.org/smallgroups/becomingaleaderorhost/> or contact Carolyn York at carolyn.york@therocksandiego.org or 619.764.5120.

Thanksgiving Outreach for the Homeless is just around the corner (Saturday, November 17) and we're in need of Food Servers and people for our Outreach Teams. This would be a great opportunity for your entire small group to work together! For details or to register to volunteer, go to <http://www.therocksandiego.org/eventcalendar/3504/>.

For all other Rock events, please go <http://www.therocksandiego.org/eventcalendar/>.

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, just let us know. Mark Collins, the Small Group Pastor, would love your prayers! We send out a monthly email of his personal and ministry prayer requests. Just contact Andy Rodgers at andy.rodgers@therocksandiego.org. May God work through your prayers mightily!

Reaching the Lost: Please pray that God would continue to draw the lost both to the Rock and our small groups.

Current Small Group Leaders/Small Groups: Pray for perseverance, wisdom, and guidance for our small group leaders as they lead their groups this fall season. Pray that our small groups would truly be a place to grow in deep relationship with God and one another.

Potential Small Group Leaders: Pray for those who have signed up over the last month expressing interest in leading and/or hosting a small group; training and deployment are the next steps.

Small Group Staff: Pray that God would renew our strength and give us His vision for small groups as we continue our planning for 2008.

The Rock Body: Let's give thanks for how God has moved in our church and community to come together and help those affected by the recent fires. Please also pray that our church body would continue to be a source of encouragement and support for those in need.

MEMORY VERSE

But the hour is coming and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him. John 4:23

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – THE GOOD SAMARITAN

We've all seen the headlines, due to a traumatic event a well-known figure in our tabloid-driven society finds God or becomes "born again." They are converted to Christianity and helped through their life-altering crisis. Unfortunately, later we also hear the media's reports that they have been "de-converted," or their lifestyles return back to the same old destructive patterns that caused them to run to God in the first place.

In our world it's not easy to tell who the "real Christian" is. We all know people that exhibit Christian values which they follow, but claim no personal relationship with God. On the other hand, we deal with friends, family and even co-workers who profess Jesus, yet they bear no visible spiritual fruit.

Although the phrase "born again" is commonly used in our culture, certainly its original meaning has been lost. For example, politicians or famous athletes who make a comeback are sometimes referred to as being "born again." Most people outside the church think of "born again" Christians as being a lunatic fringe group heaven-bent on assimilating others to their way of thinking. Even those who physically followed Jesus were not clear about true discipleship and what it meant to inherit the Kingdom of God. When it's all said and done is there one fool proof way of knowing if someone has eternal life? In response to this question Jesus used some creative ways to help us understand what it looks like to possess eternal life.

Getting Started

1. Why do you think people sometimes prefer religious rituals or law keeping rather than a relationship with God?
2. Do you have rituals or traditions that have helped you in your relationship with God? Which have become meaningless?

Digging Deeper

Read Luke 10:25-37. A lawyer (expert in the Law of Moses) stood up (in that culture indicating that he was ready to debate a subject) and asked Jesus the age old question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Instead of debating with the scholar Jesus tells a story illustrating what a person looks like who is already a citizen of the Kingdom.

3. Read Luke 10:25-29.
 - a. Obviously, the expert in the Law knew the Old Testament rules and rituals better than most people. What were the two laws that the Lawyer boiled the entire Old Testament down to?
 - b. Why do you think that Jesus' answer did not include faith in Him as the pathway to eternal life?
 - c. Without Christ, could the lawyer keep the two laws? What do you think the lawyer was looking for from Jesus?

4. Read Luke 10: 30-32.
 - a. In the Jewish tradition what were the roles of Priests and Levites? In our culture who could they be compared to today?
 - b. Do you ever find yourself walking in the same shoes as the Priests and the Levites? Please explain. How does this happen?

5. Read Luke 10:33-35.
 - a. Jesus' story outlines many ways the Samaritan "showed compassion" on the beaten victim. What do you think Jesus is trying to get the lawyer to see?
 - b. Why do you think Jesus choose a Samaritan as the hero of the story (For help look at John 4:7-42)?

6. Read Luke 10:36.
 - a. How does Christ reverse the religious expert's original question from 10:29? How was Jesus trying to expand the lawyer's idea to what it takes to have eternal life?
 - b. Do you think that it's common for people today to hold on to laws or rituals when it comes to salvation? What are some of these rituals?

7. Read Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16, Mark 10:45, and James 2:17.
 - a. These verses describe that having a right relationship with God begins and requires faith in Christ. How does James 2:17 help us determine what true faith looks like?

 - b. How does loving our neighbor serve as a true test for a right relationship with God?

Bringing it Home

The lawyer asked Jesus, “Who’s my neighbor?” His question showed the hardness of his heart towards those he thought were unredeemable and outside the grace of God. Jesus understood that the Lawyer was more interested in showing his great knowledge of the Scriptures than loving people. Though he knew the commands, he couldn’t keep them because the love of Christ didn’t abound in his heart. Tonight, end the group by discussing *some* of these hard questions.

8. Can you share some concrete examples of how your love is growing for other people?

9. If you were really being honest, who do you look like the most--the Priest, Levite or Samaritan? Is there a particular group of people who you struggle to love?

10. Good Samaritans follow through on their commitments. Are there some commitments that you’ve failed to live up to? How can you do better?

11. Are you more interested in *knowing* what the Bible says, rather than *doing* what it says?

12. Has Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan increased or decreased the assurance of your salvation?