

# SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

## Extreme Home Takeover, Part 5

Questions written by Pastor John Dehnert

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Interested in leading your own small group, but are afraid you may not have what it takes? Why don't you check out our small group leader training, **Foundations in Leadership**, and let us give you the tools to lead well. This training begins Tuesday, May 8, 7:15 PM and meets for 8 weeks. For more info or to sign up, contact Andy Rodgers at [andy@therocksandiego.org](mailto:andy@therocksandiego.org) or 858.268.1366 x2012.

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(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](mailto:andy@therocksandiego.org). May God work through your prayers mightily!*

**Reaching the Lost:** Hundreds of people came forward to accept Christ over the Easter Weekend at the Rock! Can you pray for their new relationship with the Lord and that they'd get plugged into a church family?

**Current Small Group Leaders/Small Groups:** Pray for strength, perseverance, and wisdom for small group leaders, hosts, and coaches. Pray that the group members would continue to grow in relationship with one another.

**Potential Small Group Leaders:** Three more weeks until our new leaders start their small groups: please keep praying for them. Also pray for our second phase of new leaders who will begin their training May 6 at the Foundations in Leadership class.

**Small Group Staff:** Pray for efficiency in work projects--there are so many details that go into our upcoming Small Group Sign-up Campaign; we'll definitely need the Lord's help!

**The Rock Body:** Can you continue praying that our weekend church population would respond to our Small Group Sign-up Campaign scheduled for April 28/29 and May 5/6. Pray that they'd find a good "group-fit."

## MEMORY VERSE

*But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out.* Numbers 32:23

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – STOP THE BELLY ACHAN

When I'm completely honest I have to admit that I don't always believe in the penalty of sin - and that's the problem! Deep down inside, there are times when I actually believe I will get away with doing whatever I want to do without suffering the consequences. Maybe that's what was going on for Achan when he broke the deal Israel had with God.

It's not that I think God doesn't see me when I sin, it's more like I don't believe He will really punish me; not like He did with Achan. But then there are times when I actually contemplate a few of my sins (no I'm not listing them here ☺), follow their outcome trail, and the results I see seem more like natural consequences than punishment. And maybe that's the way it works with the new covenant. Maybe God doesn't destroy our crops and lead invading countries to sweep us away. Maybe it's much worse; maybe He simply leaves us to the consequences of our actions. It's kind of like Joshua 7:12 when He says, "I will not be with you anymore." At times it seems like God is saying, "Okay, you want it your way? Let me get out of your way and let you experience life under your own direction."

The story of Achan is all about our agreement to yield to God and then what happens when we back out on that agreement. Strap on some courage and take a good look at how it would go if we took Achan out of the story and plugged ourselves in.

### *Getting Started*

Early on, God related to His people in community, which is what we see here in this passage in Joshua. Achan commits the violation but it's credited against the entire country. That was the nature of the old covenant. God made the deal with the entire nation of Israel, not the individuals in it. So when someone violated the terms of the deal everyone suffered for it. What this highlights is the "community nature" of consequences when we choose not to follow God in full obedience.

1. Have you ever seen someone do the wrong thing and, as a result, inflicted negative consequences on others? Talk about that in the group for a moment.
2. Is it possible not to have your decisions and behavior affect the people around you? What affect does "secret sin" (private disobedience) have on the church?
3. Is there a difference between active and passive disobedience in a community? Can you come up with some examples of passive disobedience? What does it mean to passively disobey God? How does that affect other people?

### *Digging Deeper*

4. When you read Joshua 7 you see that Achan went through a very fast process when he broke the deal with God. Read verse 21 and come up with the three "I" statements that led Achan to his disobedience. In other words, what were the three parts of Achan's sin?

"I \_\_\_\_\_."

"I \_\_\_\_\_."

“I \_\_\_\_\_.”

When you couple this verse (V. 21) with 1 John 2:15-17, where do you think Achan went wrong?

5. Sometimes we don't take disobedience seriously because it seems hidden to us, deep down in our hearts where no one can see it. Jesus talked about this in Luke 12:1-3. Read this passage together and think through the following exercise (take these one at a time, without reading ahead):
  - a. Summarize Jesus' warning in VV 2-3.
  - b. When you look at the context of the passage, what comes before and after, who was Jesus talking about?
  - c. What were the Pharisees known for?
  - d. If the “righteous” Pharisees were the violators, what does this tell you about the kinds of things which violate God's values and standards?
6. Isaiah 29:15-16 talks about our ability to hide what's in our hearts from God. What's the rationale behind not trying to hide ourselves from God?
7. Sometimes God's reputation takes a hit because of passages like Joshua 7. As modern Americans we don't always understand the “community” aspect of God's covenant with His people. So when God punishes an entire nation for the sin of an individual we cry foul. Read the following verses to see how God feels about his people: Hosea 2:14-15; Hosea 11:8-11 (the names he uses are symbolic of Israel), Isaiah 30:18.
8. Here are some **extra credit verses** you can take a look at as a group or individually during the week:
  - a. Psalm 139:36-37 - What did the psalmist want to want?

- b. Matthew 5:28-29 - Jesus speaks in harsh terms about issues of infidelity or impurity in our hearts. Is Jesus being literal in these verses? Short of gouging out your eye or cutting off your hand, what is Jesus saying in this verse about how we should respond to infidelity?
- c. 1 Timothy 6:6-10 - Summarize Paul's thoughts here.
- d. Hebrews 13:5 - What's the antidote for loving money, wealth, things, etc.?
- e. James 1:13-15 - What is happening with temptation? How does it work?
- f. In light of the Joshua 7 passage, can you think of ways that the truths in any, or all, of these verses could have changed Achan's three step progression of sin outlined in V. 21?

### ***Bringing it Home***

It's risky to talk about how we've been hurt by the actions of others. When we do that we open up tender and wounded parts of our lives to other people. However, it can be even more risky to talk about how our actions have hurt others.

- 9. Read Colossians 3:5 and talk about how Paul suggests we deal with disobedience issues in our lives. What does he say to do?
- 10. The language he uses is organic; he talks about issues of "life and death." Theoretically speaking, how do you kill something? Give that some serious thought; if you literally had to kill something what are some of the things you could do?
- 11. Now translate that "death language" over to the sinful thoughts, motives, attitudes and actions in our lives. What are some of the things in us that need to die? Literally speaking now, how can we kill those things? How do we "put to death" a thought...or a motive...or an attitude...or an action?
- 12. It's going to get a bit risky now. Are there thoughts, motives, attitudes or actions that God has been asking you to put to death? What will you do?
- 13. Who has experienced the consequences of your disobedience? Is there anything you can do to make up for those consequences? What will you do?