

PHASES OF A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

The Secular Life

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: What did you like to collect as a child? Now?

[Read Luke 12:13-21]

Secular Values Miss Life's Purpose (reread Luke 12:13-15)

1. How does the world measure success?
2. Advertisers spend millions to entice us to think that if we buy more and more of their products, we will be happier, more fulfilled, more comfortable. How do you respond to the constant pressure to buy?
3. This man (v. 13) saw Jesus merely as an instrument to gain what he desired. His love for material gain outweighed his desire to learn from Jesus. Jesus sees the heart of the issue and warns the listeners, "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed." Define "greed". How might we be guilty of misusing our relationship with God?

Secular Values Lead To Selfish Choices (reread 12:16-19)

1. Jesus used this teachable moment to tell a story. Is this part of the story appealing to you? Why or why not?

2. How is this like what is happening in the world today? (in your life?)
3. (Note the times the rich man refers to himself in these verses. How can increased riches and a life of self-indulgence lead to unhappiness . . . a false sense of self-satisfaction? (e.g. lottery winners, stories of the rich and famous)

Secular Values Result In Dead Ends (reread 12:20-21)

1. What is Jesus saying about material possessions when all is said and done?
2. What is the message (the timeless truths) for all mankind from today's lesson? (See also Luke 12:33; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10)

Wrap up: How is your relevant to your situation?

Prayer:

- For one another
- For our outreach activities

LIFE Groups

A safe place to build friendships and nurture spiritual growth.

- L** ♦ Learn..... applying Biblical truth for everyday living
- I** ♦ Invite..... welcoming others to our fellowship
- F** ♦ Fellowship..... nurturing Christ centered caring relationships
- E** ♦ Evangelism..... reaching others with the hope of Christ

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The Seeker's Reward

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: What was the last thing misplaced that you had to search to find?

[Read Acts 8:26-40]

4. Who are the characters represented in this story?

5. What was the occasion the Ethiopian official went to Jerusalem? (see Acts 2:1,5)

6. How had God prepared the Ethiopian for Philip's' witness? (See also John 6:44)
How is this like what is happening in the world today? Do you know of experiences where non-believers searched the scriptures for answers to questions about life . . . what situations (life experiences), might have prompted their search?

7. Do you know people like this? (Take time to pray for them now)

8. What was your impression of Philip? What characteristics do you admire? (Some background information on Philip: Acts 6:1-6; 8:1, 4-8,12)

9. Philip leads off with a question. Discuss the value of using questions in discovering where God is at work in peoples lives.

10. Philip shares the Good News about Jesus. Is it enough to “know” the truths about God? Why or why not?

11. Note how this is a fulfillment of prophecy recorded in Isaiah 56:3-5. And again in Acts 1:8.

Wrap up:

How well prepared are you to be used of God when presented with an opportunity similar to Philips?

If not, what steps do you need to take to become better prepared? (translate into a prayer to God)

Prayer:

- Ministry to one another
- As a group pray for 3 non-believers: _____, _____, _____

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The Mature Follower

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: What's your favorite part of raising a garden?

Today's lesson traces the life of Mary Magdalene as she followed Jesus.
[Read Luke 8:1-3; Mark 15:37-41; John 20:1-2, 10-18]

Follow Out of Gratitude (reread Luke 8:1-3)

12. What led Jesus' early disciples/followers to surrender their ways of life to follow Him? What strikes you about them?

13. If there were one primary reason why you follow Jesus, what would it be? Or what was your initial reason for choosing to become a devoted follower of Christ?

14. Discuss how the power of gratitude towards God has impacted your life recently. (Home, friends, work, etc.)

Follow Unconditionally (reread Mark 15:37-41; John 20:1-13)

1. What can you learn about Mary Magdalene from her presence at the cross and at the tomb?

2. How do you think you would have responded, more like Mary or the disciples? Why?

Follow Into Service (reread John 20:14-18)

1. Mary did not recognize Jesus when He was standing right there before her. What reasons might have caused this to happen?

2. Discuss why Mary would have found it difficult to leave Jesus.

3. How is Christ's command to Mary like His instructions to all believers?

4. Mary responded to Christ's command. Why might Jesus have entrusted her with this task . . . what can we learn from her example?

Wrap up: Be honest with yourself. Are you a growing Christian or has your growth stopped? If not, what steps do you feel God is leading you to take concerning spiritual growth? (Translate your response into a prayer)

Prayer:

- For one another

- For our outreach activities

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The Discipler's Ministry

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: Who was the best teacher you ever had?

Today's lesson considers Paul's discipleship ministry to Timothy.

[Read Acts 16:1-4; 1 Timothy 1:18-19; 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:1-3]

Enlisting Others To Disciple (reread Acts 16:1-4; 1 Timothy 1:18-19)

15. Who was Paul's mentor? (see Acts 11:25-26)

16. The brothers (v. 2) spoke well of Timothy. Discuss what traits they may have seen in Timothy that made him a good candidate to train in preparation to disciple others. What influence impacted Timothy's early years? (see 2 Timothy 1:5)

17. What problems was Timothy up against in the church at Ephesus? (see 1 Timothy 1:3-5)

Encourage & Instruct (reread 1 Timothy 4:11-16)

4. Discuss some "ministry essentials" and their significance in discipling others. What are ways you can encourage others?

5. Why was Paul so concerned that Timothy become a successful discipler?

6. Why is having someone believe in you and depend on you a positive force in overcoming opposition, maintaining right behavior, and rising to a higher level of spiritual impact? (Share personal examples)

Entrust To Others (reread 2 Timothy 2:1-3))

3. Discuss the hardships and joys associated with being a discipler.
4. Spiritual growth often leads us to “stepping out of our comfort zone”. Share about a time this happened to you . . . how did God stretch you?

Wrap up:

- Is there something God would have you do to cooperate more fully with His plan of discipleship?

Prayer:

- Ministry to one another

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