

Stories of the Kingdom Discussion Questions 6.18.17

Leader Prep Section

Take time before your small group meeting to prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select 4-5 questions that are best suited to your group.

Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.

When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.

1. Share a story when you witnessed the harvest of seeds of truth that had fallen on fertile soil in someone's heart.
2. How does it feel when you witness either the seeds falling on path and not taking root or when they fall on shallow soil and the plant withers soon after?

Background

We pick up the story of Jesus at a point where large crowds have gathered to listen to him teach; many of them in the hope of healing for themselves or someone they care about. This passage is the Parable of the Sower and once again we find Jesus by the shore of the Sea of Galilee surrounded by such a crowd of people he sits in a boat while he teaches. It makes good sense that Jesus used a parable about farming as most people were intimately familiar with the tasks of farming and the fact that some soils were good for planting and others were not. The text makes it clear the Parable of the Sower isn't the only parable Jesus used to make his point, but it is the one Matthew included in his biography of Jesus.

Read Matthew 13:1-17

Questions

Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.

1. What three types of soil did Jesus describe? Why do you suppose he chose these three?
2. What reason does Jesus give for using parables to teach the people?
3. Jesus tells the disciples they are blessed. What rationale does he give?

Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.

1. What would replace the three types of soil in a modern equivalent to the Parable of the Sower?
2. What can we do to ensure we use our ears to hear as Jesus commands in verse 9?
3. Compare the wording of Isaiah 6:9-10 to Matthew 13:14-15. What is similar and what is different?

Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.

1. How can we help those in our lives understand the truth of the parable the way Jesus did with the disciples?
2. How can we help people understand the parables today? What would you explain about the Parable of the Sower?
3. How do we avoid being like those described by the Isaiah passage Jesus quotes?

Closing

As you finish up your time together continue to pray for wisdom during the season of transition at Hillcrest. Also, spend time praying for one another that the summer would be a season of rest and rejuvenation.

Reminder: Stories are a crucial element used to help us connect with others, know where we came from and where we are going. As citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven it is critical for us to know and tell our stories as they remind us of who saved us, what he has left us to do and where we will spend eternity.