

Stronger Discussion Questions 02.18.18

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 of an experience you had of being away from the people you know and love.
2. Have you ever known anyone physically in a condition when touching them would be difficult? What was that like?

Background

Shortly after his baptism and 40 days in the desert Jesus is back in the area of Capernaum and during his time there Jesus healed many people so that he began to draw people from the surrounding areas. The story immediately before ours began with an early morning prayer session that was interrupted by his disciples who wanted to be sure Jesus was aware people were looking for him. Jesus's response to that was to leave the place and head to a new town so he could also preach the good news there. Sometime after that experience a man with leprosy approached Jesus asking to be healed. A few things to note about leprosy in the first century. The term was used for a number of skin conditions. Lepers were required to live outside the city and when they had to enter the city they had to alert those around them of their condition while walking through town. A leper would live cut off from their family and most likely go untouched for years.

Read Mark 1:40-45

Questions

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

1. What does the leper ask Jesus for when he kneels in front of him?
2. Why did he ask to be clean and not simply be healed?
3. What did Jesus do in response?
4. How would the crowds have reacted to Jesus touching this man?
5. How would the religious leaders have reacted to Jesus touching this man?
6. What did Jesus tell the man to do after healing him?
7. What did the man actually do after he was healed?

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

1. What do you think motivated the leper to kneel before Jesus and ask for healing? How would you have acted in the same situation?
2. If all you had was this one story, what could you know about Jesus from it?
3. Why do you think Jesus told the man to keep the miracle under wraps?
4. What would you have done if you had been the one who was healed?
5. Why do you think Mark recorded this story for all Christians to read?
6. Who do you find yourself identifying with in the story and why?

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

1. Who are the lepers in our society?
2. If you are willing to share, who are your personal lepers? What people do you want to avoid?
3. How do we follow Jesus's lead in reaching out? What might that look like in your life?
4. What concrete step might you take this week to reach out to the lonely or marginalized?
5. Group challenge: Consider as a group choosing one practical step you might all take this next week in response to this message and then debrief it at your next gathering. For example, you all might agree to seek out one conversation with someone at work, in your neighborhood, that you might normally avoid. In a week or two when you are back together, talk about how it went.

Closing

Take time to pray together that we would all see those in our lives who are underserved or are in need of more community. Plan practical ways we can start to make a difference.

Reminder: The Good News is Jesus is stronger. He is stronger than temptation, he is stronger than sin, and he is stronger than death. Nothing stands between Jesus and his Father! Jesus has made a way for that to be true for us as well.