

Community Group Study Guide

For the week of June 16, 2013

This will be the last Community Group Study Guide until the fall.

Watch for future announcements about our special fall series.

QUICK REVIEW

Review your notes from Larry's sermon. Was there anything that you had never considered before? What was a point that really grabbed your attention?

MY STORY

1. Do you get more enjoyment out of learning something new, or practicing something you already know how to do? Why?

2. Would you rather do something easy that takes a long time, or something more challenging that can be done quickly? Why?

DIGGING DEEPER

Larry's sermon on Sunday talked a lot about Noah's obligation to God. Noah's task of building the ark was simple in the sense that it was clear cut, yet it was difficult to accomplish. He spent around a hundred years building the ark. God probably isn't asking any of us to build a giant boat. However, He has also given us a task that is quite simple in some respects, yet extremely difficult in others. Mark Twain once said, "It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand." For many of us the challenge isn't studying the Bible, it's doing what it says.

Read Matthew 22:34-40.

1. In Jesus' ministry He was asked scores of questions, even though His teachings were often quite straightforward. Here, when Jesus is asked to boil everything down to one commandment, He responds with two. They can be summarized as "Love God" and "Love people." Who is someone you know and consider to be a person who really loves God? Who do you know who you believe exemplifies what it means to love people? Why did you pick the people you did?

2. Sometimes we emphasize one of these commands at the expense of the other. We either get so wrapped up in loving God and connecting with Him that we neglect to love our neighbors, or we get so focused on helping and loving others that we forget to spend time connecting with God. Which do you think you tend to spend the most time on? When was a time you went against your natural tendency and intentionally tried to obey the command that wasn't as "easy" for you?

3. Jesus' teaching in this passage is pretty simple. There aren't any complicated formulas, and no one needs to take notes. It's more about taking action. Why do you we sometimes make following Him more complicated than it needs to be?

4. Most churches have a mission statement that includes some version of "love God and love people." What are some activities of the church that focus on loving God? What are some things that are more directly aimed at loving people? Have you ever participated in any of these activities? Which are your favorites?

5. When have you put something off even though you knew it would be beneficial for you to do? What were your reasons? Looking back, do you think those were good reasons or not?

6. In verse 40, Jesus says that “all of the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments?” What do you think He meant by that? Can you think of any important scriptural teaching that is not in some way “contained” in one of these two commands?

TAKING IT HOME

The challenge with discussions like this are that often we can talk at length about what Jesus wants us to do without ever making any real changes in our lives. Take a few moments to think of one thing you are currently not doing that, were you to do it, would demonstrate love for God. What is something you could do that would show love for people? Next list some of the positives those actions would add to your life.

Post your list somewhere you’ll see it everyday for the next week. Use it as a reminder to take the first steps to put your intentions into action.

PRAYER REQUESTS

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