

Bible Discussions

Index to Bible discussions – compiled 6th Feb 2009, James Thomas, Riverside Note, these Bible discussions have come from a number of sources around the kingdom, grateful thanks go to the original authors.

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Prayer Month ideas for group Bible discussions

He's Listening

Big Idea: Why pray? Prayer changes things, because God changes things and us as we pray.

Ice Breaker: Give a response to both of these questions: "Why do you pray?" "Why don't you pray?"

-Read Nehemiah 1:1-3. What news has Nehemiah heard from Hanani and what does that mean to him? How do you respond when you hear bad news about people you know and care for? Were you ever stirred to act when you heard the news? Were you ever stirred to pray when you heard the news? Which is harder for you - to take action or to pray for people who are in distress and why is that?

-Read 1:4. What are Nehemiah's immediate responses to Hanani's report? Have you ever responded like that to news? Why or why not?

-Read 1:5-11 List the specific concerns that Nehemiah mentions in his prayer. (Nehemiah is concerned about the people's walk with the Lord, about sin/confession and about God's promise to gather Israel back to their land. He prays for help with the king.) What specific evidence do you find here that Nehemiah believed God heard his prayer and would answer it? (Nehemiah assumes God hears him and will answer his prayers! He is confident in God's ability and so he asks boldly and does so continually for days.) Why is confession necessary as we approach God with our requests? (v. 6-7) Nehemiah's prayer includes statements that God keeps His promises. How does he state this? (v. 5, 8-10) Do you trust that God keeps His promises? What is a promise that God has kept for you? Did Nehemiah become more or less confident as he prayed and fasted? (see. v. 11) How does prayer better prepare him to get more involved in the far off events of Jerusalem? How does this compare with what you have experienced in prayer? What's a "cupbearer to the king"?

- Read 2:1-8 What risk does Nehemiah take by presenting his concerns to the king? (He risks even his life by both grieving before the king and initiating a request without permission.) Knowing that he is about to risk his life, how did Nehemiah's prayers in chapter one prepare him for taking this initiative? Why does Nehemiah pray again in v. 4? What effect does prayer have on Nehemiah? How can prayer have that effect on you for events you face today? Why is Nehemiah successful before the king? As you think about your ministry, are there any reports you are hearing that you need to petition God for? What will you do to take a risk and become part of the answer for that prayer? What excuses could Nehemiah make for not getting involved? What excuses have you made? How does prayer keep us from making these excuses?

Final Charge: Why Pray? Nehemiah thinks about what his needs are and believes God will act for him and through him. We find it hard to wed holy piety and personal hard work of getting involved. We somehow think that God will come through irrespective of what we do. That is not a biblical pattern. God will do his part, but only if we will do our part! We need to pray because there is a connection between believing, persistent prayer and our ability to take risks for God.

Back To Basics

Ice Breaker: SOME PRIOR PLANNING WILL BE NECESSARY – READ AND PREPARE BEFOREHAND

-Bring a couple of decks of cards.

-Before the discussion:

Choose one person - to be very rough and negative about asking for cards.

- to ask with repetition. "Do you have any nines, Do you have any nines, Do you have any nines?"
- that stands up and asks loudly so that everyone can hear with long and drawn out sentences.

(Getting someone very dramatic would be very good for this.)

- Play a big game of go-fish (an easy card game – look it up on the internet if you don't know it)

Have everyone involved and asking for lots of cards. Keep the game going. Change the rules as necessary to make it work for a large group. How did you feel about the different methods of asking for cards?

Who appealed to you the most? Who made you want to give cards to them the most?

-READ Matt 6:5-13 -What is God's expectation for our prayers? Why does Jesus say "When you pray?"

Why would he make the assumption that everyone prays? How can we sometimes be like the hypocrites or the Gentile's that Jesus refers to? When are you most likely to pray? What is your habit?

-Go through the direction on How to pray. Talk about each one

How can we make sure we are including each of these in our daily prayers?

Pray together to finish the discussion: Choose one person to pray the different portions of Jesus' prayer

· Thankful prayer, Kingdom focus, Sin focus, etc.

Prayer Busters

Icebreaker: Use one of the following two questions to start the discussion:

Q1. Have you ever called someone and they did not return your call? How did it make you feel? How do you feel when God doesn't answer your prayers?

Q2. Have you ever avoided/ignore someone's phone call? Why did you not answer it? How do you feel when God doesn't answer your prayer?

-God doesn't answer: James 4:1-4 What is your motive when you pray? Why do people covet?

Psalm 66:18 Why wouldn't God answer a prayer from someone who cherishes sin?

God did not answer Balaam's prayer: Joshua 24:8-10 Why wouldn't God listen to Balaam?

-Mark 11:22-24: What do you need in your prayer? How easy is it to believe in your prayer? Why is it hard?

-James 1: 5 - 8: What does it mean to be double-minded? How can double-mindedness creep into your prayer life? What are ways to fight off double-mindedness?

-Hindered Prayers: 1 Peter 3: 7 What causes your prayer to be hinder in this passage? Why do you think the husband's prayer would be hindered?

-Delayed Answer: Luke 18:1-8 Why is hard to wait for an answer? Do you imitate this widow's faith? What does faith have to do with being persistent?

-John 17 – Jesus prays for unity? Do you think this prayer has been answered?

-1 John 5: 14: Are you being persistent about something that isn't God's will?

Conclusion: Let us make sure we pray in accordance to God's will. Let us believe and be persistent because maybe God will answer it's just a matter of his timing.

Draw Near

Opening Question: Share something in your life that you have asked/prayed to God for and you received. Have you ever asked God for something and you got it and later wished that you had never received it? What was it? job/relationship/situation.

Q. How can we be sure when we are “listening to God” that it is He that we hear and Satan is not involved? Or, how can we identify the voice of God?

Identifying who is doing the talking is essential if we are to listen accurately. Let’s look at someone who heard a voice in his head but it was not the voice of God.

Scripture: Matthew 16:21-23

Q. What is your first reaction when you read this?

Q. What do you think was going through Peter’s mind when he rebuked the Lord?

Q. Was he trying to lead Jesus’ astray or be a stumbling block? How do you know?

Q. What in Jesus’ response would you have found hard to hear? –being called Satan

Q. How would you have responded? Honestly

Q. Why do you think that Jesus responded in such a radical way?

Q. In vs. 23 Jesus makes it clear what Peter’s main problem is. What is it?

Q. How can we be sure that we have in mind the things of God and not the things of men?

DISCUSSION: Have you ever been convinced in your mind that you were making the right decision and it turned out sour? Explain. Financial/relationship/career/etc.

Q. What can we learn from Peter’s situation?

Let’s look at how we can make sure that we are hearing the voice of God.

Read Matthew 16:24

Q. What does this passage mean?

Q. How can denying ourselves and carrying our crosses daily help us to hear the voice of God?

Q. How can we ourselves, or our thinking, or our desires get in the way or distract us from listening to God?

Share one thing that you know that God calls people to do but they find it hard to listen to? Why?

To listen to God’s voice means that we have to constantly put God first in our lives. We must deny ourselves and obey his word over our own words.

Conclusion:

Turn to John 10:27

Q. According to this passage how can we be positive that it is God’s voice that we hear?

-- We must walk with Him. Follow Him

Q. What does it mean to follow Him?

Q. How can we go about practically following the Lord in our daily walk?

-- Read the bible

-- Pray consistently

-- Deny ourselves and carry our crosses

-- Fellowship with those who are listening to the voice of God

Jesus and the Tax Man

Introduction

- End of financial year approaching. Time to get our taxes in order.
- How do you feel about paying taxes? Not a popular topic.
- We don't like thinking about taxes – despite the slogan 'taxes don't have to be taxing' it is still not our favourite activity!
- If we said tonight we are going to focus on a taxman, you might not be too inspired but this man was different - after his encounter with Jesus.

Read Mark 2:13-17

- Jesus was teaching by the shores of Galilee – v13 cf. Mark 4:1
- He saw Levi sitting in his booth. He saw Levi, son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax office - better known as Matthew, the apostle and gospel writer – see Matt 9:9, 10:3
- His father was Alphaeus, commentators are divided as to whether this was the father of James in Mark 3:18.
- Imagine how Levi must have felt as Jesus and a 'large crowd' arrived!
- Tax collectors hired their booths from the Roman officials. They were hated. They were viewed as traitors - as Jews working for the Roman government – collaborators with the occupying forces.
- They were viewed as extortionists - they often charged exorbitant fees and had the help of Roman soldiers to punish those who wouldn't pay.
- They were classed together with sinners and prostitutes – the scum of society

Luke 15:1-2 Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Matt 21:31 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you."

- What must Levi have thought as the crowd arrived? Perhaps Jesus was leading this crowd in a rebellion against him? Crowds can be intimidating!
- Instead of trouble – he heard the quiet words "follow me".
- He got up and 'left everything' (Luke 5:28) and followed Jesus.
- *What do you think 'leaving everything' entailed for Levi? (Left job, career, work 'colleagues', had to face those who hated him.)*
- *What does leaving everything mean for you? Was this a once only thing? How does being a Christian affect your daily work life?*

Levi throws a party!

- Levi gave Jesus a great banquet (Luke 5:29) in his house v15, and invited all his friends who strangely enough were 'tax collectors and sinners'!
- Teachers of Law, Pharisees were shocked. Luke says they "complained" Luke 5:30
- They ask the disciples "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Notice how they didn't ask Jesus. Is that just human nature not to be direct about complaints?
- Jesus response – most profound:-

"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Mark 2:17

- *What does Jesus response reveal about Levi and about the Teachers of the Law? (He knew he was sick, they were self-righteous and judgemental.)*
- *How does Jesus response encourage you?*

Jesus is looking for sinners!

- In regards to the disease of sin, we are all sick Rom 3:23. Old adage - 'The ground is level at the foot of the cross.'
- *How can we be self-righteous and judgmental in our dealing with others, even in our family group?*

We are to be separate but not isolated

- The Bible teaches the principle of separation from the world.

1 Cor 15:33 Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

2 Cor 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

- But separation doesn't involve total isolation

1 Cor 5:9-10 I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people--not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world.

- Jesus was willing to eat with 'tax collectors and sinners'.

Conclusion

What can we learn from the 'taxman' – from Levi?

- To understand our own sinfulness – sickness. Share together.
- How can we avoid the tendency to be judgmental? How does it show itself in us?
- The need to share the Gospel with others, our friends, work colleagues. Discuss plans for how we can support each other in the family group to do this.

Jesus Calms the Storm

Introduction

- Talk about unexpected happenings. Ask group about their experiences.
- Unexpected things are sometimes funny, sometimes serious.

Newspaper article:-

‘A woman who was applying hairspray some years ago ran into a little mechanical difficulty. The aerosol container refused to stop spraying. The woman solved the problem by simply spraying the stuff into the toilet until the container was empty. Then she left the bathroom. Shortly afterward, her husband entered the bathroom and seated himself on the toilet. He happened to be smoking at the time, and when his cigarette burned down to a stub, he did the natural thing-he parted his thighs and dropped it into the bowl. The toilet exploded.’

Read Mark 4:35-41 and parallel passage Matt 8:23-27

- Unexpected storm in the disciples’ life. Matthew says (v24) it was ‘without warning’.
 - This was not just a little spring rain – it was a ‘furious squall’ or ‘furious storm’.
 - Matthew calls the storm a *seismos* in Greek, which is the word for an earthquake. The waves were so high that the boat was hidden in the trough as the crest of the waves towered over them. (William Barclay in ‘The Daily Study Bible’ Matthew volume 1 pg 316-317)
- ‘The Sea of Galilee is small; it is only thirteen miles from north to south and eight miles from east to west at its widest. The Jordan valley makes a deep cleft in the surface of the earth, and the Sea of Galilee is part of that cleft. It is 680 feet below sea level. That gives it a climate which is warm and gracious, but it also creates dangers. On the west side there are hills with valleys and gullies; and, when a cold wind comes from the west, these valleys and gullies act like gigantic funnels. The wind, as it were, becomes compressed in them, and rushes down upon the lake with savage violence and with startling suddenness, so that the calm of one meant can become the raging, storm of the next. The storms on the Sea of Galilee combine suddenness and violence in a unique way.’

- The seasoned fishermen were used to the storms on Galilee but this was something extreme to make them panic for their lives.
- (Some commentators think this storm could have been Satanic in its nature with Satan trying to kill Jesus and the disciples.)
- Jesus suggested that they get into the boat – why? (To rest, get away from crowds.) Sometimes seemingly good things can turn bad.
- Why did Jesus go to sleep? (He was tired. Totally at peace with elements.)
- Disciples said “Don’t you care?” Whatever the circumstances we never say Jesus doesn’t care. His care may not be obvious initially.
- Wasn’t Jesus a little hard on them for being afraid? Why did he say “still have no faith”?
- At the end it says they were terrified – afraid again – what was the difference from the first fear? (Awe of God. Power over elements. Jesus had shown power over sickness, now over nature, next in chapter 5 over demons. Jesus power was complete in all realms.)

Reflection

- How does this apply to us? Be more cautious next time you go on the boat on the Thames?!
- What kind of storms do we experience?
- You may feel all is plain sailing now – but storms will come. Are you going to wake up Jesus or leave him asleep in the stern?
- Jesus left one side of the lake to go ‘over to the other side’, to a new situation and face the demons in the possessed man. The disciples faced that situation with faith, not fear.
- Sometimes storms in our life can prepare us for doing greater things for God.
- What do you want to remember the next time your life seems out of control? (Wake Jesus up-bring him into your life through prayer and Bible study. God may be preparing me for something better.)
- Ultimate storm of death. Need to realise that the vast majority of people around us will face death without Christ.
- Let’s pray regularly this week for the needs in our lives but also for those who aren’t yet Christians.

Demon Possessed Man

- What is the most frightening thing you have ever seen? Let's look at a very frightening man!

Note: this study is not centred on demon-possession or exorcism, but on how life is changed after a man meets with Christ. There were three aspects of conversion: his Condition, his Change, and his Commission.

1. *His Condition.*

Mark 5:1-10

- Paint picture of a strange man. Believe it or not you can learn from how this insane man, who lived naked in a graveyard and cut himself with stones, changed when he met Jesus.
- As for us today, what are people today living for? (Money, studies, pleasure)
- What is our purpose? What difference does our life make? Are we restless, always looking for more?
- Cut with stones--how do we hurt ourselves today? (Self-destructive habits, worldly sins).
- He was controlled by evil spirit. What are some things we are controlled by? (Money, sex, peer pressure.) Share something of yourself, of a sin that has controlled you.
- This man was also scared. What was he scared of? (Jesus: he said, "Swear to God you won't torture me.")
- Why do you think people today are scared of facing the truth? (They don't want to admit the condition they are in, that they really need help.)

2. *His Change*

Mark 5:11-20

- If you were one of the crowd, what changes would you notice in this man (vs 15-16)? (...sitting there at dressed and in his right mind.)
- What do you think made a difference in this man's life? (He met Jesus.) But what did Jesus do that really changed him? (Jesus believed in him and helped him to get rid of the demons in his life.)

2 Corinthians 5:17

- What does it mean to be a new creation? (Ask Christians to share what it means. Not just a mechanical thing, reading Bible, going to church but an inward change of thoughts, motives, desire and purpose).
- Encourage those who need to look into becoming a Christian and experiencing this change to do so.
- Why did they plead with Jesus to leave? (He challenged the people – especially those herding the pigs which were unclean animals - Lev 11:7. Did they have an attitude to see their own need and kneel before Jesus?)
- What are our needs before Jesus?

3. *His Commission*

- What motivated the man to spread good news? (The mercy shown to him.)
- Do you think he found it hard to share?
- Why do you think we find it hard at times to share our faith with others?

Conclusion.

- We must realise our condition and that we are lost without Jesus.
- We need to make a firm decision to change, not just initially to become a Christian, but also as we grow and mature in the faith.
- As Christians, we have been commissioned to share our faith. It is our mission in life – Matt 28:18-20.

Mark 6:1-6a Faith and Family

Introduction

- Talk about your week so far. How is it going?
- What do you remember from the sermon on Sunday?

Read Mark 6:1-6a

1. Faith

- Jesus goes back to his hometown, Nazareth, where he was brought up.
- The last time he went back it didn't go that well. (**Luke 4:16-30**)
- Would you want to go back?
- They rejected him because they knew him well.
- How does the phrase 'familiarity breeds contempt' apply in the church? How does it apply to us?
- What sort of things do we find familiar and so lose respect for? (Familiar passages, sin list, communion, hymns we sing often.)
- Their lack of faith limited what Jesus could do. How does our lack of faith limit what Jesus can do through us?
- What can we do to change that?

2. Family

- What is your relationship with your family like? Are they disciples? Do they respect your faith? Do they support you in your faith? Share about your family.
- How is our faith affected by our family?
- What is the best thing we can do to help build the faith of our family? (Be strong and consistent in our faith.)
- Suggest a prayer list to pray for the needs of each other's families.
- What is encouraging about Jesus family? (Though they didn't believe initially they did later and became pillars in the early church.)
- See following passages:-

John 7:5, Acts 1:14, Acts 12:1-3, 17, 15:13 Jude v1

- Remember Jude's (Judas') advice in his letter. **Jude v22-23**

Conclusion

- What do we learn from these 6 sort verses?
- The people of Nazareth were "impressed" with Jesus and His wisdom and mighty power, yet their familiarity with Him and His family caused them to remain in unbelief.
- It is easy to disrespect the familiar. It is easy to think, I know this and I've heard this before. Easy to focus on the messenger and not the message.
- Our lack of faith severely restricts what God can do through us
- Even Jesus had opposition from his family; it is not surprising we do too.
- Rejection is a part of the Christian life. This rejection of Jesus served as an object lesson for His disciples, who would also experience rejection of their mission (cf. 6:10, 11).
- We can expect to face the world's rejection as we deliver the message of salvation in Christ. We are not responsible for how people respond to the message. We are only responsible for delivering the message.
- We don't know what affect our faith will have on our families long term. Jesus' brothers believed and led the Jerusalem church, wrote letters we still have and had descendants, grandchildren who we know were faithful.

Family group discussion walking on water Mark 6

Mark 6 v45 to 52

⁴⁵Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

⁴⁷When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land.

⁴⁸He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁵⁰because they all saw him and were terrified.

Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ⁵¹Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, ⁵²for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

⁵³When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there.

Who has been in a bad storm at sea or on land, what was it like?

The apostles were on the boat in the storm from evening to the fourth watch. 9am to at least 3am, at least 6 hours, what would it have been like for the apostles to have been in a small boat, in a storm, on a treacherous lake, for 6 hours?

V51 says that the apostle had not understood about the loaves and that their hearts were hardened. What was wrong with the apostles what had they not understood about the loaves? Why does it say their hearts were hardened. Let's look at a couple of verses which may explain.

Mark 6v30 says

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught.

Words are important, they thought, they had done it.

Mark 6v35 says

³⁵By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. ³⁶Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." ³⁷But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages!^{lel} Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

The apostles had just come back from preaching and performing miracles, why didn't they think the people could be healed?

They thought they couldn't feed the hungry, they were trusting in their strength and not believing in Jesus

The parallel account in John.

John 6¹⁴After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." ¹⁵Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

The people start to believe that Jesus was the Prophet who is to come into the world, but they have a wrong understanding, the great crowd wanted to make him a king, they believed he would be a warrior king like David, and free them from the Romans.

Where were the apostles, did they also want to be great princes of an earthly Messiah King? Did they share the misunderstanding of the people.

What was wrong with the apostles? what had they not understood about the loaves? Why does it say their hearts were hardened?

Mark 6 ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁵⁰because they all saw him and **were terrified**.

Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ⁵¹Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. **They were completely amazed**,

Everyone knows the story of Jesus walking on water, the apostles were amazed

Greek word spirit – is phantasma, not used anywhere else in the bible,
Cried out – they shrieked in horror – same word as demons used when they are displaced.
The apostles shrieked in horror because they thought they saw in ghost.

It says Jesus made his disciples get into the boat? If Jesus knows everything why did he make them go and not go himself.
Why did Jesus make the apostles go into the storm and leave them in it overnight for six hours?

Parallel passage Matthew 14,

³²And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Why did Jesus walk on the water, because the apostles, didn't understand that he wasn't just a good man, or a good luck charm, what the world wants to know but that he was god.

What storms have we been in our lives and what lessons have we learnt from them?
Time for discussion

⁴⁸He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them.
Jesus saw them toiling in rowing, at least 3 miles away, at night time, how?

⁴⁶After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

What do you think Jesus was praying about for the 6 hours that he was on the mountain, whilst he watched the apostles struggling in the boat.

When Jesus had sent them, every part of their struggle was covered by Jesus prayer

The native American people known as the Lakota may be familiar from you from the book dances with wolves. At around the age 14, Lakota boys are sent on an initiation test to become men. This involves sitting and fasting on a mountain peak.

As the boys fast and trembled on the mountain peak, alone for the first time, he would hear mountain lions snarl and move in the darkness below him.

In fact the sounds are made by the men of the tribe, keeping watch, to ensure the boys safety. A young person was too precious to the Lakota to be endangered needlessly.

The Lakota, want their boys to feel like they are in danger to help them become men but they look after them all the time.

Jesus wanted the apostles to feel like they are in danger to help them understand that he is the Messiah.

It is a hard gospel, but Jesus lets us go through trials to learn and rely on him, but he watches and prays for us every step of the way.

Mark 11v12-25

Good evening

Current radical thing

What is the most radical thing you have ever done?

Please read

Mark 11

¹⁵ On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. ¹⁷ And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations' ^[a]? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.' ^[a]"

¹⁸ The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

Jesus was very radical clearing the temple

Why did he feel so radical about the temple?

(possible answers – his fathers house , Passover exodus 12v14 cleansing the house of yeast/sin

1 Corinthians 6v19 says:

¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Thanks be to Jesus sacrifice, god does not dwell within a temple in Jerusalem, he dwells within each one of us.

How do we feel the Holy Spirit guiding us each day?

Jesus was extremely radical in driving out sin from the temple, how can we be radical in driving sin away from the temple within each one of us?

How are we doing?

Bible Discussion – Mark 12v28 The greatest commandments

Love the lord your god
Love your neighbour as yourself

Opening Question

Please name a loving thing that someone has done for you?

My 18th Spiritual birthday today, baptised in Seattle and when I left my American friends gave me the photo album, with photos and letters from them to me.

Mark The Greatest Commandment

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. [e] 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' [f] 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' [g] There is no commandment greater than these."

What ways is it possible to show your love to God?

David Psalm 63 – poems

In what ways have you demonstrated your love to God?

Praying, going out onto southport beach and praying all night

Writing letters to God

Painting pictures

Writing poems

Telling people of your love for God

Giving money sacrificially to God

Do something special this week to show God how much you love him.

Battersea/Fulham family group 091110

I was looking at some scriptures with David and we came across Acts 2v42-47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

What are some of the parts of this scripture that we like best?

Everyone filled with awe, devoted to breaking bread and to prayer

Together and everything in common

Lord added daily those who were being saved

Fantastic, I love these scriptures and what they talk about.

Rate yourself on how doing 1 to 10 in three areas below and share briefly(3-5 mins) about your current spiritual health.(10 being for **them** the most vibrant and healthy **ever** in their walk with God, 1 the opposite)

Area 1. Love for God (Devotion to Worship, Prayer & Study life etc.. Everyone filled with awe, devoted to breaking bread and to prayer)

Area 2 Love for Relationships in Church Family (depth and breadth of friendships with other brothers and sisters - Together and everything in common)

Area 3. Love for the Lost & Community (Desire to save souls, reaching out to the poor, neighbours etc. - Lord added daily those who were being saved)

Thank you for your sharing

How do we get to grow in these areas?

(god can teach us through prayer, through bible study, but so often through others)

Ephesians 4v7-16

⁷But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸This is why it^[a] says:

"When he ascended on high,
he led captives in his train

and gave gifts to men."^[b] ⁹(What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions^[c]? ¹⁰He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until

we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

God tells us that, we each have gifts, and we each have things we can learn from each other. To be built up. Reach unity in the faith.

Share some things we have learnt from others.

(Low faithless point – Psalm 1, America teenager evangelise and met Elizabeth, Adrian how to spend time with my children video of milly)

How do we feel about developing closer one another relationships?

Let's take one of those areas that we were once stronger in and would like to get back to and spend some time both with God and with another brother or sister being open and getting input into that.

The Raising of Lazarus – fact or hoax?

(Written by Tony Cameron)

1. Notes for the person leading this:
 - a. The point of this discussion is that Jesus was doing miracles. Today, people seem to forget how radical and shocking this is. We confront people with a miracle and get them to consider how it happened. Of course there were many miracles so even if the guests aren't convinced here, what about the others?
 - b. This is especially suitable for teens and people with a slight faith.
 - c. It is also good for the disciples as there are things to discuss, instead of saying the 'right' answer.
 - d. A good preparation is John Oakes' book 'Reasons for Belief', which is what motivated me to do the discussion.
2. What is the best hoax or trick you've seen?
3. Let's consider a very recent popular one – Derren Brown and lottery balls
 - a. Explain the idea – to predict the 7 numbers on the white balls before they were randomly chosen. This was done live on Channel 4.
 - b. Show the clip (at the bottom of this linked article):
 - c. [Derren's Brown's lottery prediction: How did he do it? | TV Blog...](#)
 - d. What was the explanation? DB said he asked several people, and took the average of their answers.
 - e. Do you think this method is a true predictor? – It could do it, it's possible, but highly unlikely, certainly not enough to do it live on TV
 - f. How do you think he did it?
 - g. Show the clip <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqAt2akPHJ8>
4. Let's look at a case from history and consider if it was a hoax. Turn to John 11.
5. Background: Jesus known, dangerous for him to be too close to Judea. His disciples are scared. Read 1 – 6.
 - a. How do you think the sisters expected him to react?
 - b. How does Jesus react to the message?
6. Read John 11:17-27
 - a. What do we learn about Martha here? – she feels Jesus could have helped earlier; also believes he can still help; believes that people live after they die
 - b. What does Jesus claim about himself? – that his followers will live after they die
 - c. How would you feel if I one day said that I had the power that people could live after dieing? I am really serious, I claim that just last week I was visiting a hospital and brought someone back to life who had been dead for 24 hours. You'd think: Joke, silly, perhaps offended if you just lost someone close.
 - d. What if I said I had some witnesses, some people whose lives I'd resurrected and some who had seen those people before and after? You'd think: Still a joke, a trick to see if you are gullible.
 - e. Then you talk to the witnesses – but they agree with my story? Now you think: A very elaborate joke, you don't want to believe it because then you'll be either mad or gullible!

- f. What if they all stuck 100% to the story? Try to understand why they are doing it, accept it as a weird happening, but difficult to be friends because they are LIEING or tricking you. But you wouldn't accept the story as TRUE.
 - g. Point: Jesus made a very radical claim, and we need to consider it carefully, else we are the mad or gullible ones!
7. Read John 11:38-44
- a. What happens? They move the stone and the dead man appears. Yet what were people expecting? – the odour of a rotting dead body
8. Let's see how people reacted – read Jn 11:45-53
- a. What 2 reactions do we see here? Belief (new people come to faith) and anger (Pharisees)
 - b. If this was a hoax, how could it have been performed? E.g. Jesus planned it with the family, agree to fake Lazarus dieing, fake doctor, fake burial, secretly get Lazarus in the grave before Jesus arrives
 - c. Does it look like people thought this was a hoax?
 - d. What does the reaction of the Jewish leaders tell us? They believed it was a miracle. There seems to be no doubt in the authenticity of the miracle. If there was, they could have used that against him, they could surely have persuaded or forced one of the hoaxers to reveal the trick.
9. Did Camelot (owners of the Lottery) get Derren Brown arrested or attacked etc? No, he's an entertainer. Did they believe he could predict the Lottery? No. There's no doubt it's a trick that's why they don't bother with his claims.
10. The difference with Jesus? He claims to be totally serious, and later he claims to be God (John 10 and other places) and these must be considered based on the evidence of the miracles see Jn 10:25).

11. Conclusion:

We've looked tonight at a World of trickery and greed and also at life and death!

We've also been reminded that Jesus has all power and how some decide to follow Jesus and some try to destroy him.

Let's not be tricked by the World, but believe and follow Jesus the author of life.

Bury your baggage

Contributed by Brett Thompson --Indianapolis, Indiana
 Saturday, 09 August 2008
 Last Updated: Friday, 15 August 2008

Today I plan to hold a funeral. Today we going to bury the baggage of our past. But before we do, we first need to examine what our baggage consists of. Then we will compare these to God's Word

Ice Breaker:

Tell us your name and what you would like to be known as. For example, my name is Brett Thompson and I would like to be known as a good friend who is safe to talk to.

Introduction:

Can you remember a time where someone close to you really upset you? Can you remember a time where someone not close to you really upset you? Which happens more often? Why?

Today I plan to hold a funeral. Today we going to bury the baggage of our past. But before we do, we first need to examine what our baggage consists of. Then we will compare these to God's Word

My Beliefs

- My Father does not love me
- I have been hurt badly in the past
- I am a loser, failure, disappointment
- I will never amount to anything
- I 'm not listened to
- Possessions are more important than me
- What are your wrong beliefs and baggage

God's Word

- John 16:27
- Duet 4:30-31
- Isaiah 43:1-6, Zechariah 2:8
- Jeremiah 29:11-14
- Psalm 66:19-20
- Matthew 19:16-26
- What scriptures can you use to combat your beliefs and baggage?

Many times I get upset because of the baggage I bring into the situation and not the situation itself, My hot buttons that get pushed are not the problem themselves, but the memories, past grudges, or upsets that make them "hot buttons" in the first place. I may have been wronged, but often my reaction is even more wrong than the initial offense.

My eulogy:

"Jesus, today in front of you and these witnesses, I come to rid myself of this past, to drop the heavy load of

baggage, to free myself of past hurts. Today I bury the past, “forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.” (Philippians 3:12) Moreover, I apologize for taking it out on others, and hurting others. By the cross, you show me that is not the way to behave. Today, I bury that way of life and take on a new way of life, your way of life. Tomorrow I will still have my hurts, but starting today I chose to not hurt others. Some things that hurt me were unacceptable behavior; However, today I chose to not behave unacceptably From now on I take responsibility for my actions and chose not to blame those who hurt me or behave poorly. The chain of events stops here. It stops today. I need forgiveness. I need you help, God. I do not need others to treat me perfectly or even very well. I only need the cross. May it start with me and spread to others."

Final instructions:

At this point you can take a shovel and bury the paper with my notes, burn them, shred them, flush them or use your imagination. You can also encourage others to write out their baggage and bury it as well, or share their baggage For the sake of time we assigned each person a scripture in advance and had them read in turn.

A Pixel Parable Bible Talk - "Finding Nemo"

Contributed by Dan LaFever
 Thursday, 03 April 2008
 Last Updated: Thursday, 03 April 2008

Here's a Bible Talk you can lead with the DVD player as your visual aid. Get out that color-filled copy of "Finding Nemo" to have a creative, interesting and faith building discussion!

Have you ever been separated from someone you love? Has your child ever been lost or have you lost someone precious? What did that feel like?

The film Finding Nemo is the story of a fish, Nemo, who is captured, and his father's journey against incredible odds to save him. This film illustrates a love of a father for his son, and his commitment to never stop searching until he brings him home. The movie's message resonated with the viewing public when it was first released and is reflected in the following:

- Finding Nemo won the 2003 Academy Award for best animated film.
- The film grossed \$864 million dollars worldwide.
- The DVD is the best selling animated feature of all time as of 2006.
- The DVD is also the best selling DVD of all time with over 40 million sold as of 2006.

The theme in Finding Nemo is a great parallel of God's amazing love for his creation. The Bible tells us of how much God loves his children, how his love can overcome our fears, and how we need to surrender and let God have control. Let's look at some clips from the film that help illustrate these great truths from God's word.

1. God loves us and wants to bring his lost children home. Play DVD clip – Chapter 17 to 57:35

What was so compelling about Marlin's love for his son that motivated the sea creatures to share the “good news” with each other?

Read Luke 15:3-7

In the parable, what motivates the shepherd to go searching for one lost sheep when he still has 99 saved ones? Why does he want to celebrate with his friend and neighbors when his lost sheep is found?

How did it feel when you first realized that God wanted you and was searching for you? What lengths did God go to in order to bring you from out of darkness in to his light?

2. God's love gives us courage and hope. Play DVD clip 57:35 to 1:00:33

55:15

What transformed Nemo from being sad and afraid to becoming bold and excited?

Read I John 4:16-18

The Bible says that God is love, period. What are some examples when God has been the very definition of love in your life?

Perfect love drives out fear. Why is fear so debilitating? What are some fears that people have that stop them from being loved by God? How does God's love for us help us overcome fear and make us bold?

3. We must surrender our will to let God have control. Play DVD clip - Chapter 1:08:53 to 1:13:33.

1:06:33

Why was Dorie so calm and relaxed while Marlin was stressed out and worried?

Read Proverbs 3:5 and Isaiah 50:10

What are some examples of situations that worry and stress you out?

Why is it hard to trust God and let him have control of difficult situations?

What are the benefits of surrendering our will to God's will?

Conclusion:

Finding Nemo contains scenes that are parables about how much God loves us. He searches for his lost children, his love drives out our darkest fears, and he blesses us when we surrender to his will. Will you let God find you?

will you listen and surrender to him?

Pixle Parables --"The Lion King"

Contributed by Dan Lafever
Monday, 30 June 2008
Last Updated: Wednesday, 02 July 2008

What examples do you know of people who have overcome their past failures to achieve something great? Have you ever overcome anything difficult in your life? What did that feel like?

Note: If you have a great Bible Talk to share, please submit them to content@disciplestoday.org

Opening questions:

What examples do you know of people who have overcome their past failures to achieve something great?

Have you ever overcome anything difficult in your life? What did that feel like?

Introduction:

The film "The Lion King" is the story of a lion cub, Simba, and his coming-of-age journey to become king of the pride. Simba starts life with very selfish ambitions to be king, but he finds himself exiled and alone after his treacherous uncle kills his father, Mufasa. As Simba grows up, he learns that his father will always be there for him, to overcome his guilt and shame about the past, and to lead his pride like Mufasa.

Consider the following facts about the film:

- | "The Lion King" won two Academy Awards in 1995.
- | The film grossed \$783 million dollars worldwide since 1994.
- | It is the best selling non-CGI animated feature film of all time.
- | The film inspired a musical, which is celebrating 10 years on Broadway.

The Lion King story borrows powerful truths from God's word. In the same way Simba grew and became the leader of the pride lands, we too must grow and become more like Jesus everyday. During this journey, we will encounter failures and challenges that will cause us to falter, but with God's help, we can keep going. The Bible encourages us to keep our eyes on Jesus, to reflect Him in our lives, and always remember our first love. Let's look at some clips from the film to illustrate these points and compare them with some passages:

1. Fix our eyes on Jesus

Play DVD clip – Chapter 7 to 0:26:06

Why did Mufasa tell Simba about his ancestors and that he would "always be there"?

Hebrews 12:1-3

Jesus was already in heaven before the book of Hebrews was written, so what did the writer mean when he said to "fix our eyes on Jesus"?

What things do we fix our eyes on instead of Christ?

What are some practical ways and habits we can develop to keep Jesus before us daily?

Gal 6:26-27

Why does the Bible remind us that we are "clothed with Christ"?

2. Our lives reflect God's glory
Play DVD clip – Chapter 19 to 1:07:03

Why does Simba need Rafiki to see the reflection of his father?

2 Corinthians 3:16-18

There are many people reflecting other things in their lives besides the Lord's glory. What kinds of reflections do you see in people's lives that you have come in contact with? How does God transform our lives into his likeness? What tools does his use?

Proverbs 27:19

How can God use others in our lives to “improve our reflection”?
3. We must never forget our first love

Play DVD clip – 1:07:03 to 1:09:16

Why does Mufasa tell Simba to remember him rather than tell him what to do?

Revelation 2:1-7

Jesus talks about the good things that the church at Ephesus was doing, but He was not pleased with them because they had lost their first love.

Before we discuss this passage, what was your first love like?

What traps do Christians fall into and forsake Christ as their first love?

What are some ways we can show God that He is our hearts desire?

Conclusion:

The Lion King illustrates how we must fix our eyes on Jesus, reflect his glory in our lives, and how we must not forsake Jesus who is our first love. By doing these things, we will flee the other “Lyn” King, Satan, and glorify the Lion of Judah.

Pixle Parables --"Meet the Robinsons"

Contributed by Dan Lafever
 Wednesday, 07 May 2008
 Last Updated: Wednesday, 07 May 2008

When you were small, what did you think your life would be like when you grew up? Did your life turn out to be what you dreamed of as a child?

Opening Questions:

When you were small, what did you think your life would be like when you grew up? Did your life turn out to be what you dreamed of as a child?

Is there anything about your childhood you would like to change or “do over”?

Introduction:

Meet the Robinsons is the story of Lewis, a young boy inventor growing up in an orphanage. He is determined to find out the identity of his mother, who left him as a baby. So he builds a memory machine to retrieve his memory of her. After entering his creation in a local science fair, Lewis is visited by a boy named Wilbur and pursued by a mysterious man in a bowler hat.

Things get complicated when Wilbur takes Lewis into the future with a time machine all while being pursued by the bowler hat man who can also time travel. All the while, Lewis learns about how his actions, both good and bad, will affect him, his family and others around him in the future.

This Disney computer animated film was based on the picture book, A day with Wilbur Robinson by William Joyce. At the center of the film is Lewis and the choices he makes. In the same way, God's word teaches us about our life choices: to obey God and be righteous or to rebel against God and be sinful. The Lord commands us to forgive and reject bitterness, to understand the progression of sin, and to always persevere through to the end. Today, let's look at “Meet the Robinsons” and find the spiritual lessons that God wants us to learn.

God warns us to not let a bitter root grow in our hearts – Play DVD clip - Chapter 9 to 40:45

Why was the bowler hat man so passionate about persuading Goob to not “let it go”?

Read Hebrews 12:14-17

What are some things that happen to people that embitter them? Have you ever become bitter? If so, what happened? The scripture says that trouble can be caused by bitterness-what kinds of trouble can a bitter root cause?

Read Col 3:1-14

Forgiveness of one another is commanded by God. How can forgiveness cure bitterness? How do we learn to forgive and to keep forgiving?

2. God wants to spare us the consequences of sin – Play DVD clip Chapter 16 to 1:07:50

What happened to Goob over time when he kept holding onto his anger?

Read James 1:13-15

According to James, what happens to us when we are tempted? How can we avoid giving into temptation and evil desires? What are some examples when sin grows up and gives birth to death? How can we prevent sin in our lives from growing out of control?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

The key to overcoming sin is to avoid it altogether. What are some examples of how God provides “a way out” of temptation?

3. God wants us to “keep moving forward” - Play DVD clip 41:39 to 44:10

As Wilbur explains, what were the positive benefits of “keep moving forward”?

Read Phil 3:12-14

In the scripture, Paul talks about “forgetting what is behind” and to move forward. What are some things that keep people “stuck” looking back at their lives? How can a person get “unstuck” from their past? How does a “pressing on toward the prize” attitude help us in our daily lives?

Read James 1:2-4

Trials are not fun. How can we develop a perspective of pure joy when we suffer? What are the benefits, spiritual and otherwise, of perseverance in our lives?

Conclusion:

God wants us to bless our lives today and live with us forever. He wants us to forgive and not be bitter, to understand how sin can progress and destroy us, and how we must persevere and keep moving forward. What future will you choose?

Play Chapter 19 through to the Walt Disney quote(with the subtitles on) to close the discussion.

What is my Second Life?

Contributed by Dan LaFever
 Tuesday, 04 March 2008
 Last Updated: Wednesday, 05 March 2008

Second Life is an online fantasy world started up in 2003. It's billed as "life beyond reality, where imagination knows no bounds" and you can even create characters, called avatars, that can fly! But what is your "Second Life" with God?

Introduction and Preparation

A great Bible Talk takes a good deal of work. It's an investment that must be made in order to be fun, attractive, and interesting to draw people in. Here's the things we have learned to do in order to maximize the experience:

Tasks before BT series begins:

I send the BT lesson out to every disciple via email beforehand so it can be read and they can think about comments or stories to share in advance.

Every Christian is assigned a responsibility like organizing food, child's lesson, pre-activity, etc. because everyone must take responsibility and use their gifts to make it successful and to keep anyone from becoming overwhelmed with too much work.

All responsibilities are assigned in advance of the series and a schedule is distributed before the series begins.

Post BT mementos - we send some sort of reminder craft home with every family of the lesson. In this case, we had coasters printed with the theme of the BT on them and we distributed them at the end of the lesson every week.

Almost every BT was written and edited at least two weeks before it was presented-this makes it easier for the leader and clearer because of editing.

Select videos to show that enhance the discussion or topic.

Pre-lesson activity - before the BT, we gather all the families and do a pre-BT activity that involves the kids. It's always fun and loosens everyone up.

Children's activity -children 10 and under will do an activity in another room while the adults have BT.

Day of Bible Talk:

Pre-Talk checklist - I created a checklist of items to go through before BT. These task include things like adjusting the home temperature, lighting scented candles, silencing phones, tuning on music, computer setup, preparing the coat room, turning on the outside driveway lights, and other things to enhance the experience and reduce distractions.

Food - Open with a prayer-we do our food at the beginning rather than after for a couple reasons: First, everyone is distracted by it so we eat at the beginning. Secondly, any food that winds up the kids will have some time to digest and they will burn off that energy rather than being "amped up" right before they go home. We also avoid caffeine as well for this very reason.

Pre-lesson activity -after we eat, we gather families around and have a group activity. The more riotous, the better and more fun. We aim ours to last 5 to 10 minutes but no more than 10.

The Bible Talk intro - I do three things: First, welcome everyone and introduce the topic, secondly, ask everyone to silence their cell phones and electronic devices, and thirdly, coach everyone to make comments, tell stories, and stay away from one word responses to questions.

The Bible Talk - Here's where you conduct the lesson and discussion. I try to include good videos that expand or expound on the topic-I use a projector and play the youtube videos I select above the mantle of our fireplace.

Conclusion - go over the BT points, issues the bible study invitation, hand out the post BT memento, thank everyone for coming and close with a prayer.

Fellowship - talk to as many visitors and ask them about the lesson and set up any studies.

We gave this lesson, "What is my Second Life ?" We had 9 visitors and the night was a great success. We had so many people in our living room that I had to lead the BT standing up because there were no more chairs. In that group, two teens are studying the bible and we have made new contacts that we are working with. Ware planning our next bt series to start soon.

What is my Second Life?

Second life is an online fantasy world started up in 2003. It's billed as "life beyond reality, where imagination knows no bounds" and you can even create characters, called avatars, that can fly! According to an article on October 29, 2007 in the Washington Post, Second Life has over nine million users that spend lots of time and real money playing the game

and living their avatar's life. This online society has become so popular that real companies such as IBM, Dell, and others have setup virtual offices there and news channel CNN has a bureau in Second Life.

Check out this Second Life video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxj8RTW4ev4>

A little Second Life humor...<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrAHBk4ZAeQ>

There are many other online worlds and video games where a person can live another life. Some of them, like the SIMS series of game titles, don't have a mission or goal-you simply live in the alternate reality and interact with characters.

What do you think is so appealing about Second Life that would entice nine million people to play it?

Why would people spend so much time playing a fantasy game like this instead of living a real life?

Why should virtual characters have all the fun? God wants us to have a "second life" that is better than any online environment or game.

Let's go to the Bible and to address these questions:

Jesus came to give us a "second life" better than our "first life" on earth. Eph:4:21-24

What is the old self, or the "first life", that the scripture is talking about?

What are some examples of "deceitful desires" that corrupt and ruin our lives?

What is the new self, or the "second life", that God wants you to have?

Read John 10:10 What does Jesus mean, "life to the full?"

After we die, God gives us a "Second Life" in heaven. Revelation 21: 3-5

What would it be like to see God face to face?

Describe what your life would be like if all the sources of pain and tears were gone.

What are other things in this life that you will be glad to be rid of in heaven?

What would keep anyone from receiving a second life with God? Matt 18:7-9

- · Why is Jesus so extreme when it comes to dealing with sin?
-
- · Read Col 2:13-14 Why does the Bible describe people's lives without God's forgiveness as "dead"?
-
- · What is God's motivation to forgive us and provide us a second chance?

Conclusion:

- · Jesus came to give us a full, joyful, and powerful life while we live on earth.
- · After death, God will give us an eternal second life free of suffering, pain, and tears.
- · The only thing that keeps us from life with God is sin but if we turn to him He will forgive our sins and make us alive.

Will you choose God's Second Life?

The peace of God during conflict

Contributed by William Auki --Kenya, Africa
 Wednesday, 07 May 2008
 Last Updated: Tuesday, 13 May 2008

My country of Kenya has been undergoing a tough time since the general election for parliamentarians and the presidency. Many felt cheated, a feeling that is common in many other countries in Africa.

To the reader:

My country of Kenya has been undergoing a tough time since the general election for parliamentarians and the presidency. Many felt cheated, a feeling that is common in many other countries in Africa. The election fiasco stirred tribalism tendencies within the Kenyan people. Violence broke out and the entire country was in chaos for more than one month. Many lost their property through looting and utter destruction just because they hailed

from a different community.

The church was not untouched by this event, as we underwent a period of self-examination in which we had to be honest with our own feelings. The conclusion was obvious: we needed to change. Otherwise our personal expectations with respect to the election would poison our own souls. We needed the peace of God. This Bible Talk was written to address this need. The central question that rings in our ears during difficult times is: Where is God when life hurts? We will look at having the peace of God during good and bad times.

Opening Question:

Have you ever been involved with conflict?

Read Philippians 4:2-3

What was going on between these two women? A disagreement.

How did this affect the church?

Was it acceptable for them to remain in that state? Why?

How is this related to the issue of joy in the subsequent verses? Stress, unhappy, anxiety, worry, anger, sickness ...

Were these women really focused on the fact that their names were written in the book of life?

What does it take for you to lose your focus?

Read Philippians 4:4-7

What is Paul's prescription for conflict? Rejoice always, pray, with thanksgiving.

Is this possible? How?

What can you rejoice about today?

How do these compare with modern psychology?

Which of these produces a long lasting solution- God's way or man's way? Why?

How can you know that someone is rejoicing in the Lord?

In what areas has your gentleness been challenged this week? How did you fare?

Read Philippians 4:8-9

What are some things we allow into our thoughts that eventually rob us of peace?

What is Paul's solution to our thought pollution?

If he was to visit you today, what would he comment about your leisure time, reading material, movies, and television viewing?

God desires peace for us and he has a way out. We must follow it his way and not our way. Things may seem far away from anything peaceful but God is working.

CHALLENGE:

Are you experiencing the peace of God that transcends all understanding or do you find yourself always in arguments and fights? Are your thoughts anything to be proud of or would you be ashamed to share what you are involved in day after day?

Follow God's way and see how many awesome things he's doing and will do in your life.

HAVE A PEACEFUL WEEK!

Your brother,
William Auki

Where is God When Life Hurts?

Contributed by William Auki --Kenya, Africa
 Tuesday, 20 May 2008
 Last Updated: Wednesday, 21 May 2008

My country of Kenya has been undergoing a tough time since the general election for parliamentarians and the presidency. Many felt cheated, a feeling that is common in many other countries in Africa.

To the reader:

My country of Kenya has been undergoing a tough time since the general election for parliamentarians and the presidency. Many felt cheated, a feeling that is common in many other countries in Africa. The election fiasco stirred tribalism tendencies within the Kenyan people. Violence broke out and the entire country was in chaos for more than one month. Many lost their property through looting and utter destruction just because they hailed

from a different community.

The church was not untouched by this event, as we underwent a period of self-examination in which we had to be honest with our own feelings. The conclusion was obvious: we needed to change. Otherwise our personal expectations with respect to the election would poison our own souls. We needed the peace of God. This Bible Talk was written to address this need. The central question that rings in our ears during difficult times is: Where is God when life hurts? We will look at trusting God during good and bad times.

Opening Question:

What makes you Healthy? Wealthy? Wise?

Job 1:1-5

What impresses you about Job in these verses? What kind of a person was he?

Job 1:6-12

Job loses everything. In chapter 2, he loses even his health.

What was his reaction?

Had you been Job, how would you have reacted?

If you lost all in a day, what would be your biggest question?

How did Satan choose Job and how might he choose you?

What do you think this test meant for Job?

Job 1:20-22

What was Job response after losing everything? He worships God.

What can you praise God for right now?

Job 2:9

Job maintains his integrity

What is your biggest obstacle today that challenges your integrity?

Job 42:10-16

At the end, Job is doubly-blessed by God.

Why was Job restored?

Why did his family and friends now come back?

Does God always promise a happy ending?

What if your situation NEVER got better? (For some it did not. See Hebrews chapter 11, for example).

How do you think Job would have answered the question: Where is God when it hurts –both at the point when he lost everything and after being restored?

What about you?

CHALLENGE:

No matter what we think makes us Wealthy, Healthy or Wise, we must realize that the things of this world are only for a moment and can and will disappear. As such we must give ourselves to obeying God at all times no matter what we are going through.

Branches of God

What is your Favorite Holiday and why?

Romans 11:13-16

13I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry 14in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. 15For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

Verse 14 and ideas on what this means, Paul made his ministry great so people would want to join.

It is not us that make us holy but the body we are a part of. **What made church holy, how?**

Romans 11:17-21

17If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. 21For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

What does this mean?

What are the wild olive shoots, and the old branches?

Going by this scripture can we be accepted by God if we are not one his original people?

Romans 11:22-24

22Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. 23And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

Is anyone forever part of the vine or can anyone be removed or added?

So how do we stay in the vine?

How do we get grafted in?

Galatians 3:26-29

26You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

In`as`much´

adv. 1. In like degree; in like manner; seeing that; considering that; since; - followed by [as](#). See In as much as, under [In](#), prep.

Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

- Matt. xxv. 45.

Gentile Believers

The English word Gentile comes from the Hebrew word *Goy* (Gohee, Strong's #1471). The plural form in Hebrew is *goyim* (Gohee-eem; Note: Strong's does not differentiate between the singular and plural forms).

Goy literally means 'a people.' However, the common understanding is that anyone who is not Jewish is considered to be a *Goy*. The most used definition for *goyim* is 'nations,' and it is generally understood to be those nations which are not of Israel. However, from a Scriptural standpoint these definitions, while usually correct, are not always true. In fact, *goy* can refer to anyone who is a part of any 'nation,' including the nation of Israel. Prior to the calling of *Avraham* (Ahv-rah-hahm = Abraham), all peoples were said to reside within their *goyim* or 'nations.' (See Gen. 10:5, 20, 31 and 32.)

Changing your Picture of Jesus!

1. Q: Who is someone you respect or admire?

A: Gandhi, Joan of Ark, Nelson Mandela

2. Q: Why?

A: Courage, Conviction & Purposeful life

How does the world view Jesus?

(Petting the Lamb, not relatable, distant, great teacher)

Luke 4:14-21

3. Q: What do you notice about Jesus in this passage?

A: Revolutionary - Socially & Spiritually; powerful, full of faith, confident, assured of his calling!

4. Q: What would you like to change today in society?

A: Racism, divorce rate, greed poverty, etc ...

Q: What is working? What is not?

-Only Real following of Jesus can work!

5. Q: What would you like to change today in religion?

A: Hypocrisy, image homosexual marriages, sexual molestation by priests, etc ...

Luke 4:22-30

6. Q: What do you notice about Jesus here?

A: Confrontative - he spoke his convictions and detested the racism.

John 2:12-16

7. Q: What do you notice about him here?

A: Radical - he acted on his convictions

8. Q: What prevents people today from acting on their convictions?

A: Fear, laziness, wimpish etc ...

John 11:28-37

9. Q: What do you see here?

A: Compassion, sympathy, love & sensitivity

10. Q: What prevents people from being this way?

A: Pride, selfishness etc...

Conclusion:

My old picture of Jesus = wimpy, thin, picking flowers, singing to sheep.

My new picture of Jesus = an incredibly bold, courageous and caring man.

Elementary Teachings Bible Discussion

Hebrews 6

1Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death,^[a] and of faith in God, 2instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3And God permitting, we will do so.

Repentance

2 Peter 3

9The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2 Cor. 7

8Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— 9yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. 12So even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong or of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are. 13By all this we are encouraged.

Faith in God

Heb. 11

1Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. 2This is what the ancients were commended for.

3By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. 4By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

By Faith... Faith in God is not rational, or self-seeking, but it trusting in God and obeying his commands

Baptism

Matt 3

11"I baptize you with^[b] water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. 12His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

baptize – submerge in water

Vs 13-17, Jesus is baptized, essential so that all righteousness is fulfilled

Laying of Hands

Acts 5

The Apostles Heal Many

12The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. 14Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. 15As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. 16Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil^[a] spirits, and all of them were healed.

Apostles were appointed by Jesus to spread the news about him(matt 4:18) (matt 10:1 Jesus gives them the authority to drive out demons and heal people)

Resurrection of the Dead

Matt 22

23That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. 24"Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. 25Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. 26The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. 27Finally, the woman died. 28Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"

29Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. 30At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. 31But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 32'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'^[a]? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

The resurrection, not just any resurrection. The resurrection was a theological staple of Jewish Theology. At the end of time, there would be one resurrection where all dead people would be resurrected. This is not speaking to individual people being willed back to life, but instead what will happen when we are judged.

Eternal Judgment

2 Peter 2 (in reference to false teachers)

4For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell,^[a] putting them into gloomy dungeons^[b] to be held for judgment; 5if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men 8(for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.^[c] 10This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature^[d] and despise authority.

There will be a judgment. It is cited hundreds of times throughout the Old and New Testament. If any of these areas are still unclear, we can study them further.

Getting to Know God

Q: Introduction: Go around and ask two questions

1. Name and concentration in school

2. If you could ask God one question what would you ask him?

Q: Does anyone here like mystery stories ... mystery movies ?

Q: Why ? What do you enjoy most about mysteries ?

Q: How does a mystery hold our attention ?

[Giving us clues to the answer, keeping us searching and thinking, holding back the whole truth until the end]

- **Let's play detectives. Usually we're searching for clues to get to know the bad guy, but that's a discussion we can save for another time. This time we'll be searching for clues to help us to get to know better the only really Good Guy ... God, the creator of the universe; God, our Father in Heaven.**

Psalm 118 [Read the whole psalm, right through.]

To begin with, what does this scripture tell us about our God ?

What clues does it give us about his nature, his characteristics ?

Later on, we can talk about how we should respond to these characteristics of God.

- God is good, unchanging, he always loves us ... vs. 1-4 and 29.
- He answers our prayers ... vs. 5 and 21.
- He frees us from fear ... vs. 6.
- He is with us all the time ... vs. 7
- He supports us, he helps us succeed ... vs. 11, 12.
- He protects us from harm ... vs. 11, 12.
- He strengthens us ... vs. 14.
- He frees us from death, he is our salvation ... vs. 14 and 21.
- He is all-powerful, in control, amazing ... vs. 15, 16 and 23.
- He tests us, disciplines us ... vs. 18.
- He blesses us, he gives us a great life ... vs. 26.
- He shows us the way to live our lives ... vs. 27.
- Our God is certainly an amazing God. How should we respond to him ?

What does Psalm 118 say about what God expects of us ? What should we do ?

- We should give thanks ... vs. 1 and 21.
- We should fear God, fear displeasing him, disappointing him ... vs. 4.
- We should call on him, pray for his support ... vs. 5, 12, and 25.
- But we should take action, not just wait for God to do it for us ... vs. 10 -12
- We should trust him, rely on him, not on ourselves or on promises ... vs. 8.
- We should be joyful always, however tough it may seem ... vs. 15 and 24.
- We should speak out about him, share our faith with others ... vs. 17.
- We should choose the narrow road, gate ... vs. 19, 20. (See Matt. 7: 13, 14)
- We should praise him, honour him ... vs. 27, 28.

So, what have you learned from this discussion ?

What must you do to get to know God better ?

What will you do differently this week ?

[e.g. Try to set a good example to others, love and support one another, help those who are struggling, invite anyone who might be interested to join our Bible Talk !]

Let's finish up with a thought in Isaiah 55:6-9

Q: God's word says seek the Lord while he may be found – why does he say that?

Q: What does God say about our thoughts compared to his thoughts?

Conclusion: Get deeper in the Bible with each other and individually to bring about a deeper knowledge of God!

Bible Talk

Heaven

Revelations 21:1-27

What is your favorite Fictional place?

What is your favorite Non Fictional place?

Would you want to go to any of those places forever?

Well what we are about to discuss is real and will be for ever.

Read:

Rev 21:1-4

The world that we know has ended and our dwelling will be with God

Verse 4 There will be no more death or mourning or crying of pain, basically everything bad that we endure in this world will be gone.

Read:

Rev 21:5-8 (everything new)

Alpha and the omega (meaning the beginning and the end)

We will have our thirst quenched by the water of life with out cost

Do we like paying for water? NO

Well this is water that will make us never thirsty again.

We need to overcome, who ever does will inherit all the things mentioned above such as no more pain and we will be with God as his sons and daughters.

So how do we overcome?

Verse 8

By not doing this list of sins.

vile *Adjective* **1** [filthy](#), [foul](#), [nasty](#), **vile**

thoroughly unpleasant; "filthy (or foul or nasty or vile) weather we're having"

2 [despicable](#), [ugly](#), **vile**, [unworthy](#)

morally reprehensible; "would do something as despicable as murder"; "ugly crimes";

*"the vile development of slavery appalled them" **3** [nauseating](#), [nauseous](#), [noisome](#),*

[loathsome](#), [offensive](#), [sickening](#), **vile**

causing or able to cause nausea; "a nauseating smell"; "nauseous offal"; "a sickening stench"

If we do we will end up in the fire lake (Hell).

Rev 21:22-27

No sun or moon Because God glory will shine so bright we don't need it.

What do you think this world would be like with out the sun?
Well God is going to give us light that will be better than the sun and the moon.

Verse 25 Again it mentions that there will be no night time and the gates always open

This comes from back in the first century the cities used to close there gates at night so no enemies or beasts could get in the city.

Verse 27

Nothing impure will be brought into heaven, shameful or deceitful.

I hope that you have a better understanding of what God has planned for those who live the life that he wants for us.

Other scriptures you can read if u want to see more.

Psalm 19: 1-6

2 Cor 5:1-5

John 3:12-15

I also would like to say if this is something that hit you or moved you in anyway and feel like you would like to get into the bible some more find someone how knows about the bible and get together with and study the bible

Bible Talk: How many chances does God give you?

Matthew 25:31-46

Vs 31-40

- How are the people on the right feeling right now?
- How does it seem the people on the right lived? (generously)
- Did they even know that they were on the good side?

Vs 41-45

- How are the people on the left feeling right now?
- How does it seem that the people on the left lived?
- Did they know that they were going to hell?

*What are the differences in character between these two groups?

(one is selfish, one is selfless, one loves and has compassion, the other doesn't, one sacrificed and the other didn't).

What happens to the two groups?

Vs 46

One group lived like Jesus and the other didn't.

In this story, there was one chance to do right before God. If you did, you would be richly rewarded in heaven. If you didn't, you went to hell. There were, and still are, no second chances. If you don't know what right by God is, make the commitment to learn. Sit down with someone who does, and have them teach you.

LIFE TO THE FULL

Intro: This is a bible discussion group that believes that the Bible is the word of God and is inspired by God and we believe that having a relationship with God is the most important thing you can do in life!

**So did Harvard Back in the Day Read the QUOTE:
HARVARD LAW 1642**

I know many of us have midterms and looking forward to spring break.. Thanks for coming...

This Bible Talk is Called LIFE TO THE FULL!

Q: Let's Start off with introducing ourselves say our name and let's say one thing we want to do before we die?

Q: What does it mean to have a full life?

Today we are going to read one scripture and focus on it... It is what Jesus says and speaks to all of our hearts...

**John 10:10 – I love this passage because it is a promise and a statement that is powerful and inspiring...
“I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”**

Jesus is saying that following him and having life in Jesus is what it means to have life the full....

Q: What do people often think negatively about Christianity?

Q: What do people or skeptics say about the Bible and the different instructions or commands that it says... (Restrict your life, boring life... etc...)

That is the farthest from the truth.....

Either Jesus is lying or we are missing something...

Q: What about following Jesus truly above all things gives you life the full?

Q: Who is the thief? (Satan, the world, the passions of this world) 1 John 2:17* That is the thief!

Q: Just imagine you are an old man/woman! What do you want to have done and lived out?
- Jesus wants to make your life, life to the full!

Get to study the Bible and find out what it means to life to the full....

Jesus is not lying... He can truly give life to the full....

Responses of the Heart

- We make common reactions to similar events.
- What are some common reactions we make to: tripping?, getting dumped?(Ginger punching me), scoring a winning goal?, acing a test?(History of Africa – crashing the truck out of joy), Wedding Day(some cry, some get cold feet), death.
- We make similar reactions to varying events.

- Turn to Mark 4:1-9
- Let's describe the different soils...path-hard, rocky-shallow, weeds-cluttered, good soil-soft and receptive.
- Vs. 9 – “those who have ears...” – why say it? People don't have to listen. Those that have humility. Vs. 10-12 – God wants only the right kind of hearts in heaven.
- Vs. 13-14 – lets look at the common reactions of the heart to the word of God.

TYPES OF HEARTS:

1. Hard heart :

- What is unique about soil along the path? It is hard. Why?
- Vs. 15
- What are the characteristics of a hard heart?
- Cynical, hurt, shut down, in pain, afraid, proud, reserved, etc...
- Have you ever been hardened to something? (marriage and relationships, I never wanted to get married, it didn't work, etc...)
- Sometimes the most driven people are the most hardened. Looking for something to fill the void.
 - o Hebrews 3:12-14, there is a way to change a hard heart, got to recognize it and then surround yourself with the right kind of people.

2. Shallow heart:

- What is unique about the soil with rocky soil?
 - o It is shallow. Why?
- What makes a shallow heart shallow?
 - o No conviction.

- The heart of the quick reaction, like being Italian, we react to millions of things with such joy and depth of emotion, yet moments later it is forgotten.
- Anyone here ever had a shallow heart towards something?
 - o OPPOSITE OF A SHALLOW HEART: Mt 15: 21-28
 - o What characterized her reaction? Wouldn't take no for an answer.
- What are things that make a heart shallow?
 - o Not wanting to get real, or have to deal with our lives.
 - o Not wanting to do the work to build conviction.

3. Distracted heart:

- Vs. 18-19 – weeds choke out the word.
- What are some of the most enjoyable aspects of life? What are the things that you enjoy more than any other thing? (my wife, sports, fun, food, vacations, etc...)
- These are not bad things. However, if used improperly these things could be the things that prevent us from loving Jesus.
 - o What are some of the most important things in your life?(school, family, etc...)
 - o Lk 14:25-27 – HATE

4. Good /soft heart:

- Vs. 20 – The good heart hears, accepts, and produces fruit.
- Why do you think Jesus tells the 4 different types of reactions possible with the word?
 - o So we can choose to be the right soil.
 - o Being the good soil is a choice, make the right choice, and study the bible.

Who is Your PAPI?
5.23.06
1st Northeastern Bible Talk

Q: Introduce yourself – Name, Major, and what you want to do when you get out of NU?

Today's Bible Talk is called – Who is your PAPI?

Q: Starting off what does the Spanish Word- "Papi" mean?

Q: Why do people call David Ortiz BIG PAPI? (Historical Context)

Q: What are some different ways you can describe God in a word?

* Today I wanted to talk about how God wants and really is our true Father.

* Today I would like you to answer the question – **Who is your PAPI spiritually?**

Q: * May seem like a difficult question but how would define what makes someone your father?

-Can adopt, can come from the father, my son was created from me!

God doesn't have a mother God but he is our creator.

- The beginning God made the heavens and the earth and made man in his image...

Isaiah 64:8

* Even in the OT - God was a father.

Why? Because we are all the work of his hands. Isn't it funny that all of us our unique people? There is no like: Jim, etc...

Well what does this father give us?

Q: How is your relationship with your father? What is one thing you love about your earthly father?

Psalms 68:5-6 - God is even a father to the fatherless. Some of us don't have a great relationship with their physical father but God still wants to be a father to the fatherless..

What does God the Father do for us?

James 1:16-18

-He gives us every good thing as a gift from heaven.

Q: What are some good things?

-He does change but stays constant in our lives.

-God the father wants to give you what you ask for in prayer.

-Provides food and protection and love.

-Gives us joy and success.

-Disciplines us sometimes in Heb 12.

It says that we **might** be born again or saved - becoming the first fruits of all his creation.

Q: What does this mean?

(Resurrection - Jesus was the first fruits of those rose from the dead. God the father wants you to be resurrected and wants to be with you forever in eternity!

This says though that we might!

-Might implies that we may not!

The big question is who is your PAPI?
--

Most people would say God is! But let's look at one passage that speaks about another father that you may be the son of and not know it!

He gave us as John 3 says – “His one and only son” – why does he say one and only son – we are adopted –

Ephesians 1:3-6

God has set up the plan to adopt us as his son through the one son dying on the cross!

When does God become your father?

John 8:31-47

-These people believed **in him but they didn't hold to Jesus teachings...**

They seemed religious but Jesus told him that their PAPI was who?

The devil! Why? How could Jesus say this?

-They were slaves to sin!

Q: What does it feel like when you are Satan's child? Slave

Q: If God is not your father – is their another Father other than the devil?

Q: How can you be sure that you have the right father?

Plan in the Bible and ignorance does not make someone not guilty!

-Study the Bible to find out who is your Papi and make sure you get in the right family!

Who is you Papi – let's make sure it is God!

Why are you here?

Acts 17:24-28

- What did God do?
- How much control does He have over our lives?
- Why did He put you at BU?
- Can you find him?
- What do you have to do first?

Jeremiah 29:11-13

- How earnestly do we need to seek God to find Him?
- Have you ever done something with all your heart?

Ok. So why should we seek God?

Matthew 6:31-34

- If you seek God, will he take care of you?
- Will God take care of tomorrow?