

PILGRIM HOME GROUPS

The smaller groups in our church community are inside our homes where we go deeper, build friendships, and walk out the Christian life with each other.

HOME CHURCH/SMALL GROUP/CLASS GUIDE

1. "Breaking the Ice" question: (group facilitator)
2. Check-ins: What's been happening in your week(s) since last meeting? Introduce yourself if new/new people in group, check in with each other
3. Care: Needs in the group; name needs and have sentence prayers (short sentences/open ended, not long-winded) at end of the gathering time
4. Compassion: What compassion work is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbors to join?
5. Group Announcements (church-wide and group-only)
6. Dig in: Any reflections, discernments, disagreements from last week's teaching (or since you last met)? Look at the Bible passage(s) again and read some of them out loud in the group (and other verses that may have been mentioned). What jumps out at you? Discuss some of the questions as a group.
7. End and Homework: Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

DISCUSSION:

1. Have you picked a compassion/service opportunity? It could be something someone is already connected with in your group...
2. In Luke 11:17-23, Jesus is the stronger man. What does this passage tell us about the spiritual situation we find ourselves in and how has the cross changed this?
3. If evil is simply a "dark will" part of God, what does that say about our views of sin and evil?
4. What would you say to a loved one who experienced a significant loss? Does the type of loss change this and how (e.g. a horrible accident claims a child, a family member is kidnapped, the experience of war, cyclone/hurricane, etc.)
5. What aspect of God's character do you find most comforting? What do you find most "forced" (e.g. "What I think I'm supposed to say, but this is really what I think/feel")?
6. Dig into scripture: 1 Peter 5:7-9, Ephesians 6:10-20, Romans 12:14-21, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, 1 Timothy 4:1-7, Roman 12:2, others?
In what areas of life do you need to engage the "weapons of our warfare"?
7. How do these verses potentially reveal more about our gatherings for worship, prayer, encouragement, confession, etc.?

PRAYER REQUESTS THIS WEEK:

The Thinking Christian RESPOND TO EVIL

OPENING STORY:

Big Idea review: Two approaches and pictures of God

+ Blueprint or warzone

+ Particular or general

+ Pure will or pure love

+ Human super-tyrant or Jesus
(1 John 1:5, Hebrews 1:3, Col. 1:15-20, 2:9-10)

Big Idea: Part 2:

Our response will be resignation or holy revolt. We must choose revolt.
(1 Peter 5:7-9, Ephesians 6:10-20)

Jesus is the Stronger Man and the Two Kingdoms/middle age tension

"The kingdom of God as Jesus uses the term refers to nothing other than his ministry, and the ministry he gave to his disciples, of setting up God's rule where previously there had been Satan's rule. If the "kingdom of God" was the central concept of Jesus' ministry and teachings all scholars recognize, then the 'kingdom of Satan' was, as a corollary concept, central as well. An increasing number of scholars are also coming to recognize this...the NT authors also never doubted that in this present world the Creator's will was not the only will that was being carried out. Wills, human and angelic, oppose God, and he must fight against them. The kingdom of God, therefore, was something the NT authors prayed for, not something they considered already accomplished (Matthew 6:10, Luke 11:2)" Boyd 185.

RESPOND TO EVIL AND PRACTICAL TAKE OUTS

(1 John 4:1-4, Luke 11.17-23)

- 1) We can and should call evil! Not simply another aspect of God.
- 2) We should fight, resist, revolt through prayer, loving action and naming evil as such, NOT as God's perfect plan!
- 3) We love first. We leave final judgment to God. (We do NOT try to locate God's judgment in the storm).
- 4) Worship and prayer matter more than you suspect.

BRING THE RULE OF GOD INTO OUR SITUATIONS!

- 1) Systemic evil is the most powerful.
- 2) Dealing with evil on the personal/small level.
- 3) Some warnings: Not all sickness, problems, or issues are directly connected to an evil spirit - BUT every issue DOES involve a spiritual component.
- 4) Confession of sin - agreeing with what God says about it and confession of your God-given worth.
- 5) Become so rooted in the church, word, and worship that you can hear the leadings of the Spirit
- 6) Pray for your neighbors, your family, your church AND
- 7) Get prayer when you have a problem/issue...