

Small Group Homework

For the week of January 22, 2017

GETTING STARTED

What's something you did as a kid that you look back on and realize was pretty crazy?

LOOKING BACK

Looking back on Sunday, is there anything that stood out to you, confused you, or challenged you?

MY STORY

1. What are some of the things human beings have accomplished that you find to be amazing and wonderful?
2. What are some of the things people are capable of that you find to be horrifying?
3. It's popular to say that people are basically good. God disagrees (Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:23, 1 John 1:8). How would you describe the human condition?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read **Galatians 5:13-15 (NLT)**:¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.¹⁴ For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁵ But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.

1. What are some of the ways people "bite" and "devour" each other instead of acting in loving ways?
2. Paul implies that before Christ makes someone new, that person is not free to lovingly serve others (v13). What do you think he means?

Read **Galatians 5:16-17 (NLT)**: ¹⁶ So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

1. Define evil and give an example of evil that we might experience in our daily lives:

Continue in **Galatians 5:19-21 (NLT)**: ¹⁹ When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

1. One reaction to this passage is to begin creating specific definitions for each sin listed. What are some possible reasons for wanting clarification on these points? Do any of those reasons hint at deceitfulness or wickedness in our own hearts?
2. What difference would it make to have people in your life who know your hidden sins and struggles, and who help you resist your sinful nature?

Continue in **Galatians 5:22-25 (NLT)**: ²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

1. How would the world around us be different if people confessed their sins to each other and followed the Spirit's leading in every part of their lives?
2. How could God use New Day's Backyard Missions week as a step towards seeing the Holy Spirit bring hope to the world's corrupted condition?

PRAYERS: