

Small Group Homework

For the week of March 12, 2017

GETTING STARTED

What's an event in your life that felt embarrassing, but that you learned from?

LOOKING BACK

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

MY STORY

1. One of the questions posed on Sunday was, "Why is it so hard for us to accept correction?" When is it difficult for you personally to receive constructive criticism?
2. How comfortable are you with giving corrective feedback?

DIGGING DEEPER

After Judah's first son married Tamar and then died, his second son married Tamar and then he also died. **Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Go back to your parents' home and remain a widow until ~~my son~~ Shelah [] is old enough to marry you."** (But Judah didn't really intend to do this because he was afraid Shelah would also die, like his two brothers.) So Tamar went back to live in her father's home (**Genesis 38:11 (NLT)**).

1. In each generation--Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and now Judah--we see poor decisions that are motivated by fear. What kinds of fears can keep us from doing what we know is right?
2. John wrote about fear to early disciples of Jesus: **1 John 4:18 (MSG) There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love.** How does a better understanding of God's love banish fear from our lives?

Generations after Judah lived, his descendants multiplied and became a powerful kingdom. Even as God blessed them, they turned away from Him. God gave them many warnings through a number of prophets in order to call them to repentance, including this warning about what would happen within their society: **Young people will insult their elders, and vulgar people will sneer at the honorable (Isaiah 3:5 (NLT)).**

1. How does it hurt a society when young people insult their elders?

2. Who do you think God would consider honorable today?
3. What is a modern example of vulgar people sneering at the honorable?
4. How can we help to foster a culture of honor where people are more likely to receive correction from honorable people?

WORDS OF WISDOM

Proverbs 10:17 (NLT) People who accept discipline are on the pathway to life, but those who ignore correction will go astray.

Proverbs 12:1 (NLT) To learn, you must love discipline; it is stupid to hate correction.

Proverbs 13:1 (NLT) A wise child accepts a parent's discipline; a mocker refuses to listen to correction.

Proverbs 15:32 (NLT) If you reject discipline, you only harm yourself; but if you listen to correction, you grow in understanding.

1. What is the difference between discipline and punishment?
2. What are some ways we receive discipline as adults?
3. Fasting, prayer, worship, and reading Scripture are examples of "spiritual disciplines." How are spiritual disciplines related to receiving correction in our lives?

BRINGING IT HOME: Even when we know the right thing to do, sometimes like Judah we find that we are unwilling or afraid. We all mess up. A wise person is open to being called out and corrected. For God's glory and for our benefit, let's encourage each other to speak the truth in love, even when the truth points out our error.

PRAYERS: