

Sermon Based Small Group Guide

For April 25, 2021 sermon:

1 Corinthians: "THIS is how the Good News changes people"

Warm up: (Questions for discussion)

What is the biggest personal change you've gone through in your life?

How difficult is it for you to experience "change" in the life of the church?

Do you know Olivet's "Vision Statement"? Do you see change/growth in it?

Digging deeper: (20-30 minutes)

1. Paul makes it clear...the message of Jesus and the cross were his #1 priority, but his own life and how he behaved when he was with unbelievers and then believers was also very important. In the following passages, identify and talk about his attitude and actions when representing Jesus.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 1 Thessalonians 2:3-12 Philippians 1:3-11

2. God is at work! He is at work in the life of the believer, and He is also at work in the life of the unbeliever. The Bible is clear that real change (believing and being transformed by the Gospel, conviction, insight, maturity) is only possible because God graciously pursues us and relentlessly moves us toward Christ-likeness. Talk about these passages (which are just a few about the ministry of the Holy Spirit):

Acts 1:8 Isaiah 11:2 John 14:26 Romans 8:26 Galatians 5:22-23 2 Corinthians 12:1-11

3. God loves the lost but that doesn't mean that they are going to respond to His love. This can be confusing and discouraging to us. Jesus told a parable about this and explained how and why people respond to the Good News the way they do. Read "the parable of the sower and the seed" in Matthew 13:3-9 and his explanation of the parable in Matthew 13:18-23.

-What was the attitude of the sower?

-Think about the power of the seed...it tries to take root anywhere/everywhere!

-Why is it not able to take root or produce fruit in many circumstances?

Apply it: (10 minutes)

Buckle up friends! This is not meant to be negative or a "downer" but we need to expect that it is going to be more difficult to follow Christ and that our message is going to become even less popular. But in ALL of this, to commit to not become negative, angry or bitter at people who reject us and the Good News about Jesus. Spend a few minutes encouraging each other and even brainstorming ways to be a bold and positive witness for Jesus in the week ahead. (This was the concluding application and challenge last week as well, but since many groups meet every other week, I wanted to include it again. If you met/share this last week...did you TRY to share? Did you get any feedback or reaction?)