

GROUP GUIDE

Highlands Fellowship- Circle Leaders Guide

This guide is given to Circle leaders as an assisted guide. In this guide you will find extra commentary that you might find helpful while guiding the conversation.

Remember: These conversation guides are not to be a “race to the finish”. As you and your circle of friends gather, it’s important to hear from everyone and keep God’s Word at the center of the conversation.

I Was "In Fantasy" Now I'm Not
1 Corinthians 10:23

01/19/2020

MAIN POINT

Chasing idols over God prevents us from experiencing the freedom that God has to offer.

Open Doors

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

When you were a child, what is something you believed was true that later found out was not?

How long did that false belief continue? What factors perpetuated that fantasy?

As adults, what are some subtle lies we believe that impact our daily lives?

When it comes to believing untruths, all of us have either been contributors or victims. Even as adults, we sometimes live in a type of fantasy world, basing decisions off beliefs that just aren't true. Maybe we've believed some things about God or His Word that aren't true. Or maybe we have believed some things true about ourselves that are actually false. Or maybe we've chosen to believe untruths because we think it's easier that way. The problem is, falsehood always leads to idolatry. As new creations in Christ, we need to identify our false beliefs that have led to idolatry in our lives and choose, instead, to faithfully follow the Lord.

Digging In

Discuss the Scripture to discover what it says or means about a particular topic.

| Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 10:23.

- Put verse 23 in your own words.
- Do Paul's words here narrow the definition of idolatry or broaden it? Explain.

We are so inclined to idolatry that we can even make idols out of our freedom from idolatry in Christ. Paul contended that a question believers ought to ask about any action is not whether it's permissible but whether it's helpful. This term referred to the need for all matters to build up other Christians, rather than confuse, anger, or in any way cause them to stumble in their faith.

In this week's message we heard the following quote by Dave Pedde: "If you're addicted to your freedoms, you aren't very free." How have you seen this true in your own life?

Our focus should be on promoting righteousness, peace, and joy in the body of Christ. Above all, our actions should serve Christ and help other Christians grow and flourish.

| Ask a volunteer to read Jonah 2:8

Name idols that people turn to today. What is the ultimate problem with idols?

| Ask a volunteer to read Ecclesiastes 10:1-3.

Discuss the question posed in this week's sermon, "What are you trying to make visible?"

What is the connection between idolatry and your efforts to make certain things "visible"?

Reflecting on the grace of God that forgave his sinful rebellion and rescued him from the depths of the sea motivated Jonah to confess his loyalty to God and commit himself anew to serve God. Jonah had been living in a fantasy he'd created out of his own idolatry, but now he confessed reality.

In a sense, the whole book of Jonah is about salvation. Chapter 1 described how the sailors experienced a kind of physical and perhaps spiritual deliverance. In chapter 2 Jonah was rescued. Chapter 3 will show how the Ninevites repented and turned to God. Chapter 4 shows Jonah's resentment over God's mercy toward the Ninevites. "Salvation is from the Lord" (v. 9) was not just a statement of theological belief for Jonah; it was a confession based on personal experience. We can know God and experience His saving grace only through a personal relationship with Jesus who died on the cross to save us from our sins.

Taking it home

Identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to your life.

Respond to the Bob Goff quote from this week's message: "Don't plant sod where God is wanting to plant seeds... It's more important to grow than to look finished." In what way do you need to apply this to your own life?

Can you be involved in gospel advancement if you're living for yourself rather than Christ? Why or why not?

Read Hebrews 11:1. Where do you tend to confuse fantasy (what is seen/perceived in this world) with the realities of God's kingdom (what is unseen and requires faith)?

PRAYER

Pray that learners will experience true freedom in Christ and bring glory to God as they reject falsehood and the idols falsehood creates. Pray specifically for God to reveal Himself and the areas of self-reliance that may be hindering His work in your group.

COMMENTARY

| 1 Corinthians 10:23-26

10:23-24. Paul returned to the discussion of not harming others but rather building them up by seeking what was best for them. He wanted to emphasize once more the basic principle that should govern all Christian conduct. Paul echoed another of the slogans being used by the puffed-up church members in Corinth. This "freedom" group loved to emphasize that everything is permissible. They may have been misapplying this conviction not only to actions such as eating temple meat but also to clearly forbidden behavior such as sexual immorality. In their twisted thinking about God's grace, forgiveness, and Christian freedom, they saw no reason to rule out any behavior.

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10:25-26. In what may seem a surprising twist, Paul said seeking "the good of the other person" (v. 24) meant a believer who objected to buying meat that had been sacrificed to idols should not interrogate the meat sellers in order to certify that the meat had no association with idolatry. Why? Most likely because such questions would seem hostile and alienate the nonbelieving Greeks at Corinth, thus hindering the gospel's advance. Paul offered scriptural support for this position from Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it." Therefore, partake of the meat out of gratitude and a clear conscience.

| Jonah 2:8-10

2:8-9. These two verses contain words of praise and thanksgiving because Jonah was confident that God would help and save him. God's miraculous deliverance would show that He exists, unlike pagan idols. The word "but" at the beginning of verse 9 forms a

sharp contrast between trusting in idols and trusting in God. In this verse, Jonah made the decision to be obedient to God's will. Verse 9 closes with a resounding affirmation: "Salvation is from the Lord!" This was not just a theological statement of belief. It was a personal confession. God had saved him.

2:10. In this verse the narrative of 1:17 is resumed. God spoke to the fish, as clearly as He had spoken to Jonah. God still was in control of Jonah's situation. When Jonah was spiritually ready to do God's will, the Creator commanded His creature to put the prophet back on dry land.