

Small Group Notes based on Disciple: 8

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- Make sure everyone knows each other's names. Have everyone share a little about themselves and how life is going right now.
- But what does it look like to be a disciple?
 - Four Categories to put thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors in:
 - 1: Disciple: follows the ways of God. **Matthew 28:18-20**
 - 2: Church Culture: follows the ways of men. **Mark 7:7-8**
 - 3: Itching Ears: follows the ways of preference. **2 Tim 4:3**
 - 4: Ferocious Wolves: follows the ways of darkness. **Matthew 7:15**
- Faith vs Works: Saved from sin and death – by grace through faith – to righteousness and eternal life!
 - How is the above concept shown in **Ephesians 2:8-10**?
- Let's tackle "Moral Character" today!
 - Do Christians have this code of conduct down or do they need improvement?
 - Where is that going to start?
- Some Scriptures relating to the topic: **Ephesians 5:1-8, Revelation 21:6-8**
 - Any surprises in these verses? What are God's expectations?
- Apply the "saved from, by, to" concept to the 10 commandments: **Exodus 20:3-17**
 - (For ex: saved from stealing, by grace, to giving.)
 - What about the other lists people make: dancing, TV, smoking, gambling, drinking, what music you listen to, etc? How do we find the line?
- Let's now look at our 4 categories and relate it to "Moral Character."
 - Church Culture:
 - Seeker making churches. Problem: classic user/enabler relationship...whatever the problem just add a hug (while ignoring morality).
 - Legalistic churches. Problem: strain out a gnat but swallow a camel...whatever the problem just get more detailed (while missing the forest for the trees)!
 - Itching Ears:
 - Don't want to change but rather find a group that allows or feeds their issue:
 - Greed can choose a false prosperity group.
 - Pride can choose a separatist group, or just be by yourself.
 - What others can you see?
 - Ferocious Wolves:
 - Spiritual terrorism like the Westborough Baptist group.
 - When sin is promoted in church.
 - When "pet sins" are condemned while other sins common in the group are ignored resulting in a hypocritical demonizing of certain people.
- **Philippians 2:12-13.**
 - What are the "ways of God" relating to moral character?
 - This will be something you "work out" rather than something that just happens.
 - Support each other through this process. It's not easy and we all need a friend.
- Pray for each other before you finish up!