

SCRIPTURES FOR 1/22/06 LIFEGROUP LESSON

Mark 16:15

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Psalms 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Hebrews 4:12-13

¹²For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to

dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

NOTE TO LEADER: There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed

NOTE TO LEADERS: All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

INTRODUCTION:

Have someone read Mark 16:15.

So, Jesus tells us to preach the gospel to everyone everywhere. But that was before the written scripture became readily available to pretty much everyone pretty much everywhere. Can we just hand someone a Bible with the admonition, “If you know what’s good for you, you’ll read this” or do we still need to proclaim the truth? Do we all need to go to Bible college and become preachers or missionaries or can we proclaim the truth by the way we live? What do Mark 16:15 and the rest of the scriptures we heard Sunday mean to us in our lives? How can WE proclaim the truth? (*these questions are all rhetorical – Ed*)

The TRUTH...
...illuminates, protects, and provides confidence.

Have someone read Psalm 119:105.

Why do we need a lamp to our feet or a light to our path? What do they illuminate?

What fuels the lamp? How do we keep from running out of fuel or “burning out”? What threatens to extinguish it?

Is it necessary for us to protect the flame? If so, how do we do that?

We know that the truth of God’s word provides direction for the believer, but what about the marginal Christian or the unbeliever? Will proclaiming the truth help them or is this illumination only for the believer?

The TRUTH...
...is living, active, sharp, precise, and exposes us.

Have someone read Hebrews 4:12-13.

What does the writer of Hebrews mean when he says, “the word ... is living and active?” How can written words be alive?

Have you experienced the living word? Explain...

It is kind of scary that the word can divide, penetrate, and expose. Have you ever felt the sting of truth in your study?

Have you ever thought you knew where you stood on something and then heard a sermon or read a Bible verse and went, “Whoa, I never looked at it that way before”?

Have someone read verse 13 again.

Who wants to have their soul laid bare every time they open the scripture? I believe this verse is intended to remind us that God already sees our deepest selves and yet wishes us to use His word to confront that which we have hidden from ourselves and from others. But it is not enough to search the scriptures in private; we must proclaim it, because sometimes, in a more intimate setting like this or even in the midst of hundreds or worshipers, God uses others to open our eyes.

The TRUTH...
...is useful to teach, rebuke, correct, and equip.

Have someone read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Why do you think Paul specifies “ALL” scripture?

Have you ever seen or heard about someone taking certain scriptures out of context to teach? Correct? Rebuke? What was the result?

All scripture is useful to teach, rebuke, and/or correct, but to what end? (*if people are uncertain, have someone read verse 17 again*)

CLOSING

We are not asked to proclaim or preach God’s word merely to look smarter or to hold the truth over others’ heads, but to equip God’s people to perform good works in His name and to show unbelievers that we are not here to judge but to serve. In Jeff’s words, “If you believe that truth found only in Jesus Christ can save people and change their lives eternally, what are you prepared to do?”

Next week, we will go into more detail about practicing the truth.