

SCRIPTURES FOR 4/2/06 LIFEGROUP LESSON

Genesis 6:11-12

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.

Titus 1:15-16

To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

Isaiah 5:20

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Romans 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 10:14-15

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

1 John 4:7-12

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

<p>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</p>

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

INTRODUCTION:

With all of the bad news out there, everyone could use some good news. Our broken world is full of reasons to despair and worry. Ever since our news media stopped worrying about sharing important information and shifted their emphasis to selling advertising, we have been bombarded by the worst life has to offer packaged as entertainment. We could use some good news.

GOOD NEWS

Why do you think we gravitate toward the negative?

This is nothing new. Consider Noah...

Have someone read Genesis 6:11-12.

Many today have no discernment of right and wrong. Look at Kanye West and his song "Jesus Walks" on a CD alongside songs about drugs and sex. Rappers give God "props" and then sing about the virtues of being a pimp. Both Paul and Isaiah predicted this...

Have someone read Titus 1:15-16 and Isaiah 5:20.

How do we respond to this BAD NEWS? Do we hide? Do we boycott? Do we offer alternatives? Do we just rant?

Part of the solution is to focus on GOOD NEWS. In Ephesians 5:16, Paul implores us to make "the most of every opportunity" and in Romans 12:21, he insists we can "overcome evil with good."

EVANGELISM

Have someone read Romans 10:14-15.

We must first believe, then we must share what we believe. So, evangelism is not an optional activity.

What is the first thing that pops into your head when you hear the word "evangelism"?

What is your biggest hurdle in personal evangelism?

What are some ways you can evangelize, even if you don't have the "gift of evangelism?"

Jeff said evangelism is "one beggar telling another beggar where to find food."

What do you think he meant by that? Do you identify with the beggar?

Jeff also said evangelism is not "condemning someone to Hell or winning an argument."

Where do doctrinal specifics and other potentially divisive issues fit into the evangelism process?

Have someone read John 14:6.

We can't dance around the truth, but we don't need to share everything right out of the shoot.

Have someone read 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.

Here Paul is talking to the church leaders in Corinth and they are still not ready for the "meat" because they still quarrel like unbelievers.

So, you do not need to be a Biblical scholar, but you DO need to share the good news. But how?

Have someone read 1 John 4:7-12 & Matthew 5:14-16.

If we love as God loves us, and we share this simple message of Christ's sacrifice, lives around us will be changed. In light of that we should proclaim the truth, not hide it. Like Jeff said, we should make ourselves available and build relationships. We do the easy parts and God does the tough part – the salvation part.

CONCLUSION

Peter tells us we must always be ready to explain the reason for our hope. Can you tell others what God has accomplished in your life? Can you love others as God has loved you?

Jeff asked if we believe Jesus is the only way to salvation and if we believe we are responsible to share it. If so, my question is what are you gonna do about it?