

Life Group Leader Guide

For the week of October 16, 2016

Quick Review

1. Mark shared several principles from the story recorded in John 5:1-9. What are they and how do they inspire or encourage you personally?

Mark shared that it is important to: 1) choose healing, 2) Let Jesus heal you, and 3) Follow the Spirit's lead toward healing. Try to help your life group understand that the pursuit of healing is a healthy thing and that God is at work.

2. How would Mark define the "baggage" that people carry in their lives? List illustrations and examples from the message.

Baggage will come up again in the Taking It Home section of this study so make sure you help define the baggage that people carry with them and begin to lay a track for how a person can deal with their baggage as a follower of Christ.

My Story

1. Share about a time when you observed emotional or spiritual healing taking place in someone's life.
2. If you are comfortable doing so, share a negative life experience. When you think about that moment or process, would you say that healing has happened already or are you still waiting?

This is one of those questions that could create a more somber and reflective moment. Be prepared to listen to responses and carefully guide the discussion. Encourage vulnerability and encourage people to converse gently and respectfully.

Digging Deeper

1. Read Psalm 130.
 - What does this passage teach us about how to approach God for healing?
 - What encouragement does the psalmist give Israel in verses 7-8 and how does his encouragement to others relate to the psalmist's own understanding of God's healing power?

2. God often uses people in his healing process. Look at the following passages and discuss the ways that God involves people to bring about healing.
 - Genesis 50:15-21; Eph. 4:32;
 - Proverbs 16:24; Eph. 4:29
 - James 5:13-18

The group should generally land on the following points: 1) we need to extend and receive forgiveness from others, 2) use words that are encouraging, and 3) pray for the healing of others. There are other potential answers but these are the primary

3. James 5:16 states, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”
 - Why does the Bible teach us to involve others in the healing process? (cf. Matt. 5:21-26; Matt 18:15-20)
 - Why is confession of sin or wrong-doing difficult?
 - What is the result of confession? What benefit comes from confession – personally (a believer) and corporately (the church).
 - What does the following quote mean and how does it apply to confession?

“He who is alone with his sin is utterly alone...” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Note that more of our sins and issues are relational sins. When we live our lives without confessing to one another we remain disconnected. Confession promotes not only forgiveness but it also creates opportunity for humility, restoration, unity, and harmony amongst people. Many of these attributes are extensions of how we should live according to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5.

Taking it Home

1. Is there an area in your life where you need personal healing? What encounter or experience is necessary, with God or others, in pursuing healing in this area?
2. Consider the people in your life for a moment, how might you be able to help bear someone’s “baggage” in a helpful and constructive way? Offer to listen and to point that person to the healing power of Christ.