

SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGHS

Understanding and Experiencing Repentance

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: What do we mean by repentance?

Read: Psalm 51:1-12, 15-17 (pray for God's guidance)

Acknowledge Sin(read Ps. 51:1-6)

1. Background: Psalm 51 is an expression of David's repentance for his sins. He had committed adultery with Bathsheba. She became pregnant. He had her husband put in harm's way so the husband was killed in battle. All the while trying to cover-up the affair. (2 Samuel 11:1-27)

How does David feel? Why is it good to experience genuine guilt (v.3)?

In verses 1 and 2, identify and contrast the 3 terms that describe God's goodness and the 3 terms that describe David's sin.

2. Since such sins are against others, what is the meaning of v. 4? What does this show about the nature of sin?
3. How did David know that God would forgive Him? How do we know God will forgive you? (see 1 John 1:5-10)

Seek the Removal of Sin (read vv. 7-9)

1. Have you ever had a toothache so painful it resulted in the tooth's being pulled or broken a bone you had to have set? How did you handle the condition? Did you take care of it yourself? What lessons do we learn from this about handling our sin problem?
2. Discuss how repentance is not our turning over a new leaf or making a resolution to do better. It involves coming to God to seek sin's removal and receiving His forgiveness.

Trust God to Renew (read vv. 10-12)

1. In order for David's conduct to change what had to happen within him?

2. In verse 10 David goes from talking about the removal of sin to the restoration of his relationship with God. Does God leave the Christian who sins against Him (Heb. 13:5)?

Discuss how the forgiveness of sin and restoring fellowship with God go together. (see Ro. 8:8-9)

Wrap up: (read vv. 15-17) How do these verses describe humility and submission to God? How does this depict a readiness to respond to God?

Why does repentance need to be an ongoing attitude?

Prayer: For one another

SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGHS

Experiencing Spiritual Breakthrough in Your Faith

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: What skill, hobby or interest was passed on to you by someone else, perhaps a parent?

Keep Your Faith Fresh (read Joshua 24:14-15, 31)

God has brought the Israelites into the land He had promised. Now Joshua gathers them together for a great celebration to renew their commitment to God.

1. What negative and positive challenges does God reveal to the Israelites in order to “keep their faith fresh”? What does this reveal about God? His ways?

The church?

2. Joshua’s generation followed the Lord. Why would God through Joshua challenge them to take a stand and “renew” their commitment? Discuss how faith and personal decisions go together. How often should we renew our commitment?

Demonstrate A Fully Obedient Faith (read Deuteronomy 7:1-6; Judges 1:1,28)

1. Consider the plot: What is the conflict? What does this generation need in order to experience a spiritual breakthrough?

2. What evidence do we see that Christians have compromised with ungodly influences today? The Christian faith in America since it’s founding?

Reject Substitutes for Faith in the Lord (read Judges 2:10-13)

1. This generation drifts away from God. Without a knowledge of God and what He has done in the past, what substitute(s) was this generation at the mercy of? What was the result?
2. What does this generation need in order to experience a spiritual breakthrough?
3. Discuss the lessons or responsibilities learned from this story that can apply to the church (or Christians) today.

Develop a Mature Faith (read 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3)

1. God through Paul, speaks spiritually about 3 types of people in this passage:
 - v. 14 "man without the spirit"
 - vv. 15-16 "spiritual man"
 - vv. 3:1-3 "worldly – mere infants in Christ"

Which of these best describe the 3 generations from the Joshua and Judges passages.

Wrap up: How is God working in your life to develop your faith?

Prayer:

- Pray for how God is working in one another's lives

SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGHS

Experiencing Spiritual Breakthrough in the Family

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: Who in your family, if anyone, had the most spiritual influence on you as a child?

Understanding God's Purpose For the Family (Genesis 18:18-19; Psalm 78:4-8)

1. People in Biblical times did not have universal access to scripture. What took the place of history books, schools, seminaries?
2. What does the believer want future believers to know and not forget about God? What would happen if the next generation forgets?
3. Whose responsibility is it to see that they remember?

Use Every Opportunity To Teach (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

1. What "teachable moments" have you recently experienced with your child? What made it a teachable moment?
2. What did Jesus say about the commandment in verse 5? (see Matthew 22:37-38) How can you keep an awareness of the commandments in your daily life?

3. What can adults without children in their homes do to help in teaching children? (share some experiences)

Fulfill Your Parental Role (Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:4-5)

1. Discuss the parental roles of fathers and mothers . . . describe the ways a father should train children to live Godly lives. How are love and kindness manifested in a mother's management of her home?

2. Identify how this lesson provides hope for today's society.

Wrap up:

How can any part of this lesson be applied to your life?

Prayer:

For one another

Identify and pray for 3 non-believers

SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGH'S

Experiencing Spiritual Breakthrough in Relation to Marriage

Additional praises/significant happenings this past week:

Ice Breaker: Where are you in the birth order of your family?

A Compromised View of Marriage (read Matthew 19:3, 7-9)

In Jesus' time there were great differences in opinion whether divorce should be easy or difficult for Jewish couples. Some supposed that when the minimum basis for divorce was met, divorce must follow - "for any reason . . . divorce and send her away."

1. How is this view of marriage and divorce like our world today? What are some "for any reasons" that are given to rationalize divorce today?

2. Jesus rejected the view that divorce inevitably follows marital breakdown. What does Jesus mean when he points out that divorce is the result of a hardening of hearts (v. 8)?

What are two incidences where divorce is permitted, however not required? (see v. 9 & 1 Corinthians 7:15)

3. What do people who hold a "compromised view of marriage" need to do to experience a spiritual breakthrough?

God's Design for Marriage Commitment (read Matthew 19:3-6)

1. Jesus reaffirms God's original intention for marriage. What is it? (summarize in your own words as you focus on key words/phrases in this passage.)

2. People who accept God's standard for marriage will surely face challenges and difficulties.

Discuss:

- a challenging time when you grew closer to God and your spouse, or
- ways you can strengthen your commitment through a current challenge you are facing

3. Discuss as group how to respond to a friend who wanted a divorce for other than biblical reasons.

God's Design for Marriage: Responsibilities (read Genesis 2:18, 20b-22; Ephesians 5:22-25, 28, 33)

1. How many times does God through Paul instruct husbands to love their wives? What is meant by "just as Christ loved the church" (v. 25) . . . What would it mean for a husband to love with his wife with this type of love (vv. 25-33)? How might a woman respond to this type of love?

2. Ephesians 5:21 helps us to interpret verses 22-25. What is the goal of Christian marriage (v. 31)? Discuss what it means to "become one flesh" or oneness in marriage (physically, emotionally, spiritually). How does the wife's role of "submission" and "respect" fit into this?

3. How can a better relationship with Jesus (understanding and growing in His character, purposes and ways) help you be a better spouse and experience a spiritual breakthrough in your marriage?

Wrap up: What is one divine truth that stands out from this study? (translate into a prayer to God)

Prayer: For one another

For 3 non-believers

