

Exposing the Enemies of the Heart Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part altogether, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. How do you tend to respond in stressful situations? Share a story of the last time you lost your keys, had a flat tire, or some similar situation.
2. What is your favorite kind of bread? If you couldn't eat bread for a whole week, what would be your first meal back after you could have bread again?

Read the following passages: John 6:1-13; 26-35.

As crowds followed Jesus into the wilderness there was a food crisis. Most of the people in the swelling crowd had brought with them *no food* to eat! In the midst of an increasingly tense situation, Jesus asked his disciples where they were going to buy food for all these people to eat. As we read this text, we can sense a range of emotions beneath the responses given by the disciples from fear to overwhelm.

The situation resolves as a young boy stepped forward with his small and basic lunch of some bread and fish and Jesus performs a miracle. What seemed small and insignificant (both the contents of the lunch and the young boy himself) were used mightily to feed a crowd of over 5,000 people. In life, we all face situations that we didn't expect and feel emotions that we don't necessarily desire to feel. When we can identify lies we are believing and expose them with truth we can live with greater freedom, faithfulness, and fruitfulness.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. How do you think Philip was feeling when Jesus asked him where they were going to buy bread for the crowd of people? (John 6:5)
2. Read Hebrews 12:1-2 and Psalm 84:10. Where should the focus of a believer be? In what way might this be different from others who are not following God?
3. Have you been allowing "enemies of the heart" to hold you back from walking in faith and obedience? (Consider, in particular, fear, overwhelm, scarcity, hopelessness, and vanity.)
4. What resources have you been reluctant to trust God with in this season of your life (e.g. time, money, emotional openness)?

5. Read John 6:26-35. Have you surrendered your heart and life to Jesus Christ? He can help you in the day-to-day needs (e.g. bread for food), but he can do so much more. Will you trust him to do that?

Pray