

Finding Solid Ground Small Group Guide

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

1. What is one of the most consistent routines in your life?
2. What outfit do you wear the most often right now?

Read the following passage: Matthew 5:17-20.

Some of the things Jesus was doing were so outside of the box that some of his contemporaries got the idea that perhaps Jesus was trying to do away with the Jewish Scriptures (i.e. the Law and the Prophets) altogether. But this was not Jesus's intention. Jesus considered the Jewish Scriptures to be a record of the things God had spoken to his people, and Jesus chose to build his life on the Scriptures. Jesus's goal was not to abolish the Scriptures, but to fulfill them. Jesus's understanding of the Law, however, was often very different than that of the Jewish leaders. Jesus taught that the primary goal of the Law and the Prophets was loving God and loving people. One of the central goals of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection was to empower his people to fulfill the Law in this sense.

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

1. Overall, are you someone who values the past and looks to the past as a pattern for how you should live in the present? Explain.
2. Generally speaking, the Pharisees were a very respected and highly committed group of people. Why do you think Jesus said, "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven"?
3. To what extent, if any, would you say that you are building your life on the Scriptures? Explain. Do the Scriptures inform your views on subjects like money, relationships, sex, career, entertainment, singleness, marriage, and others? Explain.
4. Read Psalm 103. The psalmist encourages us to remember all of the Lord's benefits. How do we remember the Lord's benefits without viewing our devotion to the Lord as a means to an end (like a happy marriage or a successful career)?
5. The word "love" can have many different meanings depending on the context. When Jesus echoes the Law's command to "love your neighbor as yourself," what kind of love does Jesus intend?

6. John the Baptist said that Jesus would baptize his people in the Holy Spirit. Have you experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Explain.

Pray