

Growing Up 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 thing you did either much earlier or much later than most people you know (e.g. learn to walk, learn to drive a car, fly on an airplane, get a job, etc.)?
2. If you had plenty of extra time, what is one skill you would like to learn?

Read the following passage: Joshua 5:2-12.

In many ways, the events in this passage represent a coming-of-age moment for a new generation of Israelites. So many important things were happening. A whole generation of men finally received the covenant sign of circumcision. God helped the Israelites put the reproach of Egypt behind them once and for all. They celebrated the Passover in their new land for the first time. And God discontinued the supply of manna. We all have key turning points throughout our lives. In some sense, we never stop “growing up” so we can embrace the good things God has for us. As we grow up, life has a way of exposing our gaps, but God has grace for our gaps.

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

1. Why was it significant that the generation of men who grew up in the wilderness had never been circumcised? Why do you think God didn't “cut off” the generation of men who were uncircumcised, even though he told Abraham that's what he would do? (See Genesis 17:14.)
2. What are some areas in which you feel like you have some gaps? What should we do when we recognize that we have gaps?
3. God told Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” (Joshua 5:9) What are some ways that the generation which left Egypt was impacted by the long history of servitude in Egypt? What are some ways the shame of the past can affect us? How does Jesus roll away the shame or disgrace we may be living with?
4. God gave the Israelites important festivals like Passover to remind them who God is, who they were, and what God had done for them. Many times, when we stop doing the things God has given us to do, we stop feeling like God's children. Why do you think this is? What are some of the actions or behaviors that you think God wants you to freshly embrace to help reinforce your identity as God's son or daughter?

5. Why did God stop supplying manna to the Israelites? Describe how this might be a metaphor for our own spiritual maturation. How can you apply this to your own life?

Pray