

Growing in Godly Character

Synopsis:

Growing in Godly character—we all strive for it, but what does it look like? How do I know if I'm running in the right direction? In a world that calls spiritual mystical and godly relative, where can we turn to find the answer to the question: "How can I personally become more like God?" Over the next six weeks, we will look at friendship, encouragement, faithfulness, perseverance, integrity, and courage through the eyes of several Biblical characters. Our goal is to grow in godliness through the stories of faithful Biblical men and our own personal stories of failure and victory. Come, let's grow together!

To the teachers:

This next six weeks should be a good time of interaction with the Biblical texts below and amongst the group on Sunday morning. The following study was used in Ethiopia in a "Grow Your Life Class" at the International Evangelical Church. We started out by raising the need for the study. Then we briefly touched on a New Testament passage (there are a couple from the OT) in order to ground the discussion theologically before launching into the narrative passages. After that, we divided into two or three groups. Each group read one passage and discussed it together. Finally, we came back together and discussed the passage with the facilitation of the teacher.

As the teacher, you are more than welcome to use different passages to ground the discussion theologically and use different questions to develop the discussion. This study is designed to be easy to lead and full of interaction.

Week 1

David – Courage (cf. John 16:33; Acts 16:13; Phil 1:12-20)

1 Sam 17 (Goliath); 2 Sam 22 (David's Song of praise); 2 Sam 11 (contra Bathsheba)

1. Retell the story.
2. Define courage.
3. How did David show/not show courage?
4. What obstacles were in his way?
5. How can we show courage before God and man?
6. What obstacles are in our way?
7. Give a personal example.

Week 2

Barnabas – Encouragement (cf. Heb 3:13; 10:25)

Acts 9:19b-31 (Barnabas vouching for Paul) & Acts 14:21-28

1. Retell the story.
2. How did Barnabas show encouragement?
3. What obstacles were in his way?
4. How can we show encouragement at work, at home, to our family, to our friends, on the street, etc.?
5. What obstacles are in our way?

6. How might our church/family/work place/etc. look if everyone were a little more encouraging?
7. Give a personal example.

Week 3

Joseph – Faithfulness (cf. Rom 15:1; 1 Cor 4:1-2, 12:25; Gal 5:22, 6:1-2; 3 John 5-8)
 Genesis 39 (Potiphar’s wife) & 43 (forgiving & blessing his family)

1. Retell the story.
2. How did Joseph show faithfulness & integrity?
3. What obstacles were in his way?
4. How can we show faithfulness at work, at home, to our family, to our friends, on the street, etc.?
5. What obstacles are in our way?
6. Give a personal example.

Week 4

Paul – Perseverance (cf. Rom 5:3-5; Jas 1:2-4)

Acts 14 (persecution & perseverance); 2 Cor 11:16-33 (Paul explaining his trials)

1. Retell the story.
2. Define perseverance.
3. How did Paul show perseverance?
4. What obstacles were in his way?
5. How can we show perseverance before God and man?
6. What obstacles are in our way?
7. Give a personal example.

Week 5

Daniel & Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – Integrity (cf. Ex 20:3-6)

Ch. 6 (Daniel & the lion’s den) & Ch. 3 (Shad, Mesh, and Abend & the fiery furnace)

1. Retell the story.
2. Define integrity before God.
3. How did they show integrity?
4. What obstacles were in their way?
5. What gave them courage and what was the source of their strength?
6. What areas of our lives do we have pressure to compromise?
7. What have you found helpful?
8. Give a personal example.

Week 6

Jonathan – Friendship (cf. Prov 17:17, 18:24, 27:17; John 15:13-15)

(1 Sam. 18:1-4, 1 Sam 19:1-6 & 1 Samuel 20)

1. Retell the story.
2. How did Jonathan show friendship?
3. What obstacles were in his way?

4. How can we be better friends?
5. What obstacles are in our way?
6. Give a personal example.