

Small Group Study

Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people



Discussion

Power with Purpose: Cross-cultural Missions

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:

Acts 7:48-50 (NLT)

48 *The Most High doesn't live in temples made by human hands. As the prophet says,*

- 49 *'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Could you build me a temple as good as that?' asks the LORD. 'Could you build me such a resting place?*
- 50 *Didn't my hands make both heaven and earth?'*

Acts 8:1-4 (NLT)

8:1 *Saul was one of the witnesses, and he agreed completely with the killing of Stephen. A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria. 2 (Some devout men came and buried Stephen with great mourning.) 3 But Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into prison. 4 But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.*

Questions

1. From the early days of the Bible, God made reaching every people group His priority. Read Genesis 22:15-18 and Galatians 3:6-9 and Matthew 8:5-11.

Genesis 22:15-18 *Then the angel of the LORD called again to Abraham from heaven. "This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me."*

Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. If you could travel to any country, all expenses paid, which one would you travel to and what would you do while you're there?
2. Have you studied any foreign languages? How well do you know them? Say one phrase in that language.
3. Besides the U.S., from what three countries do you like their food best?

Galatians 3:6-9 *In the same way, “Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.” The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God. What’s more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would declare the Gentiles to be righteous because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when he said, “All nations will be blessed through you.” So all who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith.*

Matthew 8:5-11 *When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, “Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.” Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.” But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.” When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel! And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Who is the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham of “blessing to all nations”? How does the Matthew 8 story show this?

2. Read Romans 1:14-17 and 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.

Romans 1:14-17 *For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world, to the educated and uneducated alike. So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach the Good News. For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, “It is through faith that a righteous person has life.”*

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 *The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. As the Scriptures say, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and discard the intelligence of the intelligent.” So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world’s brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it’s all nonsense. But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.*

Talk about some foreign cultures that consider Christianity “foolishness.” What factors in those cultures makes them resistant to Christianity? What are some American sub-cultures that consider Christianity “foolishness” and what has influenced them to oppose Christianity?

3. Read Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8.

Matthew 28:18-20 *Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

In what ways is the Holy Spirit still working spectacularly to transform the world?

4. Vineyard Church's cross-cultural missions emphases are in the countries of Ecuador, Ethiopia, Mexico, and soon to be Estonia, and the Middle East. Have individuals in your group talk about the connections they already have to either those missions, countries, or regions or child sponsorships, other sponsorships (World Vision, Compassion International, etc.), short-term missions trips (self or someone they know), vacation or business trips, etc.

5. What are some ways your group could grow more focused in praying for Vineyard Church's cross-cultural missionaries?

OPTIONAL #1: Identify someone in your group who has a strong passion for cross-cultural missions to be your group's ongoing "conscience" bringing to light both prayer and serving opportunities in cross-cultural missions.

OPTIONAL #2: If your small group would like to "adopt" a refugee from a foreign country, contact Fred Herron <fherron@vineyardkcnorth.com> or Tim Dykes <tdykes@vineyardkcnorth.com>.

6. Read Psalm 46:10 to prepare your group for quiet prayer time and as a reminder that God is over every nation and people group. Ask for the Spirit's direction for how your group can help transform the world.

Psalms 46:10 *"Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world."*

God bless,

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