



Sermon Discussion Questions

Sunday, September 18, 2011

Open Doors

John 1:43-51

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Note to Group Leaders:

Leaders, we have put more questions here than you may be able to use. The purpose of this is that certain questions will work for certain groups and so some of these questions will not be good ones for your group. So, pick and choose what works best for your group

Introduce it:

Sometimes there are things that happen in our lives that we respond, "No way that's true! No way that happened." Share as a group about things that have happened to you that you had a hard time believing really happened. It could be a surprise pregnancy, a surprise financial gift, a prize you won, a close friend dying or someone coming to know Jesus. Share why it was so shocking to you and what you remember was going on in your heart.

Revisit it: learn the passage preached on.

Read the passage again as a group: John 1:43-46

Put yourself in the shoes of Nathanael. If you heard the words that Phillip spoke Nathanael, what would have been most surprising about Phillip's words?

There seems to be so much more to be surprised about but Nathanael is most surprised that anything good could come out of Nazareth. Why do you imagine Nathanael was so turned off about Nazareth that he missed the good news of "finding the one that Moses and the prophets spoke?"

Nathanael meets Jesus for the first time and finds that Jesus already knows him. Why did Jesus say he knew Nathanael? Why was this so critical to hear from Nathanael?

Pull out only the things that Nathanael spoke in this passage. What do you notice about his words only? How do they show he is a skeptic?

Why was the fact that Jesus saw Phillip under the fig tree the turning point for Phillip to begin trusting Jesus?

Relook at it: see other places in the Bible that speak to sermon.

Skeptics are people that won't be made a fool of because they investigate things deeply. Their first response is suspicion. Look at another skeptic that already knew Jesus:

Read John 20:24-29

In what ways are Thomas' words similar to Nathanael's?

In this passage, it notes that "the doors were locked." In what ways are the doors of our hearts locked that make us skeptical? Why causes doors of our heart to lock and make us skeptical of anything and everything around us?

What will Jesus need to say or show you to trust him in areas of your life that you are skeptical to trusting him?

Use it: don't just learn the passage but use it.

Nathanael met Jesus because Phillip gave him space and firmness in his words, "come and see." Who are friends you have that don't know Jesus. How can you give them space and firmness and invite them to come and see Jesus?

Do you need to invite them to church? Do you need to stop inviting them to church? Do you need to say something hard to them? Do you need to layoff some and just be with them? Share who your friend is and steps you need to take this week with them.

For those that are more natural to be "firm" with people, in what ways can you specifically be courageous enough to give space this week? For those that are more natural to give "space", how can you be courageous enough to be firm this week?

Remember it: memorize a verse that helps you to remember and use it.

This week, try to memorize this verse and also try to use these words with a friend that doesn't know Jesus:

"Come and See," said Phillip. John 1:46b

Write it on a note card and put on your bathroom mirror or on the dashboard of your car. If you have children, talk about this passage with them and tell them you need their help to memorize this verse. Ask them to memorize it with you. Let them quiz you during the week.