

Family Group Time 1

Community Building Time (30 minutes)

This is your first family group time --- so you are really not a "family" yet at all --- you are just a collection of individuals. Your first job is to get to know each other better! Therefore, the time spent on the beginning activities is very important. It will start a process which will lead to better and better discussions as the members of the group trust each other more, day by day.

First: Hello, I am

1. Start with one "Virtual" ball. Beginning with the family group leader, go around the circle and introduce yourself. Give the following information: Name, Country, University, Major.
2. Then "toss the ball" to another person by saying the name of the person you're "throwing" it to
3. Then the next person goes sharing Name, Country, University, Major.
4. Keep doing this until everyone has shared once.

Second: My Home Country

Take a few minutes to complete the following sentences.

1. I would describe my country with the words:
2. I would describe my people with the words:
3. Briefly describe a ceremony, food, or holiday unique to your country.

Now go around in your group and have everyone share what they wrote down. This time, begin with the person whose birthday occurs closest to today.

Third: Two truths and a lie

Play a game!

1. Go around the group and have each person tell 3 interesting facts about themselves, but one is a lie!
2. Try not to give overly simple responses- make it hard to guess! Try to keep a straight face as you give your answers!
3. After telling your sentences, let the others in the group discuss them and try to guess which of them is not true.
4. Call on another person to go next.
5. After they guess be sure to tell which was false and what the true answer is.

Examples: places you have been, things about your family, childhood experiences, hobbies...

Fourth: Why are you here?

Why did you join this family group? What are you excited about? What are you hoping to learn about God, others, or yourself during your time?

Discussion

Introduction

Have you ever met someone that made you curious? How did you express your curiosity? In this story we are about to read, we see a woman who encounters Jesus and does just that. She takes risks, asks personal questions, and goes deeper by being genuinely curious about this man (Jesus) who she meets at the well as she draws water.

Background:

This passage is taken from an eyewitness account of one of Jesus' close disciples in 85 AD. Jesus had just started his ministry on earth and had gathered some of his first disciples (followers). Jesus performed many miracles and signs and many people put their trust in him. In the story we read today, Jesus takes an unpopular route to Galilee by going through Samaria, where He has an interesting conversation with a Samaritan woman. This conversation is abnormal for several reasons:

- 1) Jews did not usually associate with Samaritans
- 2) Men didn't interact with women in this way.

From John 4

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— **2** although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. **3** So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. **4** Now he had to go through Samaria. **5** So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. **6** Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. **7** When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" **8** (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) **9** The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) **10** Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." **11** "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? **12** Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" **13** Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." **15** The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." **16** He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." **17** "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. **18** The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." **19** "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. **20** Our ancestors

worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." **21** "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. **22** You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. **23** Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. **24** God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." **25** The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." **26** Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he." **28** Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, **29** "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" **30** They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

I. Read Carefully

1. What vocabulary questions do you have?
2. Who are the main characters in the story?
3. How does this show the way Jesus relates to others?
4. Write two questions you have.

II. Think Deeply

1. Refer back to the background, what makes Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman so special? Why do you think Jesus asked for a drink instead of drawing it himself? Look at verses 9-10.
2. In verses 10-11, what did Jesus mean by "living water"? What does Jesus mean when he says this water will, in turn, "become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life"? (v.14).
3. After the woman asks for some water, why did Jesus ask her about her husband? Why do you think the woman asked Jesus if he was a prophet? (A prophet is a person regarded as an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the will of God)
4. Who did Jesus tell the woman he was (verse 26)? What is the significance of that?
5. What was the result of the interaction between Jesus and the woman? How does it change the woman? (v. 28)

III. Invitation

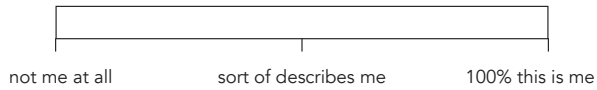
To summarize this story, we read how Jesus encountered the woman at the well and knew her even though she did not know Him. He then offered her "living water" and the living

Activity: Spiritual Survey

Exploring more about Jesus is a journey. Good preparation for any journey includes identifying a starting point; this will help you know how to engage and what questions to ask moving forward. Take a look at each of the categories below. Color in the rectangle based on how strongly you identify with each statement.

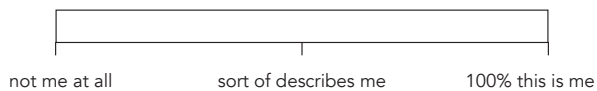


TRUST *I try to value all people, but I usually don't trust Christians. I still feel a little skeptical about the whole thing.*



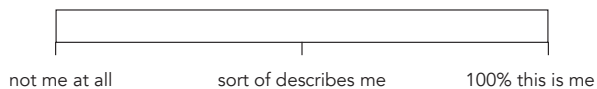
➔ Would you like to get to know a follow of Jesus better? Ask a friend you met this week to hang out when you get home.

CURIOS *I love learning how others experience faith. I want to press into my curiosity about Jesus rather than dismiss my questions.*



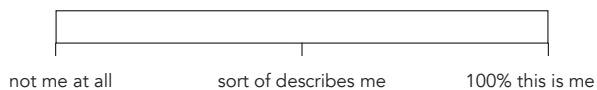
➔ What questions do you have about Jesus or religion?

OPEN *I'm open to trying something new. I want to experience God for myself.*



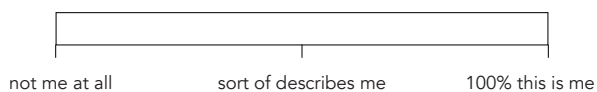
➔ Are you open to trying something Jesus taught us to do in the Bible? What would you like prayer for?

SEEKING *I'm searching for deeper meaning and wonder if it could be found in Jesus. I want to actively find answers to the questions I have about him.*



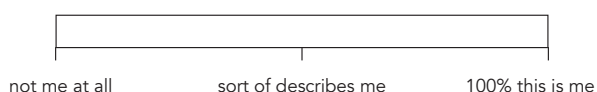
➔ If you could find the answer to one question that would help you trust Jesus, what would it be? Are you willing to actively seek Jesus?

READY *I may still have questions, but I'm ready to know more about following Jesus with my whole life.*



➔ Who or what are you most loyal to? What would it take to give your loyalty to Jesus?

MISSIONAL *I am already following Jesus, and I want to share the same joy I experience in Jesus with my friends.*



➔ What is something you learned this week that you can share with friends back home?

FAMILY GROUP 2

Community Building Time (30 minutes)

First: How was your first day?

Go around and share briefly about your experiences since we last met. What was something fun you did? Did you learn something new?

Second: Would you rather...?

Take turns answering these silly, weird, and troublesome questions! For each question, go around the circle and have each person share their answer and why they chose this response.

1. Would you rather never return to your home country, or never leave your country again?
2. Would you rather be 1 Meter (~3ft) tall or 3 Meters (~10 ft) tall?
3. Would you rather never listen to your favorite music group again or only your favorite group?
4. Would you rather your walking steps sound like dogs barking, or sing whatever you speak?
5. Would you rather eat 10 spiders once (coin size), or your least favorite food daily for a year?

Third: Strange, Funny, or Uncomfortable Traveling Experience

As international students, you have experience traveling. What is one of the most strange, funny, or uncomfortable experiences you have had? It can be from America, your home country, or another. This can be anything from a cross-cultural miscommunication, getting lost, different customs or habits.

Example: When visiting China, I did not know how to use the ground toilet! It was confusing and I did not know how to use the bathroom!

Discussion

Introduction:

What does it mean to be open minded? What sorts of questions would you ask if you were open to new experiences? In this story a man named Nicodemus seeks out Jesus to talk to him about some of the things he is curious about. In their conversation we see Nicodemus become more open as he seeks to have understanding about Jesus and His words.

Background:

This passage tells of a time when a ruler of the Jews (a Pharisee) comes to have a private conversation with Jesus. This teacher wants to seek out an explanation for the signs and miracles Jesus was doing. Jesus tells him he must be born again, if he is to ever see the kingdom of God.

From John 3

Jesus Talks with Nicodemus

1 There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus. He was one of the Jewish rulers. **2** He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. We know that God is with you. If he weren't, you couldn't do the signs you are doing." **3** Jesus replied, "What I'm about to tell you is true. No one can see God's kingdom unless they are born again." **4** "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "They can't go back inside their mother! They can't be born a second time!" **5** Jesus answered, "What I'm about to tell you is true. No one can enter God's kingdom unless they are born with water and the Holy Spirit. **6** People give birth to people. But the Spirit gives birth to spirit. **7** You should not be surprised when I say, 'You must all be born again.' **8** The wind blows where it wants to. You hear the sound it makes. But you can't tell where it comes from or where it is going. It is the same with everyone who is born with the Spirit." **9** "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. **10** "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus. "Don't you understand these things? **11** What I'm about to tell you is true. We speak about what we know. We are witnesses about what we have seen. But still you people do not accept what we say. **12** I have spoken to you about earthly things, and you do not believe. So how will you believe if I speak about heavenly things? **13** No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven. He is the Son of Man. **14** Moses lifted up the snake in the desert. In the same way, the Son of Man must also be lifted up. **15** Then everyone who believes may have eternal life in him." **16** God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. **17** God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world. He sent his Son to save the world through him. **18** Anyone who believes in him is not judged. But anyone who does not believe is judged already. They have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. **19** Here is the judgment. Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light. They loved darkness because what they did was evil. **20** Everyone who does evil deeds hates the light. They will not come into the light. They are afraid that what they do will be seen. **21** But anyone who lives by the truth comes into the light. They live by the truth with God's help. They come into the light so that it will be easy to see their good deeds.

I. Read Carefully

1. What vocabulary questions do you have?
2. Who are the main characters in the story, and what is the main issue they have?
3. Write down any questions you may have.

II. Think Deeply

1. Why did Nicodemus go to meet Jesus at night? What do you think Nicodemus heard or knew about Jesus before the meeting?

FAMILY GROUP 3

Community Building

FIRST: My favorite food

Food is such a unique and meaningful part of our cultures. What is your favorite dish from your country? Describe it to the group: How does it taste, what are the ingredients, why is it your favorite? Is this food eaten on special occasions or is it common to eat?

SECOND: Never Have I Ever

Each person holds up both hands with all fingers up.

The object of this game is to go around the circle, naming things from your life you have never done or had. If someone else has done those things, they put a finger down. The goal is to be the last one to have fingers left! Start with the youngest person in your group and go around the circle until the game is done. You want to get as many people to put a finger down during your turn, but you cannot target one person specifically (against the rules). Try to come up with interesting things to get to know the people in your group better!

Examples: I have never been to Africa- Everyone who has been to Africa puts down a finger. I have never had a sister- Everyone who has a sister puts down a finger.

THIRD: My family

Go around the group and take turns answering these two questions.

1. Who are the members in your family? What are some things you enjoy to do together? Briefly describe an average day in your family.
2. Do you have any family traditions or celebrations? What is involved in the events?

Discussion

Introduction:

In what areas of your life do you feel confident or experienced? Maybe your major, a hobby or your job? Would you listen to someone else if they gave you advice in an activity where you are an expert?

In this study we will look at a person who was a true professional, someone who could handle things by himself-and yet who, in the situation of his profession, learned some amazing things about Jesus.

Background:

This story we are going to read comes from the book of Luke and is written about the first disciples that Jesus invited to follow him. A "disciple" is a personal follower of Jesus, and in this context it specifically talks about those who followed him during his lifetime.

Something that may be helpful to understand the scene is to know that Jesus and Simon are not meeting for the first time. Simon knew who Jesus was in Luke 4 when Jesus healed his mother in law . This may be why Simon addresses him as 'master' and lets down the nets like Jesus suggests.

From Luke 5

1 One day Jesus was standing by the Sea of Galilee. The people crowded around him and listened to the word of God. 2 Jesus saw two boats at the edge of the water. They had been left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3 He got into the boat that belonged to Simon. Jesus asked him to go out a little way from shore. Then he sat down in the boat and taught the people. 4 When he finished speaking, he turned to Simon. Jesus said, "Go out into deep water. Let down the nets so you can catch some fish." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done so, they caught a large number of fish. There were so many that their nets began to break. 7 So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees. "Go away from me, Lord!" he said. "I am a sinful man!" 9 He and everyone with him were amazed at the number of fish they had caught. 10 So were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who worked with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid. From now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore. Then they left everything and followed him.

I. Read Carefully

1. What vocabulary questions do you have?
2. Who are the main characters, and what is their main argument? What is the position of each?
3. What do you learn about Jesus, and His values?
4. Write two questions you have.

II. Think Deeply

1. After a long night of fishing without catching anything, what do you think Simon felt when Jesus asked him to "put out into deep water, and let down the nets" in verse 5? Why do you think Simon trusted Jesus and was willing to do what he said?
2. What happens when Simon and the other fishermen choose to be obedient? Look at verses 6-7. What words and phrases in these verses indicate the size of the catch? Why is the size of the catch significant? What was the reaction of the crowd and other fisherman?
3. What is Simon's reaction in verse 8? Is this what you would expect? Why do you think he says he is a sinful man? Why is this an especially strong experience for Simon (being a fisherman)? What does his response say about who Jesus is?
4. What does Jesus mean when he says "from now on you will fish for people"?

Family Group 4:

Community Building

FIRST:

What's the craziest thing you have done during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

SECOND:

What's the funniest meme you have seen recently?

Discussion

Introduction:

What's the best gift you have ever received?

Background:

In this story, Jesus is talking to religious leaders at that time called Pharisees. They knew everything about religion, but were often hypocritical. The story we will read is called a parable which is a story that Jesus told to help his listeners understand a point he was trying to make.

From Luke 15

¹¹ Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' ²⁰So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹ “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

I. Read Carefully

1. What vocabulary questions do you have?
2. Who are the main characters, and what is their main argument? What is the position of each?
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Here are some questions to guide your discussion:

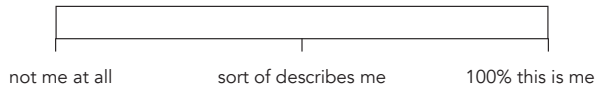
1. How would you describe what the father is like? What in the story shows you that?
2. What is surprising about the father’s response to his sons, and what would you have expected instead?
3. The father represents God in the story. How is this picture of the Christian God similar to or different from who you imagine God to be?
4. What attracts you to knowing God in this way—as one who is forgiving, compassionate, and loving?

Activity: Spiritual Survey

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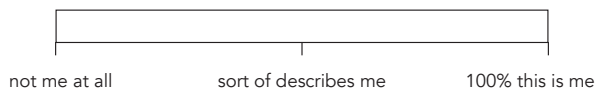


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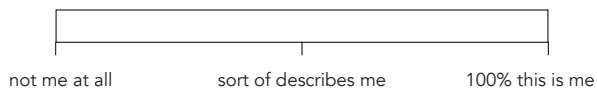
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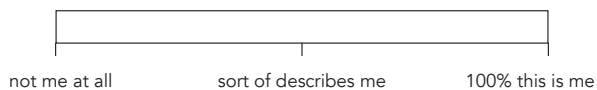
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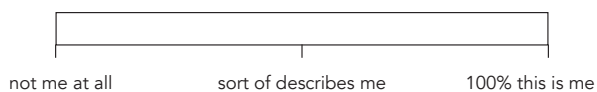
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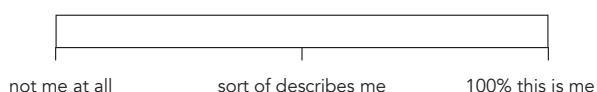
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