

Leaders' Guide, BS 3: What's The Problem?

Goal: To help people discover the need for seeking God for forgiveness of sin

Scripture: Luke 18:9-14

Leaders: This is not going to be the most comfortable 45 minutes, but we don't want this to be a comfortable discussion. Make sure that you have dealt with the sin in your life before you attempt to prepare this study. Your group will be a lot more honest and talkative if you are vulnerable with your own sins. Be prepared to share your own story...

Getting to Know You (15 minutes)

Do a fun icebreaker... Pass around the name sheet again.

Bible discussion (40 minutes)

Hook:

- ☐ What is the most helpless situation you have ever been in?
- ☐ What characterized that situation?
- ☐ How was the problem solved?

Last week, we looked at God's intense love for us. Today, we are going to look at another parable that Jesus taught.

Book:

Read Luke 18:9-14

Look

- ☐ A parable is a story from everyday life that is designed to make a spiritual point. What is the point that Jesus is trying to make here? (See vs. 14)
- ☐ What is a Pharisee? (A devout religious leader who sought to follow God's law)
- ☐ What is a Tax Collector? (Someone who had the legal right to cheat people out of money. They were so despised in their day that there is no comparison today. The closest thing would be a sleazy lawyer.)
- ☐ Based on the passage describe their lives.
- ☐ Why was the Tax Collector justified?
- ☐ What does it mean to be a sinner? (*Anyone that falls short of God's perfect standard. It is key that it is based on God and not on man*)

Word Study:

The word "sin" comes from the Greek word "hamartia" which literally means to miss the mark. It insinuates that missing the mark could be the result of a specific action or even an inward state. When the Bible speaks of sin, it is literally implying that people have missed the mark set by God.

(Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words)

- ☐ What are some sins that people deal with here at MSU?
- ☐ Why was the Pharisee not justified? (*He compared himself to humans and not to God. He too fell short and was a "sinner" but he did not humbly acknowledge that to God*)
- ☐ Was the Pharisee a sinner?
- ☐ What are some sins that religious people may deal with more than non religious people.
- ☐ Who do you most identify with? Why?
- ☐ How do you treat your sin? Do you compare to others? Seek God for forgiveness?
- ☐ How should we deal with our sin? Are there any other passages in the Bible that help us? (*If no one takes you there, go to 1 John 1:8,9*)
- ☐ *From 1 John 1:9--* What does it mean to confess? (*it literally means to agree with God about your sin*).
- ☐ What happens when you confess your sins? How long do we need to beat ourselves up over a confessed sin?

Took:

Application: What does this mean for me?

- ☐ What is your next step with regard to what we talked about tonight?
- ☐ How can we help one another deal with the sin in our lives?
- ☐ Can you think of any answers to this problem of sin?

Leaders: It is vital that you include an invitation and explanation for next week's study.

Looking at the sin and shortcomings of man tends to be a little uncomfortable, but it is a proper understanding of sin which makes the good news of Jesus so amazing. It is important to remember that the story doesn't end here, but it merely begins. Next week, we will talk about the sacrifice of Christ as payment for our sins. This is the message of the gospel: that while we were still "powerless," Christ died for us.

Close in Prayer. Allow a little time for silent confession.

Vision (3 MINUTES)

We wanted to invite you all to our large group meeting called Real Life. We meet Thursday nights at 7:30. Real Life is designed to be a safe, simple, and relational environment for unbelieving and believing students to encounter Christ. The singing and teaching aim to stir our hearts and minds with compelling pictures of the Savior. So we encourage you to not only be a part of worshipping Christ with us there, but to also join us with all the Bible discussion groups across campus. Set up meeting time/place to go to Real Life.