

Before the Lesson

Read the Scriptures and overview below before your LIFE Group meets.

Scripture passages: James 1:19-25 and John 1:1-14

Truth pushes us toward awareness and action. It causes us to check and recheck what our reality is, who our authority is, the authenticity of our actions, and the abundant freedom we have in Christ. God's Word complicates our lives, because with greater knowledge comes greater responsibility and higher standards. As Christians we have knowledge and understanding of the Word, and therefore we are without excuse. We don't have an "out" for disillusionment or ignorance. God's Word has been revealed to us through the Holy Spirit, and by design its purpose is to expose rebellion in my life and in yours and cause us to become more like Christ. We cannot be hearers only. We must be doers, and that often complicates things! The liberty and blessing of the abundant life we desire is found in Christ and His Word, however. So wouldn't we be foolish to live in ignorance or disobedience to it? We must cultivate a Word-driven life, and in doing so experience the bliss of God's favor and presence in our lives as we *Keep Calm and Carry On!*

Focus questions: How have you seen God's Word bring blessing and freedom to your life?

Group Discussion

- Read John 1:1-14. Who is the Word?
- What do you learn about the Word in these verses?
- Jesus is also called the light in this passage. From verse 9 what does the light do? How is this an illustration of what the Scriptures do for our minds?
- In verse 10 we see that the world rejected the light (Jesus). Have you ever considered that rejecting what the Bible says (disobeying the Word) is rejecting Jesus?
- Verse 14 says that the Word, Jesus, was full of grace and truth. Discuss verses that support this description of God's Holy Word. (See Psalm 119:105, John 17:17, Hebrews 4:2, 2 Timothy 3:16-17.)
- Are you allowing God's Word to shape your life? Specifically what changes have you seen in your life as a result of God's Word in the past year, month, week?
- Do you see any resistance to God's Word in your life, or is His Word your reality?
- Read James 1:19-21. Three things characterize our everyday life. These three things are real-life events that happen throughout the course of our day. In verse 19 we see this progression, and it

communicates to others exactly Who our reality is. Every day we hear, we say, and we respond. How does the Word of God offer us instruction for this progression?

- *Hear*: What do John 10:27 and Proverbs 19:27 say about listening?
 - *Say*: When you speak, what should your purpose be? See Isaiah 55:11.
 - *Respond*: According to 1 Thessalonians 2:13, what is God's Word supposed to do in you? Once it begins to form in you, how should the results affect your actions, attitudes, and responses?
- Do your responses to others reflect a life that is lived obediently to Christ? If not, why not?
 - What are you characterized by – anger, a loud tone, irritability, a sharp tongue, or harshness? Or do you display the godly characteristics of genuine love, humility, and gentleness?
 - How do you see God's Word impacting your life and changing you into the likeness of Jesus? What are others seeing?
 - What do these verses from Colossians 3:5-16 tell us to do with our words, actions, and attitudes?
 - What is your attitude toward the authority of God's Word? Do you obey the Word of God? How quickly do you obey? Read 1 Samuel 15:22-23 and John 14:21 and discuss the true mark of a love for Christ.
 - Read James 1:22-24. There is no room for hypocrisy in Christianity. The world is watching. Name some specific things you can do to display greater authenticity to those you know in your home, workplace, or neighborhood.
 - From James 1:25 what is the law of liberty?
 - Read Romans 8:1-8 and discuss the law of the Spirit of life and how it is reflected in your life. Use other verses you know to authenticate your answer.
 - Do you see the blessing of freedom in Christ in your life? Why or why not? If you do not, what do you need to do to capture the blessings God has in store for you?

Further Study (to be used in your personal Quiet Time)

Read and meditate on Psalm 1 and answer these questions.

- What does this chapter say about the law of the Lord?
- When are we to meditate on God's Word?
- What are the results of meditating on the Word of God?
- Contrast the righteous and wicked from this chapter.
- What do you learn about God from this passage?
- What do you learn about man from this passage?

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