

Five Things God Uses To Grow Your Faith

1. Practical teaching
2. Providential relationships
3. Private (spiritual) disciplines
4. Personal ministry
5. Pivotal circumstances

Practical *Biblical* teaching shows us where we are and where we need to go. Matthew 7:24-28

- Humankind's problems began when we quit trusting God.
- Christianity is an invitation to reenter a relationship of trust with God the FATHER.

Faith = trust, confidence

When my acts of faith (obedience) intersect with God's faithfulness, our faith grows.

When I do, God blesses. James 1:22-25

Applied (Do it) biblical teaching is the rock to build on.
(Kidz Life) learn it, link it, live it.

Practical Biblical teaching is pivotal - it demands a choice.

Everyone who hears the Word and puts it into practice is wise.

Life Group Questions

For week of October 5, 2014

Welcome to the fall session of Life groups. This first meeting will have a little extra time to get to know each other

To prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect, encourage one another to grow and to see God change your life from the inside out!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Would you rather...

- Have the ability to fly or teleport?
- Have fingers as long as your legs or legs as long as your fingers?
- Be able to talk with any animal or speak every language?

What is a barrier to trust?

GOING DEEPER

Do you know people whose faith in God is so strong that at times you would describe it as amazing? What is it about them that makes you think their confidence in God is so strong?

How would you describe the relationship between obedience and trust?

As you think back on your childhood, how was the obedience/trust relationship manifested in your home? Did you trust your parents? How did that impact your response to their authority?

Read *Matthew 7:24-28*. This parable follows the Sermon on the Mount. Why do you think Jesus concluded his sermon with this parable?

What does this strong exhortation say about Jesus' view of his own teaching?

What is the relationship between ". . . and puts them into practice" in verse 24 and ". . . had its foundation on the rock" in verse 25?

Have you ever applied a specific teaching of Scripture that, looking back, prepared you for an unexpected storm?

Can you think of a difficult time you have faced that could have been avoided if you had applied the principles of Scripture?

Read *James 1:22-25* What is the relationship between obedience and blessing?

Can we fool ourselves by confusing knowledge and/or attendance as obedience? What is the conscience?

Take it home *"Unapplied truth is like paint. It doesn't do anybody any good until it is applied."* If our knowledge doesn't move us toward application, then our faith will wither. The Bible challenges us to respond to God's truth in many different ways: love your enemies, show forgiveness, and practice generosity. What have been the most difficult truths from the Bible for you to apply?

This week, identify two areas of your life where a bit more application would make a noticeable difference. And then apply.

THE PURPOSE OF Life GROUPS

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word. (*Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25*). Here's how it will happen.

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (*John 15:9-13*). This care can take many forms, such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

SERVE

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (*Ephesians 4:11-16*).