



SHADOW MOUNTAIN LEADER

Packet

We do not have an outline this week.

Getting Started

1. God is always at work (see John 5:17 and Romans 8:28), and He is supernaturally creative in His technique. How have you seen God work in your life? **God is overwhelmingly diverse in His practice of bringing people to Himself. He seems to challenge any stereotyped model we come up with: Bible studies, personal evangelism, Sunday school, public invitations, music, small groups, large group gatherings, the radio, movies, and the list goes on. God is always at work bringing men and women to Himself.**

2. God uses *people* to be part of His “drawing to Himself” campaign. Who were these people in your salvation story? How has God used *you* in this way? **Whenever we find Christ, it is our job, then, to pass it on to somebody else. Another way to think of the “drawing” phenomenon (and the part we play in it) is *witnessing*. Witnessing comes to us in many different circles of our lives. For instance, sometimes it’s in the circle of *discipleship* as it was with John the Baptist and his two followers (John 1:35-42). Sometimes it’s in the circle of *kinship* as it was with Andrew and his brother, Peter (John 1:35-42). Sometimes it’s in the circle of *friendship*, as it was with Philip and Nathanael (John 1:43-51). But witnessing is the normal and natural thing that happens when a person has been found by Christ. That person immediately begins to look for others to share their newfound Savior with.**

Going Deeper

1. Describe someone you know who has heard a witness about God's saving grace (e.g., sermon, conversation, Bible study, prayer, etc.) and responded to Jesus' invitation by giving their lives over to Him. **One of the interesting things about salvation through *preaching* is that many people who respond to this type of evangelism typically confess that "God has been working on me for a long time."** Their decision did not happen all at once, or because of one sermon. It happened gradually as God softened their hearts through their interactions with His people. **What about you? How did you come to Jesus? Was it sudden or gradual? If it was sudden, describe the environment that you were in when it happened. If it was gradual, talk about that process and the people involved along the way.**

2. Read John 1:35-42. In verse 38, Jesus asks, "What do you seek?" Outside of a relationship with Jesus, what do people seek in life? Where do they go to find hope and a sense of purpose? Prior to a saving relationship with Jesus, what types of people, things, or experiences did you pursue? **This is something we should all ask ourselves from time to time: *What am I looking for? What is it that I want in life?*** All of the world seems to be going mad after health, wealth, and pleasure. In this verse, Jesus cuts right to the core of those two men's hearts with His question.

3. Many believers would say that their Christian walk has grown and changed over time. Describe your Christian walk when you first accepted Jesus Christ. How has your relationship with Jesus changed and grown? In what way are you different today than you were when you were first saved? **A lot of Christians attend church and hear a good sermon, but unfortunately never fully enjoy the benefit of really growing in their relationship with Jesus. It is clear that they are supposed to grow as a believer but don't quite understand the spiritual growth process.**

Foundational to growing as a Christian is understanding that when a person becomes a believer, he or she becomes a **new creation in Christ** (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). When you are saved, God changes your heart, breaks the bondage of sin in your life and renews your soul, and makes you a new person with an orientation toward Him.

4. In the verses below, how is the process of growth and maturity in the Christian walk described?

1 Corinthians 13:11 **At the beginning of our Christian life, we may be children, but God's intention is that we grow up. As Christians, it is our responsibility to cooperate with God's growth plan and mature into spiritual adulthood.**

Ephesians 4:15 **This verse gives us a very simple process of spiritual growth: Grace + Truth, over time = Growth.**

Philippians 4:6 **As we place our trust in God, we can release such emotions as anxiety. In fact, this verse tells us to pray with *thanksgiving*.**

1 Thessalonians 3:12 **Two powerful words: *increase* and *overflow*. These words remind us that a life of faith is ever-increasing.**

Hebrews 6:1 **This verse urges readers to leave the discussion of "elementary principles" and...go on "to perfection" (also translated as *maturity*).**

1 Peter 2:2 **Peter does a great job of highlighting the truth that spiritual growth starts *somewhere* but doesn't stay in that place. It moves *forward*.**

5. Re-read John 1:42. Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter. Some translations use the name Cephas, which means "stone." Why did Jesus change Simon's name? What was significant about Simon's personality before his name change? What about after Jesus gave him a new name? **Every time you see Peter, he's saying the wrong thing at the right time, always putting his foot in his mouth. He's up and down. And then the Lord looks at him in all of his fickleness and all of his instability, and He says, "Peter, I'm going to give you a new name. Here it is. I'm going to call you the Rock." At this moment in time, Peter was anything but a rock. That's the beautiful thing about the Lord Jesus. He never looks at us in terms of what we are. He always looks at us in terms of what we might become. He sees us not only for our actualities. He sees us for our potential. Aren't you glad He's like that? If He only saw us for what we were, none of us would even be in the kingdom today. He sees us for what we are, and He *claims* us for what we can be.**

Applying the Message

1. Practice telling your story. Split off into groups of 2 or 3 and just have a conversation about your story. Imagine that the people you are speaking with don't know you and are curious about your faith. **All you have to do is say something like, "Let me tell you what Jesus has done for me." Create an image in your mind that the person you're talking to is someone like Peter, Andrew, Nathanael, or Philip. Remember that, more than your eloquence, what they really need is for someone who's been found by Jesus to help them to understand and respond to Him.**

2. Who in your life doesn't know your story? How might you share with them in a simple, conversational, honest manner? When could you do this?