

Message Discussion Guide

THIS ONE THING

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. Bart Box

April 18, 2010

Psalm 27

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Invite learners to share about a time when a friend, acquaintance, or child asked them to provide something after a time of poor behavior or neglect. (For example, a friend asks you to help him move even though you haven't spoken in four months or a child asks to borrow \$20 after fighting with you for a week.) Encourage learners to share how they felt after receiving this inquiry.

Explain that today we will discuss how our relationship with God should be our priority instead of "using" Him to act in our behalf when we have a need.

Option 2

Encourage learners to imagine a time of great struggle in their lives. Then, ask them to think about one person who they would want to be with them during this time and why. After several learners have shared, explain that today we will discuss how David wanted God's presence with him during times of struggle in his life—more than wanting God's action.

Review the Message . . .

The Brutal Assessment...

- Of David
 - He saw devastation
 - He saw desertion
 - He saw danger
- Of Believers
 - We see conflict in our lives
 - We see sin in the world
 - We see an adversary in Scripture

Discussion

- Enlist two or three learners to read Psalm 27.

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- Explain that many scholars believe that David (the second king of Israel) wrote this psalm in between the time that he was anointed as king and officially reigned as king. Saul had been rejected as king because of his disobedience to God, and David was the chosen replacement.
- Read 1 Samuel 21:10-22:5. Inform learners that this kind of running and hiding was common for David as Saul tried to kill him.
- Looking specifically at verses 2-3 and 12, what kinds of suffering was David facing at the time he wrote this psalm?
- Thinking of the context of this psalm, why was David facing these struggles? Was he deserving of them? Were they consequences of his own sin or were they consequences of following God faithfully?
- Enlist two learners to read John 15:20 and 1 Peter 5:8. How do the challenges of David's life compare to the challenges that all believers are promised to face?

Application . . .

- What kind of conflicts discourages us the most?
- What types of suffering make us cry out to God, and which types do we try to handle ourselves?
- What do we miss when we try to handle suffering ourselves?
- How does the presence of sin in the world affect our view of life's circumstances?
- Why should we take the presence of an adversary seriously? How do we sometimes think and act as if he does not exist?

A Singular Appeal...

- The shock of the appeal
 - David doesn't ask first for deliverance
 - David asks first for God
- The benefits of the appeal
 - God is absolutely sovereign
 - God is incomparably beautiful
- The relevance of the appeal
 - What is our one thing?
 - Do we find God useful or do we find Him beautiful?

Discussion

- Read verse 4 again. In the midst of his trials, what is the one thing that David asks for? What things did David not ask for in this verse?
- Remind learners that at this time in the history of God's people, God's presence dwelled in the Tabernacle or Temple. David wanted to be in the house of the Lord because that's where God's presence was manifested.

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- What does David's asking for God's presence before His deliverance reveal about his relationship with God?
- Looking at verses 1 and 5, why did David seek God? Why was he confident in Him?
- Why did David seek after God? Because of His power to save? Or because of Who He was?

Application . . .

- What are the things we most often ask of/from God?
- Do we seek God first or His actions in our life first?
- Is there anything wrong with asking God for help or deliverance?
- What does our communication with God reveal about our relationship with Him?
- What is our priority or motive in having a relationship with God? Do we most want a "Santa Claus" or the God of the universe?

Our Confident Assertion

- We obtain our "one thing" not based on naïve predictions
- We obtain our "one thing" based on rock-solid promises

Discussion

- Focusing on verses 13-14, describe David's confidence in God.
- How did David's attitude reflect His confidence in God?
- What was David's confidence based on?

Application . . .

- What is the difference between trusting in God for something we want and trusting in His true promises?
- Why can we have confidence in His promises?
- What is true about God's character that tells us we can base our confidence in Him?

Romans 8:35-39 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*