

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

July 3rd

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. What is your best July 4th weekend memory?

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Matthew 18:1-11
 - What do you notice about Jesus' teachings?
2. Jesus states that stumbling blocks will come. What are some of the big stumbling blocks that you have seen mess up other Christians?
 - What are some of the biggest stumbling blocks that you have dealt with in your life?
3. There is a warning here about being a stumbling block to others. What difference does it make in your life to know that you life will either point people toward Jesus or be a stumbling block?
4. What kind of Christian people most often become stumbling blocks to you? Flippant Christian life? Legalism?
 - In what ways in your life can you see yourself being a stumbling block to others?
5. Jesus uses some very harsh words to describe dealing with the sources of sin in verses 8-9. Why do you think that he uses this image of body mutilation and hell fire?
6. Is there anything that you need to cut off in your life that is becoming a source of temptation?

July 3rd: Pay Attention to the Warning Signs

Matthew 18 begins with the disciples asking Jesus about who he considers to be the greatest of his followers. Jesus responds by placing a child on his lap and telling them that in order to be great, they must embrace the status of this child. Then he goes on to give some teachings about some serious warning signs that they need to watch out for.

I. The Christian life will include stumbling blocks

Jesus says in verse 7 that there will be stumbling blocks in our lives. The Christian life is not one of ease, but one that will be full of temptations. Satan is on a mission to do everything in his power to cause us to stumble. As a result, we should live lives ignorant of the dangers that we face, but should keep out a watchful eye.

II. Our life can be a stumbling block to others

In both verses 6 and 7, Jesus offers warnings to those who become stumbling blocks. We often think of our choices only impacting ourselves, but the truth is that everything that we do has a ripple effect that impacts others. Our choices will either point people toward Christ or point them away. Jesus' warning is that if our life pushes people away, then we are better off drowning than facing him on judgment day.

III. We should deliberately remove sources of sin from our lives

In verses 8 and 9, Jesus suggests that if your arm or eye causes you to sin, then you should cut it off and throw it away. He is using exaggeration to point out that if something in your life is causing you to sin, then you are better off getting rid of it than dealing with the consequences of sin.

Conclusion

Jesus is giving some very serious warnings about the Christian life. Unfortunately history is full of people who ignored them only to have their families and careers wrecked as a result of their carelessness. We need to be living watchful lives as we pursue a life with Jesus.

Finally, Jesus makes a comment in verse 10 about the angels of these children always seeing their Father in heaven. In the Old Testament, we are told of angels that cover their eyes because they cannot see God's glory. Jesus is saying though that these children have special access to God. That is God's desire for each of us: that we would travel through this Christian life victorious, to the point in which we can finish the race well and enjoy unhindered communion with him.