

Living Stones – Timothy Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Are there any lies you told as a child that you still remember today?
2. What is one of your favorite tools, appliances, or gadgets?

Read the following passages: Acts 16:1-5; Philippians 2:19-22.

When we first meet Timothy in Acts 16, it is somewhat surprising to hear that Paul wanted to circumcise Timothy, and perhaps even more surprising that Timothy went along with it! Given Paul's conviction that circumcision is irrelevant for a person's salvation, why did they take this step of circumcision? Luke explains: They did it for the mission. Timothy was willing to do whatever was necessary to advance the mission. When Paul commended Timothy to the Philippians he tells us even more about Timothy. Timothy looked out for the interests of Jesus Christ, he had proven character, and he served like a son with his father. Timothy is a powerful example for us today of what it looks like to be all-in for Jesus.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Why was circumcision a big deal for the Jewish people and what changed after Jesus's death and resurrection?
2. When Paul writes that no one looks out for the "[interests] of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 2:21), what does he mean? What are some ways we might look out for the interests of Jesus Christ?
3. How can putting our attention on God, rather than on ourselves, actually end up helping us feel better about who we are?
4. Read Ephesians 6:12. What does it mean practically to fight against "spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" rather than against people? What might this battle look like in our daily lives?
5. Describe some of the ways deception, temptation, and accusation show up in your life? How do we fight against these demonic tactics?
6. Are there any Scriptures that help you engage the challenges, pressures, or spiritual warfare you experience on a daily basis? Explain.
7. What are some attributes of godly character? What did godly character look like in Jesus's life? What is one way in which your character needs to improve?

8. Read John 10:11-15. What are some of the differences between the good shepherd and a hired hand? Given that we don't actually own anything in this world (including our own lives! — 1 Corinthians 6:19-20), what does it mean to have a mindset of ownership like Jesus, the good shepherd? Are there any areas in which you think God wants you to take greater responsibility? Explain.

Pray