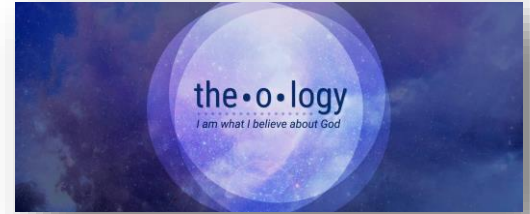


CONNECT GROUP LEADER GUIDE

THEOLOGY #2



BEGIN WITH YOUR HEART

Be aware that some people in your group will have enjoyable and fun stories of how they are like their parents or how their parents were intentional about shaping them, while others could have mostly negative experiences to share. Address the fact that imperfect parents raised us all and we inherited and learned both good and bad things from them. Despite all of that, God created us in His image and sees in each of us value and worth. So much so, that He sent Jesus to the world to redeem us. To get us back.

A LOOK AT THE WORD

God's creation and sovereignty through history. This study focuses on the truths about God's creating hand and overall plan. I would encourage you to look through this study ahead of time. Answer the tough questions and think about issues or questions your group might have as they work through the study. It's ok to not have all the answers, but you will feel more prepared this week if you've taken some time to read and prepare. Use your Bible, the internet, and other resources to direct people to find the answers to their questions that come up.

MY LIFE- OUR MISSION

Have you and/or your group ever tried the "Your Family" section? Try this one, even if you have never done it before and you are not sure how your family will respond. The next time you are driving somewhere together or happen to be eating at the same time – have this discussion with all or part of your family and see how it goes. **Share your experience with your group the next time you meet.**

Christ Community Church - Announcements

Financial Peace University Class | Dave Ramsey's nine-week financial principles course will be on Monday nights, 6:30-8:00pm, starting JAN 23 through MAR 27 [skips Mar 13 during Spring Break]. More details and REGISTER BY JAN 18 at the church web site; \$89 participant materials fee [per person or couple] can be paid at the first session. Questions? Contact Brad Kerr [bkerr@iastate.edu]

Women's Morning YADA [study/fellowship] Thursdays, 9:30-11:00a in C3/4. Spring study, Lisa Harper's "Perfect Love". Come join us for a new study and a great time of connection and fellowship. Childcare provided. Contact Lyndee Heemstra lyndeeroose04@gmail.com with questions.

SERVE - CHURCH

Blinks Volunteers Needed | for the upcoming Upward Basketball season. Contact Marilyn Rohlf to find out more information [jammr@isunet.net or 515-203-1018].

LAUNCH | Beginning Bible readers need a chaperone. An 8wk-Launch is about to blast off again. Interested in becoming a "Bible-reading chaperone" for a group of 3rd-5th grade students? Contact Karen at kheilighenthal@ccames.org or 232-2765. Launch runs on Wednesdays [JAN 18-MAR 8] from 6:30-8:00p.



CONNECT GROUP STUDY

SERIES: The-o-logy: I Am What I Believe about God

GOD and My Being #2 January 15-21.2017

This week's teaching explored "creation theology," that is, what we believe about our glorious, creative, sovereign God, truths which shape who we are.

BEGIN WITH YOUR HEART

Without question, parents shape the lives of their kids. The question is how? Some shaping is automatic; the characteristics of DNA are automatically programmed in. Yet beyond biology, conscientious parents shape environment and experience, imbedding values, reinforcing life-long lessons of wisdom.

- Think about the "automatic" (or creational) ways you were shaped by your parents. How are you just "naturally" like them?
- Follow that with the "intentional" shaping that came your way from them. What did mom, or dad, or both, insist you "become"?

Are you grateful for how they shaped you? Similarly, God has both created us to be like Him, and followed that up with revelation/training to shape us. Let's explore God's shaping work in our lives.

A LOOK AT THE WORD

Today's teaching: **No human person – male or female – can fully become what God created him/her to be (now and forever) without being shaped by "creation truth,"** that is, the truths about God's creating hand and overall plan. If "I am what I believe about God," explore the following beliefs that shape us.

FIRST – MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE. Someone read Genesis 1:26-27 along with Genesis 9:5-6 and James 3:9-10. Explore the important "shaping" implications coming from being "made in God's image."

- Describe – simply – what it means to shine with the likeness of God's image?
- What "went along with" being made in God's image, according to Genesis 1:26-27?
- Following the Flood, how does God communicate to Noah about the unique value of human life (Genesis 9)?
- According to James, how should that God's likeness in others shape our behavior? {discuss the implications}

SECOND – CONFIDENT IN GOD'S PLAN. Read Ephesians 1:11-12. Consider this: *Nothing has ever happened in the history of the world – events, circumstances, etc., outside the scope of God's plan and will.*

- Is that statement correct? Why might someone question this?
- Why do some things happen (sinful acts, tragedies, evil rulers, etc.) that seem out of sync with "God's plan"?
- Scripture reveals that God and his plan are "sovereign" over these difficult things. How does trusting in God's sovereign control shape who you are and how you live? (How does Isaiah 40:13-14 encourage you?)

THIRD - INVITED INTO GOD'S GLORY. Someone read Isaiah 66:18-23. Isaiah envisions a time when redeemed humanity is invited to delight in the glory and worship of God.

- What keeps people today from looking forward to such an experience?
- John sees God's children stepping into a remarkable era. What does Rev. 21:1-6, 22-25 tell us is coming?
- Psalm 16:11 deserves some close attention. What does it say? Compare to what we experience in this life, do you think what's coming will be more, or less, full of joy?
- So, what are you looking forward to most in eternity? Does your "tomorrow" look shape you today? How so?

SUM UP: What's the best idea the Holy Spirit gave you in some of the Scripture you just considered?

MY LIFE- OUR MISSION

MY LIFE – God values you highly because of how He made you, because you shine with His imprint through your unique personality. Your life is part of His eternal plan (Eph 1:11). Any of us can easily forget how special I am to God. Do you know of anyone – going through a rough stretch right now -- who needs you to encourage him/her with God's estimate his/her value? CCC's know...that's part of SHARING (the) TOUGH (and good!) STUFF.

YOUR FAMILY – Have some fun. Get some family pictures of grandparents, parents, and kids. Who looks like whom? Who acts like whom? Talk about who in the family has shaped whose life? Then make the connection – "We've been born of God? How are we like Him?"

OUR MISSION - Our "relationships in Christ" both inform and shape our lives over time. God uses His family to produce His Son's thinking, living, and character in each of us. The more we become like Christ, the more we shine with God's image. Take a moment and identify a couple of fellow Christians who are shaping your life in Christ. Say a sincere prayer of thanks for them! Write a note of encouragement, while you're at it!