

Discipleship

A Journey in

JANUARY 2008

BEP SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

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HOW DO I RELATE TO OTHER CHRISTIANS? 3-5

HOW DO I RELATE TO THOSE WHO HAVE WRONGED ME? 6-8

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THE RADAR

Helping keep your small group on the same frequency!

SMALL GROUP EVALUATION

Here's a good way to start off your year!

#1 What characterized your small group last year?

2 Are there new people in your group? Who has left your group? How has this changed the dynamics of the group?

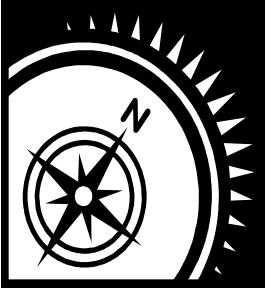
3 On a scale from 1-5, how close is your group? Do folks spend much time together outside of your designated meeting?

4 Do you need to go deeper or wider? Both? Neither? How?

5 What would you like to see happen in and through in your group in 2008?

(feel free to answer these as a group or alone as the leader)





Journey in Discipleship

January 6- February 9

How Do I Relate to other Christians?

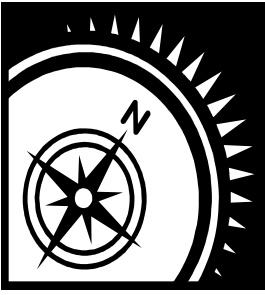
January 6 -19

Key Concepts : Members

How Do I Relate to those Who Wrong Me?

January 20- February 9

Key Concepts : Forgiveness



How Do I relate to other Christians?

January 6 – 12

KEY CONCEPT -Members

St. Paul says Christians are “members of one another” (Rom 12:5.) This goes deeper than the modern concept of being a “member” of a club. The Greek word *melos* was the common word for a part of the human body. Paul is saying: “You are the limbs and organs of one another. You are the eyes, arms, and heart of one another.” Believers then are profoundly interdependent. In ourselves we are radically incomplete. When Paul says: “Do not lie, for we are members of one another” (Eph 4:25) he means that to tell a lie, and therefore to cut yourself off from other believers, is like stabbing yourself in the vitals. The implications of this principle are spelled out practically in dozens of “one another” passages in the New Testament epistles.

☞ Read Romans 12: 4-8.

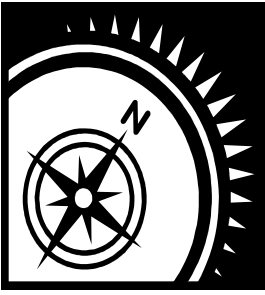
- ◆ What are your initial observations and impressions of this passage?
- ◆ What concepts are repeated or emphasized?
- ◆ Compare this passage with 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.
- ◆ What is the main point of each of these passages?

Don't forget the small group evaluation!

The process of spiritual growth requires more than an occasional conversation about a particular religious concept. Therefore, each week you will be asked the same two application questions so that you can focus and process this crucial component of your relationship with Christ and his Body.

☞ Are there aspects of our culture that hinder living interdependently? If so how do (should) you overcome them?

☞ What things like personality, family history, life style, etc. hinder living interdependently? If so how do (should) you overcome them?



How Do I relate to other Christians?

January 13-19

KEY CONCEPT -Members

☞ Read Romans 12: 9-21

☞ What do the imperatives in this verse have in common? Why are these commands so important for setting up a lifestyle of love?

☞ How can we love unlovely persons who we do not like and yet still be "sincere"?

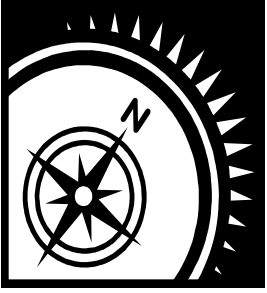
☞ Divide the 12-13 exhortations in these verses into 2-4 broad categories that help you get a grip on what love means practically.

☞ How does the gospel make each aspect of love possible?

Just as last week, you will be asked the same two application questions so that you can focus and process this crucial component of your relationship with Christ and his Body. Force yourselves to expand upon your initial applications from last week.

☞ Are there aspects of our culture that hinder living interdependently? If so how do (should) you overcome them?

☞ What things like personality, family history, life style, etc. hinder living interdependently? If so how do (should) you overcome them?



How Do I Relate to Those Who Wrong Me?

January 20-26

KEY CONCEPT -Forgiveness

☞ Read the following carefully. After each bulleted point stop and discuss your thoughts about this definition of forgiveness.

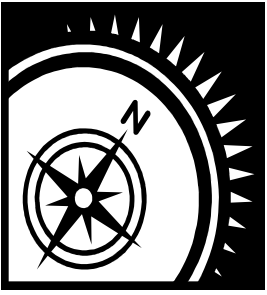
The definition of forgiveness.

☞ Forgiveness means *giving up the right to seek repayment* from the one who harmed you. Sins are “debts” (Matt 6:12) which you can either: a) make the debtors pay by hurting them until you feel things are ‘even,’ or which b) you pay by forgiving and absorbing the pain within yourself.

☞ In forgiveness you pay the debt a) by refusing to hurt the person directly, b) by refusing to cut the person down to others, or b) by *refusing to indulge in ill-will in your heart*. Instead of hoping for their pain, you pray positively for their growth.

☞ Forgiveness then, *is granted before it is felt*. It is a promise to refrain from the three things above and pray for the perpetrator as you remind yourself of God’s grace to you. Though it is extremely difficult and painful (you are bearing the cost of the sin yourself!) forgiveness will deepen your character, free you to talk to and help the person, and lead to love and peace rather than bitterness. By bearing the cost of the sin, you are walking in the path of your Master. (Col 3:13; Matt 18:21-35.)

Please complete the application questions on the next page.



How Do I Relate to Those Who Wrong Me?

January 20-26 (Continued)

KEY CONCEPT -Forgiveness

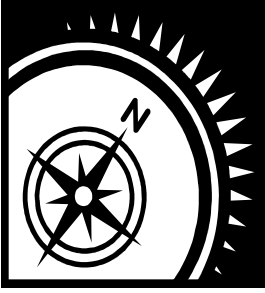
☞ In future studies we will examine more of what the Scripture teaches about conflict and forgiveness. For now, we will prime our own hearts for this series by examining ourselves. These questions are very direct, so I have included two types. Some are for group discussion, while others are for private consideration. When you answer the questions for personal consideration be as vulnerable and transparent as you are comfortable with in the group, but please take the time to consider every question privately during the upcoming weeks.

For personal consideration...

- ☞ How are you most easily and often hurt ?
- ☞ By whom are you most easily hurt?
- ☞ Is there a reason you are you susceptible to being hurt by them?
- ☞ In what ways do you “return the hurt” when someone hurts you?
- ☞ Is there someone you need to forgive?

For group discussion today... review the previous page for help.

- ☞ If forgiveness is “giving up the right to seek repayment” then how do we forgive without becoming a doormat?
- ☞ If forgiveness is “refusing to indulge in ill-will in your heart,” then what has to happen in our own heart before this can take place?
- ☞ There is a difference in how God forgives and how we forgive. God’s forgiveness is a definitive act in Christ. When we forgive its both a definitive act and a process. If “forgiveness, is granted before it is felt” then describe start to finish how complete forgiveness is given. How does God’s definitive act of forgiveness teach us how to forgive others?



How Do I Relate to Those Who Wrong Me?

January 27- February 2

KEY CONCEPT -Forgiveness

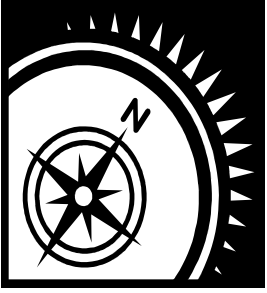
☞ Read Matthew 18:21-35. Discuss initial observations, questions & insights.

- How does the parable in vv.23-35 answer the Peter's question in v.21?
- Describe how we put a limit on how much we are willing to forgive. What does this limit look like in the way we relate to the person who has wronged us?

☞ Read Romans 12: 18-21. Discuss initial observations, questions & insights.

- How does the teaching in this passage affect the way we relate to those who have wronged us?
- What do you think it means to "heap burning coals on his head?" Is this license to use good deeds to be malicious?
- In light of the context, what does it mean to be overcome by evil? In contrast, think seriously about specific ways to overcome evil with good.

Conclude by giving people an opportunity to share about how they are processing the questions for personal consideration from last week.



How Do I Relate to Those Who Wrong Me?

February 3- February 9

Don't forget the small group evaluation!

KEY CONCEPT -Forgiveness

“Life in the Boat” Life in the church is like life on a boat. A lot of people are crammed in close quarters attempting to work together to keep the boat moving in the right direction. The result of having different people with different personalities and ideas is conflict. Conflict may be avoidable, but it is safe to say it is inevitable. A good indicator of the health of any relationship is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to work through conflict. In our culture we struggle to really live in the boat. We prefer to have our own little dingy. When conflict comes we simply row away. Read this passage and explore together and discuss what life in the boat should look like.

- ☞ Read Galatians 6: 1-3. Is this type of relating to one another common in your experience within the church? Describe your experience.

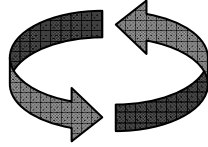
- ☞ Read Matthew 18 : 15-20. In this passage Jesus teaches about the church community in conflict and the church community in agreement. Is it true that there are always in some degree both conflict and agreement in the church? How do we live with one another with this tension? According to this passage, what are we to do together when there is conflict? What are we to do together in agreement?

- ☞ Read Matthew 5:21-26. Jesus explains the heart of the matter is the heart of the matter. As it was said in an earlier study, *“forgiveness is refusing to indulge in ill-will in your heart.”* When you know in your heart that you have ill will towards someone or someone may have ill will towards you then you must act *first*. Why and how does un-reconciled conflict affect your worship?

- ☞ Conclude by giving people an opportunity to share about how they are processing the questions for personal consideration from two weeks ago.

BEP Adult Ministry

A simple process of discipleship



WORSHIP TOGETHER

Sunday Worship

Set up/ Ushers/ Greeters /Enfolding Team/
Reception Team/Worship Teams/AV Team

LEARN TOGETHER

Adult Christian Education

Journey in the Word/ W2W & Men's Ministry
Bible Studies/Family Nights

SERVE TOGETHER

Ministries & Missions

Deaconate/ Deacon's Assistants/My Brother's
Pantry /Boys & Girls Club/ Habitat for Humanity/
Car Clinic/Fifth Quarter/ Family Club/ Tuesday
Open Gym /Karate Club/Missions

LIVE TOGETHER

Small Groups & Church Fellowships

Small Groups

Couples/ W2W/ Men's / Divorce Care/ College & Career

Church Fellowships

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