

Small Group Study

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people

Discussion

Created for Connection: “Connecting Our Passions”

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:

Genesis 1:26-28 (NLT):

26 Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like ourselves. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

27 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28 Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

1 Timothy 4:1-5 (NLT):

1 Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons. 2 These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead.

3 They will say it is wrong to be married and wrong to eat certain foods. But God created those foods to be eaten with thanks by faithful people who know the truth. 4 Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it, but receive it with thanks. 5 For we know it is made acceptable by the word of God and prayer.

Questions

Please feel free to adjust this study to fit your group’s needs and to listen to the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is not necessary to use all of the questions.

1. There are two extremes when it comes to our sexuality, denying it or being driven by it, and then there’s a vast space in between where the Lord wants us to live in self-control. In Genesis 1, God creates animals before humans.



Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. What are three things you are really passionate about?
2. If you could be any animal, which one would you be and what would you do?
3. If you suddenly discovered you could fly, what would you do with your newfound ability?

And something significant happens, people are created in God's image.
We have a spiritual dimension to us that animals don't have.

Have you ever seen a dog concerned that its life just isn't going anywhere?
A cat reflecting?
A horse not feeling centered?
Animals have a physical body, but no spirit (*sorry animal lovers; I'm an animal lover too!*)

The book of Hebrews says that an angel is a spirit.
A spirit is a being with no body, no physical essence.
Marriage and sex and procreation simply aren't parts of their existence.

When we aspire to live like angels (all spirit), we forget that we're also physical beings. And when we're all physical (like animals without spirit), we forget that there is so much more to life. This is the beauty of being human. We're spirit and body. Physical and spiritual. We're both. Living like angels can be just as destructive as living like animals.

What are some real-world examples of someone living like an "animal"? Like an "angel"? When have *you* ever been like one or the other?

2. Paul says "Since everything God created is good, we should not reject any of it but receive it with thanks. For we know it is made acceptable by the word of God and prayer." He insists that everything God created is good, and we come to see this through what he calls "the word of God and prayer" which is the hard work of study and reflection and meditation and discussion and debate. The temptation is always to avoid things that are difficult and complex. To go around them rather than through them.

The impulse of our world when faced with tension or faced with temptation or faced with issues of self-control is to come up with seven steps or a formula so that if you do things in the right order, the tension will go away. But that doesn't always work.

One of the marks of someone who has experienced significant growth in their soul is their ability to live in the midst of tension.

What are some of the things that are difficult or complex in life that we need to go through rather than around?

3. So how we live matters because God made us human. Which means we aren't angels. And we aren't animals.

What do you think it means to be fully human--not an animal nor an angel--but fully embracing the physical and the spiritual aspects of ourselves? Who are some examples of people you know who do that well?

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God bless,

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