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Freedom

GROUPS

LEADER
GUIDE

SECTION ONE

THE TREE OF LIFE

WEEK TWO LEADER GUIDE

Overview

Tree of Life:

Freedom, Grace, Eternal life, God is good, God is forgiving

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil:

Bondage, The Law, Leads to death, God is only a judge,
We are condemned

After consuming the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve hid, but God came looking for them. God is in love with sinful man and sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue people.

Truths about the Fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil:

- The fruit is knowledge. It is not wrong to have knowledge, but we must evaluate our motives to obtain it. Are we wanting to exalt ourselves or gain God's wisdom and understanding? Using godly wisdom allows us to become more like God as we emulate Him. Worldly wisdom leads us to sin, which alienates us from God.
- The fruit is deadly. The desire to know is in direct opposition to the desire to trust. Adam and Eve didn't die physically but died spiritually upon consuming the fruit.

- The fruit is consumed. Ideas are ingested in our minds and then sin is conceived. The first sin came about when Eve talked to Adam about it. Through a conversation, they consumed the idea and began to process it. This progression tells us that sin does not begin with the act, it begins in our minds.
- The fruit causes separation. God didn't separate Himself from Adam and Eve; instead, they hid from Him after consuming the fruit. God searched for them because He loved them. When we see His heart for us, we will run to Him instead of hiding from Him when we sin. We must get to the point where no matter what has happened in our lives, we take responsibility for our own lives. We can no longer blame anyone else for the quality of our relationship with God.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil produces shame and victimization. Shame causes us to separate ourselves from God. Victimization causes us to blame others, displacing our responsibility for the condition of our lives and souls.

Application

The lesson for Week 3 goes more in depth on the Tree of Life. Encourage your participants to pay attention over the next week to how they might be acting and reacting based on Tree of Life thinking, and ask them to come prepared to share some examples next week.

Discussion Guide

- Application from Week 1: Ask participants to share examples of ways they acted and reacted out of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil throughout the previous week.
- Are there things in your past that have caused you to want to hide from God?
- Have you used knowledge of God as a basis of your relationship with Him?
- What are some ways that you might have gotten caught up in religion and the Law versus the freedom and grace that result from a relationship with God?
- Have you ever been overcome by shame? The way to overcome shame is to start seeing ourselves the way God sees us. Throughout the semester, we will cover ways to align our perspectives with God's and to let Him move in our hearts.

Prayer Focus

- Pray that any incorrect views of God will be revealed to your participants and that they will be able to see Him as a loving Father who is searching for them.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas in which participants have operated out of shame and victimization.