

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME (Message: Dedication)

INTENTION

Group members will discover the value of being consistently on the lookout for God moments. They will discover that by their attitudes and their actions they can set themselves up for providentially bumping into God

INTRODUCTION

This section gets group members thinking about a providential situation

1. Ask by a show of hands
 - a. How many of you can tell about a situation where you happened to be in the right place at the right time? Explain
 - b. How many of you can think of a time you were in the wrong place at the wrong time? Explain
2. Someone once said, "The harder I work, the luckier I get."
 - a. Would you say that is true?
 - b. How much do you think luck has to do with where you find yourself in life?
 - c. Do you believe there is such a thing as luck in the life of a Christian?

INSTRUCTION

This section allows group members to check out two people who seemed to hit the "God jackpot" and how that related to the way they lived their lives.

1. Say: We are about to look at two people who seemed to be lucky to be in the right place and the right time.
2. Tell group members that we will be reading two stories found right beside each other in Luke 2. After reading the stories they will have a contest to see who can discover the most about each story.
3. Ask three volunteers to read:
 - a. One volunteer should read the introduction found in Luke 2:1-24.
 - b. The second volunteer should read the first story found in Luke 2:25-35.
 - c. The third volunteer should read the second story found in Luke 2:36-40.
4. Tell group members circle into two separate groups
5. Give a pencil and paper to the designated writer from each group
6. Now tell the writers to put the words "similarities" and "differences" on the tops of their papers.
7. Explain:
 - a. After I say "go" each group has exactly two minutes to come up with as many similarities and differences as they can find when comparing the two stories. The group with the most number of accurate similarities and differences not discovered by the other group is the winner.
 - b. After the time is up, ask the group leader from group 1 to read their list of similarities. As they are read, each team must cross out the similarity if the other team also has it listed.
 - c. Now have group 2 read their list of differences. Again, as they are read, each team must cross out the differences they have in common.

- d. Now have each team name and count the answers that remain uncrossed out.
- e. The team with the most uncrossed out is the winning team.
- f. Now pronounce the winning team as the best Bible scholars.

INTERACTION

This section gets your group discussing what the activities it might require to increase a person's likelihood of encountering and or being used by God in someone else's life.

1. Do you think these two individuals were just lucky that they happened to see Jesus? Why or why not?
2. What does the fact that they were both old tell you about who God speaks to?
3. What does the fact that one person was a man and the other a woman, tell you about, who God chooses to connect with?
4. Do you think one or both, Simeon and Anna were actually expecting to hear from God? Why or why not?
5. Why do you think it was a big deal for these people to personally see the baby Jesus? What was the significance to them?

INVESTIGATION

Group members will examine that example of Simeon and Anna and what it means to be prepared to hear from God.

1. Re-read Luke 2:25-26.
 - a. How do you think Simeon knew it was the Holy Spirit that spoke to him?
 - b. Can you think of a time you believe you heard from God? Explain.
 - c. How do you think God speaks to people today? Does He speak to you? If so, how?
2. Say: Both Simeon and Anna responded to seeing Jesus by telling others about him.
 - a. Do you think what they had to say was good news or bad news? (see Luke 2:34-35; 2:38) Why?
 - b. Do you sense that Simeon and Anna filled every minute of their lives with business, noise and activity? Explain.
 - c. It is possible that both Simeon could have missed recognizing and responding to the messiah. What might their lifestyles tell us about hearing the voice of God?
 - d. Do you think your lifestyle interferes with you hearing from God? How?

IMPLEMENTATION

This section challenges your group members look for and listen to the voice and movement of God in their lives

1. Ask:
 - a. Has anything happened in your life that you think might have been God doing or saying something to you?
 - b. Can anyone share a time you prayed about something recently and God answered?
 - c. Does anyone have a friend that you think God may be trying to get their attention? If so, why do you think so?
2. What would you like to do to make space to hear from God this week?
3. Prayer: Close by allowing group members to pray for God's leading in their lives and a willingness to respond by sharing what God is doing with someone else.

