



Deep AND Wide | December 9, 2015

Discussion Guide

The Scoop

Sharing God's love and knowing God deeper have often been thought of as two separate but necessary elements of an active and growing faith life. We long to go "deeper" and grow closer to our God, but we also want our faith to matter so we spread God's love as "wide" as we can. What if we actually grow deeper by spreading wider?

Key Verse

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.

Discussion

Identifying the things that bring us closer to God and help us go "deeper" is the ultimate goal of any Christ-follower. Personal spiritual practices are typically the ways we seek to go deeper. Things like prayer, journaling, worship, reading the Bible, etc. are a very important part of this process.

1. In what ways do you typically engage your faith through personal spiritual practices?
2. What personal spiritual practices do you see or hear other people doing that are a struggle for you?

The "wide" part of our faith is typically based on how we share God's love with others...people without faith, the oppressed, the dirty, regular people who are hurting, etc. For most of us, going wide has been limited to events or initiatives at church and other organizations designed to reach out.

3. What opportunities have you had to put your faith in action?
4. In what ways do you desire to engage your faith further?

At some point we read enough stories about Jesus, we connect with God through prayer, and discover enough principles through studying the Bible that we desire to act...to apply them by spreading "wide." Looking to another journal entry, devotional, or church service as the solution to our desire to better know God will continue to fuel this cycle of longing for more. What if the thing we long for (going deeper) is achieved by actively sharing our faith (going wide)?

5. What are some ways that we as individuals can better live out our faith and show God's love to others?

What's Next?

What if the personal spiritual practice that helps you go deep with God is actually going wide? This world is longing for people that act on their faith! It is longing for people to show up among the messy parts of life, it is longing for people to set fears aside, and it is longing for people who see beyond circumstances and see the beauty in people who were created in God's image. How will you intentionally seek to share God's love this week? Who can you sit with, listen to, smile at, or reach out to?