

SMALL GROUPS

Small Group Discussion

Week of June 19th, 2011

Father's Day

"The Tender and Tough Love of God"

1. Tell about a time when God showed you His love in a way that revealed His compassion, grace, patience and tenderness. Why are moments like this so important to our faith?
2. Tell about a time God showed you His love by being firm, by disciplining you, or by convicting you. Why are moments like this so important to our faith?

Read: John 3:16-17 and Psalm 103:1-13

3. What does the Bible teach us about God's compassion, patience, and tender love toward His children? Why is it important that we really understand the depth of God's compassion and tender mercy?
4. What are some possible consequences if we ignore God's tender love? How can our view of God become unbalanced if we focus only on God's tender love?

Read: John 3:18-19 and Isaiah 6:1-8

5. What does the Bible teach us about God's holiness, justice, discipline, and tough love? Why is it so important that we see God in the fullness of His holiness and justice?
6. What are some possible consequences if we ignore God's tough love and reject the biblical teaching about the wrath, judgment, and discipline of God? How can our view of God become unbalanced if we focus only on God's tough love?
7. On the Teeter-Totter of God's tender and tough love, most of us tend to emphasize one above the other. Where do you spend more time focusing...on God's tender love (His compassion, forgiveness, patience and grace) or His tough love (His holiness, justice, wrath, and discipline)? How can you grow your understanding of the fullness of God's tender and tough love?
8. What would you say to a person who makes *one* of these statements:

I don't like the idea of God judging people for their sin and punishing them so I choose to believe that God will not judge anyone!

If God is truly loving, He will forgive everyone and invite all people into heaven, no matter what they have done and regardless of what they believe.