



Week 1: "It's a Wonderful Life"



GET GOING!

Consequences. (Note to leaders: you'll need a pen and paper for everyone for this ice breaker.)

This week we learned that small choices can make a big difference. There are always consequences for our decisions. Tonight, let's play an *Ad Lib* game that deals with the subject of consequences.

- Have each group member sit in a circle with a piece of paper and pen. Each person must write a specific word or phrase, then fold the paper so it's hidden, and leave room for the next person to write the second line in the ad-lib guide below, fold it, and then pass it on until the story is complete (using the list below as a guide). This continues until everyone has a turn to add to the story. The structure of the story which each player needs to follow is as follows:

1. Adjective.
2. A man's name
3. Adjective.
4. A woman's name
5. Location
6. A gift you give someone
7. A poplar phrase.
8. Something you say when you're thankful.
9. A consequence.
10. Something a newscaster might say.

- After all the questions are answered pass the papers once more and then read the stories aloud. They are usually really funny and bizarre.
- The story reads The (adjective- mans name), met the (adjective- women's name) at (where they met). He gave her _____. She said _____. He said _____. The consequence was.

GET PERSONAL.

1. Since we'll be spending a few weeks at the movies together, what's your all time favorite Christmas movie and why?

WHAT'S NEXT?

Read Matthew 1:18-24

2. Paul mentioned that Joseph seems like an extra on the set of a movie? In what ways do you think Joseph felt insignificant in this situation?
3. As you look back on this week or this past month, when was a time you felt small or insignificant like Joseph might have?
4. What was God doing behind the scenes through this situation? (Hint: Reread verses 22-24.)

Your one life could be a wonderful life

Read Matthew 2:13-15

5. Joseph didn't have to listen to the angel but he choice to. Talk about a time when you felt like God was speaking to you and you listened, what was the consequence?
6. Now describe a time when you knew God was asking you to do something but you didn't! How did you feel? What was the consequence?

Read Matthew 2:19-23

7. Paul spent some time talking about the "butterfly effect," which is the idea that over time, little decisions add up to big consequences, either good or bad. What was the outcome of Joseph's listening for God and responding to what He said?
8. How have you seen the "butterfly effect" lived out, either in your life, or the life of someone close to you in a positive way? How about in a negative way?

Watch This! (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PIYcT6DmJY>)

9. What were some of the consequences of George's not being born? How would the world and the people in your life be different if you were never born?
10. What are some practical next steps that can help us be intentional with the choices that we make?
11. One of the essentials of group life is to serve together. Where can we serve together that would make a difference in someone's life? Can we make that happen before Christmas?

PRAY.

Pray that God would give you his eyes to encourage you when you feel insignificant or meaningless. Thank Him for the fact that through a relationship with Jesus, our lives take on new significance. Ask God to give you wisdom to make wise choices so that the sum of your life equals a positive impact.

DON'T FORGET.

Encourage your group members to check out these passages during the week to keep the learning going and their relationship with God growing.

Mark 12:41-44, John 1:35-42, Joshua 2:1-14, Esther 4:1-16, 2 Samuel 11:1-16

For further application, use the App Notes, which are posted each day on our Facebook Page. If you've missed this week's message, you can watch online at parkerhill.org