

Dear Parents,

Several parents asked about make-up sessions or homework. Instead of that, on the church website, after each class I will recap what we discussed. This will just go over a few major points but hopefully help your child be prepared for the next class. Please take the time to discuss it with them. This may also be a nice way for all parents to know what was discussed and can add to it with your child on a regular basis. No one can ever replace the importance you as their parent will make on their growth especially in their faith. I have include the first session so you can see one. Thank you.... Alisande

### Discussion Notes for Session 1

To help our young people find their true identity - we have to help them think beyond surface values of popularity, looks and extra-curricular activities. They are so much more than that. They are made in the image and likeness of God! Our goal is to show them that they are **Unique, unrepeatable, irreplaceable gifts from God**. This truth of being a child of God's should not be taken lightly and is the road to happiness.

We talked about the distinction between pleasure and happiness. Pleasure can bring happiness but can not be sustained. An example of pleasures could be.. cookies, vacations, or winning a game which brings us happiness in the moment but will fade with time. And if we eat too many cookies, we can be happy for a short time and then very unhappy with a belly ache. Not all pleasure will bring happiness and can be harmful to us in the end. **God is calling us to real happiness and has given us everything we need if we listen and follow his plan for our lives**. Happiness is sustainable and brings peace and joy into our lives even when we are not doing pleasurable things.

The last major topic discussed was about a universal goal for humans, Freedom. We talked about what we need to survive vs. what we need to thrive. We discussed how toddlers who run away are not prepared for the freedoms they think they want and often just pack toys or snacks. Then we really looked at this statement, **The more freedom you have, the more your happiness depends on the choices you make**. We all agreed that we have a lot more choices in middle school than we did as a toddler and will be getting even more in high school. The time is **now** to think about **Who am I, where am I going , and how am I going to get there**.

Challenge for the group for next time...

- 1) Look for joyful, happy people. See if they have any similar habits or characteristics?
- 2) Stop for 5 minutes each day and make yourself available to God. Think about these questions, Who am I, Where am I going and How will I get there. Ask God to help you and try to listen.

*Next session we will discuss Adam and Eve and learn Our story as a child of God.*

*Updated 2018 - 8th Grade Confirmation Class*