

The Rule of Faith Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part altogether, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is one area in which you are a very trustworthy source of advice?
2. What is one way you have seen yourself changing in the last 12 months?

Read the following passage: Hebrews 11:1-6.

The author of Hebrews addresses a primarily Jewish audience that was tempted to turn back from following Jesus. The letter's recipients were likely being pressured by their fellow Jews to return to a Judaism without Jesus. In the face of this pressure, the author of Hebrews reminds his readers of the nature of faith and encourages them to reflect on the great faith of the men and women who came before them. Faith is confidence in what we hope for, even when we can't see it. Faith pleases God because it is a firm trust in his faithful character.

When the ancient Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, they struggled to believe that God would really deliver them through inexperienced leaders like Moses and Aaron. Their struggle to believe gives us some valuable lessons about faith.

- Walking in faith means trusting God to work through flawed people (including ourselves!)
- Walking in faith means persevering in the process
- Walking in faith means embracing God's sacrifice
- Walking in faith means asking God for provision
- Walking in faith means giving your first to God
- Walking in faith means trusting God to bring the breakthrough

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. The Israelites were subject to Pharaoh, who was abusing them, and were being led by Moses, who was inexperienced and insecure. They didn't respond well (see Exodus 5:20-21). How do you typically respond when you see very real flaws in the people you are living with, working with, or being led by? How do you think God wants you to respond? What does it look like to trust God to work through flawed people?
2. Read Exodus 6:1-9. Many times, what God is doing in our lives takes longer than we might expect. Generally speaking, are you more likely to stick with what you're familiar with or to try something new? What are some practices or beliefs we should always persevere in no matter what we experience? How do we recognize when we should make a change in a relationship or job or some other area of our lives?

3. Read Exodus 12:21-23. How does this experience foreshadow Jesus's death on the cross? What are some practical effects that should result from embracing God's sacrifice?
4. Read Exodus 3:21-22 and Exodus 12:35-36. Generally speaking, how risk-averse are you? Are you making bold requests of God and attempting bold things for God? Explain. What is one area in your life in which you think God wants you to be more bold or to take greater risks?
5. Read Exodus 13:1-2. God told the Israelites that the first offspring of every womb belongs to him. God said something similar concerning the first of their crops. Although we do not live under the Law of Moses, why is it important for us to give our "first" to God?
6. Read Exodus 14:10-14. Are there any areas in your life in which you are asking God to bring a breakthrough? Explain. How do we know when we should take action and when we "need only to be still" (Exodus 14:14)?
7. What is one way you would like to grow in faith?

Pray