



RHYTHM(2): SMALL GROUP DIALOG

WEEK 2: WONDER

Bottom Line: Being in rhythm with God means that He alone has captured our sense of wonder.

Scripture References: Genesis 3:1-4, 6-13

A sense of wonder will keep us in rhythm with God. This is basically the essence of Solomon's argument, "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom*" (Psalm 111:10 NIV). Wonder is the beginning of rhythm. If we want to live a life in sync with the Creator of the universe, we must begin by recognizing who He really is. This week your goal is to help create or foster in students a sense of wonder. Who is this God whom they serve? What is He like? Why should we desire to live in rhythm with Him?

You don't need to resolve every question in this setting. Keep the conversation light and free of judgment. Remember that some students may not even be ready to accept that God exists; this would be a good time to listen to their questions. Acknowledge their struggles and support them as they seek to understand the mystery of God. This time of dialog is more about inspiring students to think about God in new ways than it is about answering all their questions. (In fact, you may not be able to answer all their questions—none of us can. Some things are a mystery about God to us, too.) And the reality is that if we feel like we know everything about God, then we really don't know Him at all because He's so much bigger than trite, simplistic answers or clichés. God will consistently amaze us all throughout our lives.

Create meaningful conversation. Adjust questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.

1. What did you think of the talk tonight? What did you hear the speaker say?
2. What are some things that amaze you? What captures your sense of wonder?
3. What are some things that you hear a lot—at home, at church, at school? Has the impact of those words or statements lessened because you've heard them so much?
4. What are some things that you've heard or know about God that don't seem to impact you as much as they used to?
5. Have you ever had a moment when you felt a sense of wonder and awe about God? Describe it.
6. What would a life in rhythm with God look like?
7. What are some signs in your life that you are out of rhythm with God?
8. Have someone read aloud Psalm 19:1-10. David, the author of this psalm, had a sense of wonder about God. Ask students to talk about how God is described in these verses.
9. How does your sense of wonder affect your relationship with God? If you are bored with God, what do you think could restore your sense of wonder about who He is?
10. In closing, read Ephesians 3:16-19.

CLOSING CHALLENGE:

This week, find time to wonder at God. This may mean going to the mall and just wondering at the variety and uniqueness of all the people He made; maybe it means going outside to a favorite tree or mountain which He created, or playing with a baby to make you marvel at the miracle of life that He works in each one of us. Whatever it means for you, spend time deliberately focused on God—dwelling in Him. If you decide to do the XP for the Rhythm series as a small group (or even as a large group), this would be an excellent time to go out and do that event.



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RHYTHM(4): SMALL GROUP DIALOG

WEEK 4: PASSION

Bottom Line: If we aren't in rhythm with others, we can't be in rhythm with God.

Scripture References: Matthew 5:21-24

If we aren't in rhythm with others, we can't be in rhythm with God. Haven't you ever wished that this were not true? Isn't it sometimes easier to love God than to love people? God doesn't cut us off in traffic—people do. Your job this week is to help students think about the significance of their relationships with other people. It's about treating people right, acting fairly toward others and forgiving them when they hurt us. This is a pretty straightforward principle, but it can be really difficult to carry out. Let students share their own experiences and voice their frustrations. Encourage them to keep trying.

Create meaningful conversation. Adjust questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.

1. What does it mean to be in rhythm with other people?
2. Is it possible to love God and not love people?
3. Have someone read aloud Matthew 5:23-24: *"If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (NIV).* What does this verse say about the connection between being in rhythm with God and being in rhythm with others?
4. Our relationships with other people are a reflection of our relationship with God. Use adjectives to describe what your relationships say about your relationship with God.
5. Have you ever been out of rhythm with someone close to you? What was the situation like? How did it affect you?
6. Have you ever known someone who hurt you or someone close to you but outwardly acted like they were best friends with God? What is the danger in saying you are a Christian if you are unable or unwilling to care about the people around you?
7. Inevitably, there will be times when you fall out of rhythm with those around you. What can you do to get back in rhythm when that happens?

CLOSING CHALLENGE:

Spend some time thinking about your relationships. Who are you not in rhythm with right now? Maybe something small has gotten between you and someone else, or maybe it's something really huge. Take some time right now to sit and think about that person. Think of them the way God thinks of them; try to see them with His eyes.

When you feel ready, pray for them. Be honest. If you still find it difficult to forgive them, ask God for His help. If you know that you wronged them, ask God to forgive you and show you how to make things right. Then, go do it. Have that tough conversation. Write that note. Show that person that they matter to you.